uprooted

The Undergraduate Journal of American Studies

Letter from the Editors

We are proud to present the 2020–2021 edition of the Undergraduate Journal of American Studies. This year's journal aims to capture a year unlike any other, through the rich and varied disciplines encompassed within American Studies: literature, cinema, geography, political science, history, and beyond.

So quickly did our quotidian life become a luxury. What riches were our former meetings — exchanges in classrooms, conversations in coffee shops and spontaneous encounters. We live in perpetual grief for a way of life that has been so sharply uprooted, while yet navigating the trials and tribulations of school, home, work, friendships and relationships, all through the bright, glowing, torturous screens of our devices. And yet we pay heed to this: it is no small matter that it is these very networks which opened the world to those for whom the previous quotidian was at best, a hindrance, and at worst, entirely inaccessible. For some, an uprooting made way for accessible connection.

What does it mean to be uprooted?

At first, 'uprooting' seems innocent, evocative of the garden, and the ancient habits of humanity. But it's worth asking, before you have uprooted anything: what lies beneath those vines? Once the dig is underway, you may know more, but only incrementally. Elbow grease and a shovel are needed to uproot a garden, just as effort and care are required to parse through the long, twisted and complex web of American roots. It is the dream of the garden, after all, which supposedly defines the American ideal — along with a white picket fence, house and car. But there exists a more sinister definition: to 'uproot' can also mean to remove someone, something from their home.

Since the arrival of the first colonists and enslaved people, captured from their homes to build an economy on stolen labour, enabled by centuries of forced eradication and displacement of Indigenous people upon Turtle Island — uprooting led to the creation of the United States. We can search

through the vacuous language of the nation, so deceitful it is meaningless, for America's essential foundation. Here we find, as we dig through rhetorical dirt: truths not shown to be self-evident, systems and institutions which perpetuate brutality and mass violence, centuries of unpaid, unrepatriated labour paving the way for urban development, and branches that shall grow broken, bereft, split apart, embedded with trauma silenced across generations. So we stand in an ever-deeper hole, asking: how far do those poisoned roots grow?

We, the editors, view displacement to be *the* central tenet of American history. And we see the myths surrounding the nation of exceptionalism, freedom and equality disproving themselves regularly. America is exceptionally unequal, unhealthy, impoverished and undereducated as compared to its peer nations. It is built on an exceptionally brutal form of capitalism, a history of chattel slavery, and an exceptionally resilient form of displacement, settler-colonialism.

But so too is it filled with exceptionally talented people and compelling art, revolutionary ideas and groundbreaking research, and the communities, movements and activists who have worked tirelessly to sever the nation of its poisoned roots, pushing through roadblocks continuously set to halt their progress. This process is undoubtedly incomplete. Decolonization is ever-lasting. There has not been a single attempt made by the United States at reconciliation for slavery to date — let alone the 155 years of various forms of oppression that followed in the Thirteenth Amendment's wake.

In this journal we highlight stories of displacement, discovery, instability and change. We hope the interdisciplinary array of works presented help to convey the often-contradictory basket of exceptions that can be found in the United States. The country is at once a symbol of liberty and a merchant of exploitation; the birthplace of modern democracy and the purveyor of an imperial global presence; Earth's wealthiest nation and home to millions who have more debt than assets.

Letter from the Director

It is my great pleasure to welcome you, dear readers, to the fifteenth volume of the *Undergraduate Journal of American Studies* at the University of Toronto. As always, the articles in this volume cover a wide variety of topics and articulate a range of perspectives. What unites them, however, is the overarching theme of "uprooting," an idea that has both positive and negative connotations. In the positive sense, it suggests the removal of weeds from the garden, a clearing away for new and better growth. The crises of the past year have finally made way for movements which point toward a better future, such as #MeToo, Idle No More, and Black Lives Matter. In the negative sense, though, uprooting, or displacement, describes what the editors have of this volume have called "the central tenet of American history." "Uprooting" is a painfully and hopefully timely and vital theme that reaches across disciplinary boundaries. These articles speak volumes about the tenets and practices of American Studies, about how we choose to do American Studies at the University of Toronto.

What a year we have had; what a year! This has been our *annus horribilis*. The phrase — which translates as "horrible year" — has its origins in the Anglican church and has been adopted by the British monarchy, to which Canada remains loosely, yet somehow firmly, tethered. Though it is true for an entire world grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, the phrase is also particularly apt for the United States. With more than half a million dead due to a maliciously inept handling of the pandemic, the United States has also witnessed and perhaps begun to come to terms with the brutal murders of Black men and women at the hands of its police and a rise in anti-Asian, anti-women violence spurred on by the racist and sexist rants of its former leader — who, on the heels of a near economic collapse, also encouraged an insurrection against the U.S. government. The Centre for the Study of the United States (CSUS) has responded to the events of this year with counter-programming on

the history of rebellion in the U.S., the problems of policing in the country, and the effects of populism on and in its political systems. We have mounted courses on the pandemic and on populism, both led by our outstanding Bissell-Heyd Lecturer, Professor Alexandra Rahr. And we have also started offering a series of classes on issues of political, social and cultural sovereignty in a settler-colonial society. As the U.S. confronts the limits of American exceptionalism and a realization that the country is perhaps not so exceptional after all, at CSUS we're planning next year's curriculum and public programming to address this moment. We'll be looking at whether America has been hobbled by its encounter with populist rule, how it is attempting to re-establish its leadership in the global marketplace and in the global marketplace of ideas... and facing the possibility that it may not be able to do so.

As vaccines are distributed across the world, the unevenness of that distribution provides a graphic illustration of an equally uneven distribution of global wealth and power, and there the United States remains dominant. As Canada works hard to vaccinate its most vulnerable populations and to secure more vaccines for everyone else, the United States is intent on providing full vaccination by the end of the summer. Yet regardless of the actual pace, as we begin to recover from the devastating effects of the pandemic — the erratic lockdowns and re-openings, the massive disruptions to global supply chains — we imagine a return to normality. Still, this resumption begs a very basic question: what is normal, and should we be rushing to return to it? For some, the beginning of recovery is a chance to reset and critique the norms that got us into this situation in the first place. We have learned all too well the weaknesses in the global supply chain. But we have also witnessed the stark effects of poverty, racism and sexism in the pandemic's uneven death rates. And we have been forced to acknowledge through this pandemic the degree to which the United States and Canada are or are not prepared to deal with the ongoing crisis of climate change. This is a moment, in essence, in which we can begin to ask whether we want to return to the way things were or to explore new definitions of the normal and the everyday — to let everything grow back as it was, or to consider a new, more just way of nurturing life.

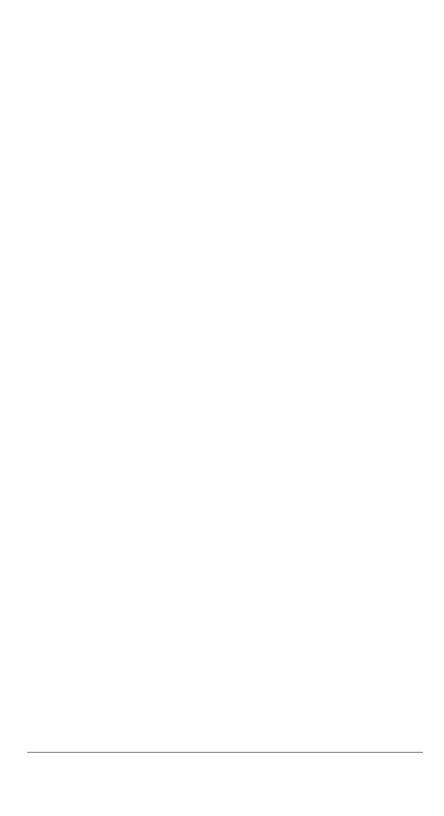I offer my sincere thanks and congratulations to the individual contributors and to the editorial team who has assembled their contributions into a coherent and elegant whole. To speak about things vital to our own interests and those of our peers, and to do so with craft and with care, is a pleasure in and of itself, but it is also an important contribution to public discourse. And, in an age when silence is complicity and

speaking up a necessity, it is an essential contribution to our social well being. To quote the great American thinker Dolly Parton, "Storms make trees take deeper roots." To nurture those deep roots it is vital that we write what we know to be true, as these undergraduate authors have done here. Such is the power of well-stated ideas. And that is the promise delivered of an academic journal that serves as a vehicle for such smart, talented, committed undergraduates as you will find writing here.

The Centre for the Study of the United States (CSUS) at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto, is our country's preeminent place for making sense of our place in the Americas and in the world. It is a meeting place for scholars in fields as diverse as political science, economics, cinema studies, women and gender studies, history, English, geography, and art history, brought together by a shared intellectual interest in the United States, and in the Americas. We host a plethora of public lectures and intellectually stimulating events each year. We offer a thorough and far-reaching undergraduate program in American Studies. And we act as a clearinghouse for graduate students whose focus is the Americas. And, as you will see, we help in our small way to support an undergraduate student journal in American Studies, which advertises the breadth and depth of our students' interests.

My sincere congratulations and gratitude to all of you who made this journal happen.

Nicholas Sammond
Director
Centre for the Study of the United States and the
American Studies program

Note on the Cover:

Palestine, circa 1880 to 1922––olive harvest (between October to November). Caught by the camera laughing, one figure looks to the lens, while another puts his hand to his mouth, the slight edge of a smile escaping. Some harvesters stoop to the ground, gathering olives, as others still climb the ladders that surround them. They are there in the olive trees, searching through branches. In the background: a gaggle of individuals, one basket visible. The gathering of olives is a community-oriented affair, in which families, locals, and in recent decades, volunteers from around the world, gather together. Nestled in these groves there has been and continues to be music, dance, celebration.

The olive tree, a near universal symbol of peace, is more than a mere plant. It is revered in Palestine not simply for its enormous economic significance, but as an emblem of cultural heritage across various religions. And its uprooting, destruction, and burning, in the tens to hundreds of thousands by Israeli Occupying Forces and settlers in the years since the Occupation of Palestine, is both a cultural and literal lynchpin of Israeli settler colonialism. Uprooting an olive tree in Occupied Palestine for settler residence is uprooting a symbol of heritage, a livelihood, an ancestral culture––it realizes the visual language of settler colonialism across the Levantine landscape.

It is this same narrative legitimating dispossession that gave rise to the settler colonial nations encompassed within Turtle Island (North America). Thus, this year's cover of the Undergraduate Journal of American Studies, shaded in the colour orange in recognition and remembrance of still recent histories of uprooting and mass violence across Turtle Island, was selected to highlight the past and present processes of settler colonialism as they occur before our very eyes. The uprooting of Palestine — its people and culture — has been enacted with the assistance of Western imperial powers, first Britain and France, and since the late twentieth century, the support and funds of the U.S. government, itself a settler colonial nation much like Canada, with hands bloodied by the genocide of the Indigenous peoples of this land.
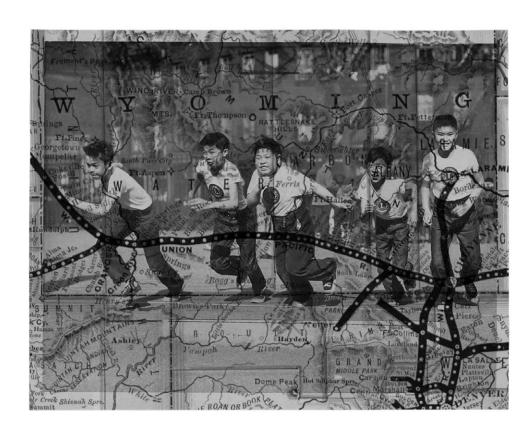
Photo Credits

14 Union Pacific Railroad, 1883: https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3701p.rr005950/?r=0.258,0.198,0.159,0.095,0

14 Chinese American Boys, Beginning foot race, 1955: https://www.loc.gov/resource/ds.07244/

26 Maxime Du Camp, Palestine (1849/51): https://www.artic.edu/artworks/144331/jerusalem-mosquee-d-omar-palestine

32 Philip Johnson, Glass House: http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/highsm.04817/

44 Highsmith, Carol M., AIDS quilt, Washington, D.C. (b/w 1980-2006): https://www.loc.gov/resource/highsm.13502/?r=-0.304,-0.045,1.467,0.877,0

54 W.S. Smith - David Street, Jerusalem, Palestine (1906): https://www.loc.gov/resource/stereo.1s08911/

68 Juan Gris Ace of Clubs and Four of Diamonds, 1915: https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.163527.html#inscription

80 Iraq, Karbala (General view, towards mosque), 1932: https://www.loc.gov/item/2019692092/

88 Tse, Ka-Man ([Man holding tray of tomato plants, Chinatown, New York City, New York]), created 2017, printed 2019: https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.69177/

102 James F. Ryder, Atlantic & Great Western Railway, 1862.jpg: https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.136560.html

110 Cathedral and market, Antigua, Guatemala, C. A. (1902): https://www.loc.gov/resource/stereo.1s26300/

118 Rain. Pittsburgh, Pa. (1941): https://www.loc.gov/resource/fsa.8c19363/

Table of Contents:

Chinatown, 1955 — Five young children take off in the 50-yard dash at the Lion's Club Decathlon (photograph by Walter Albertin) in New York, set atop an 1883 map depicting the rise of towns in Wyoming along the Union Pacific Railroad. Fifth before the railroad forks is Rock Springs, the site of the 1885 murder of tens of immigrant Chinese workers, by white men and women. Library of Congress.

KATE SCHNEIDER

From "Coolies" to the "Model Minority":

Anti-Chinese Racism and American Political Development

While the past few decades have produced fantastic work on race within the subfield of American political development (APD), there is a notable lack of scholarship surrounding the development of anti-Asian racism. This a disappointing omission considering that at least six percent of the American population identifies as Asian and that the history of Asian Americans stretches back at least 150 years.[1] As a case study, this paper will focus on racism experienced by Chinese Americans specifically, although it is worth noting that their experiences are not necessarily representative of other Asian ethnic groups. This paper will argue that existing APD literature does not adequately explain the development of anti-Chinese racism in the United States. First, I will present an overview of this development from an APD perspective, emphasizing the role of institutions and highlighting political change throughout American history.[2] Second, I will examine how three challenges, the black-white binary, Whiggish conceptions of political development, and discontinuous narratives prevent existing APD scholarship from properly incorporating the experiences of Chinese Americans.

I. Charting the Development of Anti-Chinese Racism

Prior to the 1850s, the Chinese population in the United States — 43 individuals total — was prohibited from obtaining citizenship.[3] This was a

result of the 1790 Nationality Act, which granted citizenship exclusively to white persons (i.e. white propertied men).[4] The California Gold Rush in 1848 prompted the first substantial wave of Chinese immigration, which brought tens of thousands of Chinese men to the West Coast with promises of boundless wealth.[5] Following the Gold Rush, Chinese immigrants worked in industries desperate for cheap labour, playing a key role in projects such as the construction of the transcontinental railroad.[6]

Yet as their numbers grew, so did racism among the white population, especially in California where most Chinese labourers resided.[7] Throughout the 1850s, the California government passed laws to dissuade Chinese immigrants from settling — many of which would be replicated at the federal level. In 1852, California instituted a foreign miner's license tax and a $50 head tax on Chinese ship passengers.[8] In 1854, the California Supreme Court ruled in *People v. Hall* that Chinese persons could not testify for or against white persons.[9] Four years later, California passed a law fully prohibiting Chinese immigration.[10] California's 1879 constitution prohibited the government and private corporations from employing Chinese immigrants.[11] In 1880, the state outlawed whites from marrying non-white persons, including "Mongolians," referring to anyone of Asian descent.[12] In response to the increasing racism, many Chinese workers dispersed to other parts of the United States, forming tight-knit Chinatown communities in cities across the country.[13] Others adopted jobs traditionally held by women, such as at laundries and restaurants, to avoid threatening white male workers.[14]

Following the Civil War, Congress ratified the Reconstruction Amendments, constitutional amendments intended to institute protections for newly emancipated Black individuals.[15] Congressional debates show many white legislators were concerned that Reconstruction meant equality for not just African persons, but other races, including the Chinese.[16] The economic troubles in the 1870s from the aftermath of the Civil War further fueled anti-Chinese sentiments during the Reconstruction Era.[17] The elections of 1876 and 1880 saw both parties decrying the "coolies" and warning about an impending invasion of the Chinese.[18] Congress's actions reflected these attitudes of the white population, passing the Page Act of 1875 that effectively banned the immigration of all Chinese women.[19] The judiciary acted to preserve this discrimination. For example, in the 1878 *In re Ah Yup* case, a federal court affirmed that Chinese persons were not eligible for citizenship.[20]

These sentiments culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned the immigration of Chinese labourers for 10 years.[21] The law singled out labourers, yet in practice was interpreted by immigration

officials to exclude almost all Chinese immigrants. The federal government subsequently passed the Scott Act in 1888, denying Chinese immigrants wishing to temporarily leave the United States permission to re-enter.[22] Congress renewed Chinese exclusion with the Geary Act of 1892.[23] The combination of these three laws led to a considerable decline in the Chinese population in America.[24]

Jim Crow laws were devastating for communities of colour. Efforts to discriminate primarily against Black Americans had ancillary effects on Chinese Americans. In 1896, *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld racial segregation through the "separate but equal" doctrine, which asserted that distinctions based on race did not violate the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection.[25] In the 1927 *Lum v. Rice* case, the Supreme Court resolved that Chinese Americans should attend coloured schools.[26] In this period, the state continued to not only endorse segregation, but also exclusionary immigration policies. The 1917 Asiatic Barred Zone Act stopped almost all immigration from Asia.[27] In 1921, the Emergency Quota Act was passed, setting strict quotas for new immigrants based on the current population.[28] The 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act dictated that the United States would prohibit all possible immigrants not eligible for citizenship.[29] These laws reinforced the exclusion of Chinese Americans while also extending this exclusion to all other Asians.

Amid this succession of racist policies around the turn of the 20th century, the courts provided a path for minor advancements in racial equality. *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* in 1886 struck down an ordinance discriminating against Chinese laundry owners,[30] recognizing that equal protection under the 14th Amendment applied to all races.[31] In 1898, the Court ruled in *Wong Kim Ark v. United States* that birthright citizenship could not be denied to Americans of Chinese descent.[32] Later, the 1944 case *Korematsu v. United States*, despite allowing Japanese internment, dictated that all racial classifications would trigger "strict scrutiny" under the 14th Amendment — a ruling that would facilitate the undoing of racial segregation starting ten years later in *Brown v. Board of Education*.[33]

The 1950s and 1960s ushered in monumental change in the United States with the rise of the Civil Rights movement following World War II. The conclusion of the war provided an opening for the eventual repeal of exclusionary policies, mostly due to China's position as a wartime ally. In 1943, Congress passed the Magnuson Act, which repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, instituted an annual quota of 105 Chinese immigrants, and finally made Chinese immigrants eligible for naturalization.[34] In 1952, the McCarran-Walter Act was passed, expanding the immigration quota system to all Asia-Pacific countries.[35] The efforts of Black

Americans during the Civil Rights movement achieved many reforms that also benefited Chinese Americans. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public accommodations.[36] The 24th Amendment ratified in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 strengthened voting rights by banning poll taxes and literacy tests, respectively.[37] In 1967, the Supreme Court legalized interracial marriage in *Loving v. Virginia*. For Chinese Americans, however, an equally significant development was the passage of the Hart-Celler Act of 1965. Hart-Celler abolished the national origins quota system, replacing it with consideration of factors such as employment, education, and family reunification.[38] Unforeseen by lawmakers at the time, Hart-Celler altered the demographics of the United States in the following decades through significant increases in immigrants from non-European countries, including China.[39]

More recent issues centering around race deal with affirmative action. In the 1978 *Bakke* case, the Supreme Court affirmed the idea of a colorblind constitution,[40] declaring racial quotas unconstitutional.[41] Over two decades later, in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the Court ruled that, while racial quotas were unacceptable, considering race among other factors in a holistic admissions approach was permissible.[42] However, while many racialized groups continue to be underrepresented within post-secondary education, Chinese and other Asian Americans are often overrepresented, leading to the stereotype of "model minorities."[43] Questions have arisen over whether Asian Americans have attained the status of "whiteness" and should not benefit from affirmative action. These claims have become even more contentious with the highly publicized case of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*. In this case, the plaintiffs argue that Harvard's affirmative action program unfairly discriminates against Asian Americans to increase the enrollment of other racial minorities.[44] Nevertheless, the persistence of discrimination against Asian Americans in areas like housing and employment — through workplace harassment and hiring practices — and as victims of hate crimes counters the stereotype of model minorities.[45] Notably, recent reports indicate that Chinese Americans are increasingly the targets of racially-motivated discrimination stemming from the global SARS-COV-2 pandemic.[46]

II. Anti-Chinese Racism and American Political Development

APD still has shortcomings in addressing race. In particular, there are three challenges preventing APD from properly accounting for

anti-Chinese racism: the black-white binary, Whiggish conceptions of political development, and discontinuous narratives.

A. Expanding Beyond the Black-White Binary

The first challenge is reconsidering the black-white paradigm, which portrays the only racial division in the United States as between white and Black individuals. This binary framework obscures the experiences of many non-Black people of color.[47] Nonetheless, it is crucial to understand the centrality of the black-white division to America. A black-white racial continuum was constructed in the United States before its founding.[48] As new immigrant groups arrived, they were placed along the pre-existing continuum by whites,[49] even when these newly constructed racial categories conflicted with the continuum. However, recognizing the two poles of the socially constructed racial continuum does not mean that everything in between should be neglected. Overcoming this challenge does not require less scholarship be devoted to the experiences of Black Americans but, instead, necessitates that more scholarship be devoted to enriching the understanding of race within APD considering experiences beyond the black-white binary.

The example of Chinese Americans effectively addresses this challenge. Professor Claire Jean Kim has suggested a theory of racial triangulation, wherein white Americans designate Chinese Americans as superior to Black Americans in racial status but assign them an additional aspect of being culturally alien.[50] Whereas Chinese Americans were initially near-black on the racial continuum,[51] their current position is closer to whiteness. However, Chinese Americans are prevented from attaining white status due to the persistence of this assigned cultural foreignness.[52] Political science professor Fred Lee differentiates between "naturalistic" and "post-naturalistic" racial conceptions, with the former seeing race as rooted in inheritable physical traits and the latter viewing racial distinctions as stemming from social factors, such as culture.[53] He argues post-naturalistic understandings of race have emerged post-WWII, layering on top of (and often complicating) pre-existing naturalistic racial conceptions, illuminating how these dimensions of racial hierarchy and foreignness operate in the present.[54]

Expanding beyond the simple black-white binary can also reveal conflicting attempts to subvert white supremacy between racialized groups. In short, advancements for one group have not necessarily meant advancements for another. For instance, while Black Americans achieved citizenship in the 1860s, Chinese Americans were denied until 1943. The experiences of Chinese Americans demonstrates how members of the

racial egalitarian order can simultaneously work to uphold white suprem-
acist orders. This is best demonstrated in *Lum v. Rice*. The plaintiff's
argument that Chinese children should be afforded the status of equality
by attending segregated white schools was premised on their proposed
status as non-black, thereby reinforcing the inferior status of Black
children. Overall, APD's tendency to rely on a black-white binary can
obscure significant dynamics between groups and fail to properly account
for how Chinese Americans are racialized in America.

B. Rejecting Whiggish Conceptions of Political Development

The second challenge is confronting Whiggish conceptions of political
development that paint an uninterrupted trajectory towards racial
equality. Accounts such as Lawrence Fuchs' *American Kaleidoscope* imply
America increasingly embraces the fundamental liberal values underlying
the polity.[55] As such, most of these narratives rely on the theses of Hartz
and Tocqueville, seeing racial inequality as an exception to the prevailing
ideology of liberalism.[56] This idea has gained prominence beyond just
APD, such as in the notion of a "post-racial society" achieved with the
election of President Barack Obama.[57]

 Instead, APD would benefit from accepting that racism persists into
the present and that there is always the possibility that increasingly racist
systems may re-emerge in the future.[58] The experiences of Chinese
Americans demonstrate how they have not passed into whiteness but,
instead, face familiar racist sentiments in new forms. For example, beliefs
that Chinese Americans have stronger loyalties to China than the United
States have endured into the present.[59] Furthermore, Michael Omi
explains how Asian Americans are often targeted in unique ways by white
Americans for being "unfair competitors who do 'too well.'"[60] Indeed,
modern day sentiments are reiterations of the same sentiments present in
the 1800s against Asian Americans. Modern beliefs echo 19th century
fears of a tide of "Mongolians," the threat of competition forcing Chinese
male labourers to take on jobs traditionally held by women, and the claims
of conflicted loyalty used to justify Japanese internment during WWII.

 Furthermore, the idea of model minorities used to support the
notion of a post-racial society is itself premised on racism. As law profes-
sor John A. Powell explains, "[t]he very need to pass [into whiteness]
indicates the continued salience of racial hierarchy."[61] The term "model
minority" was created by influential whites in the 1960s to criticize
dissenting Black Americans.[62] By attributing Asian Americans' adherence
to values important to white Americans as the source of their success, it

sets Asian Americans against other racialized groups, implying that overcoming racism simply requires silently accepting the paths provided to them by whites.[63] Unsurprisingly, this claim does not reflect the actual history of Chinese Americans. Instead, the disproportionate success of Chinese Americans in educational and professional settings can be attributed to American immigration policies that selectively permitted only high-achieving immigrants to become residents.[64] Overall, Whiggish views of political development fail to adequately account for the durability of anti-Chinese racism in the United States.

C. Tracing Development Outside Discontinuity

The third challenge faced by APD in addressing anti-Chinese racism is how discontinuous narratives can oversimplify the actual paths of development. This can falsely imply stability in moments outside previously identified junctures.[65] As political scientist Julie Novkov writes, "understanding how change occurs in American politics requires more than the addition of race as a variable to a model."[66] Simply embedding considerations of race into existing narratives will not necessarily work. Race must be seen as a fundamental aspect of the polity that prompts the rethinking of current models of political development.

An assessment of the most famous account of punctuated change, Ackerman's three constitutional moments, demonstrates this need. The development of anti-Chinese racism is not entirely compatible with this narrative, which identifies the Founding, the Civil War, and the New Deal as junctures.[67] For instance, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was enacted during the Reconstruction period. However, it would be reductive to claim the Act as a product of Reconstruction as it is more accurately described as the culmination of many other acts leading up to and through the Civil War. Another example can be seen with the passage of the 1965 Hart-Celler Act. Although taking place during the Civil Rights period, it is more correctly situated in an account tracing the gradual reopening of the country to Chinese immigrants over many decades. These two cases illustrate that discontinuous narratives insufficiently explain developments with regards to race, especially anti-Chinese racism.

III. Conclusion

APD's focus on political change makes the subfield well-suited for analyzing the development of racism, including against Chinese

Americans. Nonetheless, this paper demonstrated that APD faces challenges in properly accounting for the development of anti-Chinese racism. I began by examining the history of anti-Chinese sentiments in the United States from an APD perspective. Then, I built on this account to identify three specific challenges within APD, including expanding beyond the black-white binary, rejecting Whiggish conceptions of political development, and the oversimplifications resulting from discontinuous narratives. The racism underlying the notions of model minorities and the post-racial society demonstrates that race continues to be a vastly underacknowledged aspect of the American polity. With this paper, I hope to encourage future research into the role of the state in discriminating against all people of colour, including Chinese Americans, as this novel scholarship will serve to open up new, much needed pathways of inquiry within APD.

ENDNOTES

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3 Morrison G. Wong, "Chinese Americans," in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. Pyong Gap Min (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2006), 110.

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5 Min, "Asian Immigration," 9. Wong, "Chinese Americans," 111.

6 Hsu, *The Good Immigrants,* 6.

7 Wong, "Chinese Americans," 111.

8 David Lyons, *The Color Line: A Short Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 47. Wong, "Chinese Americans," 111.

9 Min, "Asian Immigration," 10.

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11 Lyons, *The Color Line*, 47.

12 Joe R. Feagin and Kimberley Ducey, *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Reparations*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 246.

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15 Orren and Skowronek, *The Search*, 136.

16 Julie Novkov, "Rethinking Race in American Politics," *Political Science Research Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (2008): 4.

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21 Wong, "Chinese Americans," 113.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Donald P. Kommers et al., *American Constitutional Law: Liberty, Community, and the Bill of Rights*. 4th ed., vol. 2 (St. Paul: West Academic Publishing, 2018), 1125.

26 Feigin and Ducey, *Racist America*, 245.

27 Min, "Asian Immigration," 11; Lyons, *The Color Line,* 75.

28 Ibid.

29 Hsu, *The Good Immigrants*, 7.

30 Lyons, *The Color Line*, 49.

31 Kommers et al., *Constitutional Law*, 1117.

32 Lyons, *The Color Line*, 49.

33 Kommers et al., *Constitutional Law*, 1117.

34 Wong, "Chinese Americans," 115; Hsu, *The Good Immigrants*, 16.

35 Min, "Asian Immigration," 12.

36 Rogers M. Smith, "Ackerman's Civil Rights Revolution and Modern American Racial Politics," *Yale Law Journal* 123, no. 8 (2014): 2911.

37 Paul Finkelman, "The Necessity of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Difficulty of Overcoming Almost a Century of Voting Discrimination," *Louisiana Law Review* 76, no. 1 (2015): 182-87.

38 Hsu, *The Good Immigrants*, 4; Min, "Asian Immigration," 14.

39 Ibid., Wong, "Chinese Americans," 116.

40 Novkov, "Equality," 462.

41 Kommers et al., *Constitutional Law*, 1134.

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Palestine Before 1948: View of the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Omar, on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount in Jerusalem/al-Quds, Palestine, 1849/51 (photograph by Maxime Du Camp). Art Institute of Chicago.

An ancient, contested city with spiritual importance to Jewish, Muslim, and Christian peoples, Jerusalem has changed hands across centuries. In that time, despite all differences, intercultural conversation continued. Since 1948, however, this dialogue has been fractured, and it continues to fracture at the hands of the settler-colonial Israeli state, as well as those governments — such as the UK and US — which made the Occupation possible and continue to provide their support.

YASMEEN ATASSI

Hidden Carceral Parallels:

Israel, the US and Questioning Settler-Colonial "Democracies"

It does not take an American political theorist to realize that there is something systematically unsettling about a criminal justice system that carries the responsibility of manifesting 'law-and-order' and has permeated society through its 'preservation through transformation'.[1] The American justice system, whether its police forces, military forces, or its prison complex, has maintained a spot in the news cycle week after week as people continue to fight against the racialized structural violence that has taken the lives of George Floyd, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and many more. In *The New Jim Crow*, Michelle Alexander's focus on the racializing subtleties of the American carceral agenda, which relates to the systems of imprisonment and punishment, allows her to demonstrate how mass incarceration is built upon an inherently American racial caste system that disenfranchises a minority and places them in a perpetual subclass.[2] It is through Alexander's analysis that the parallels to the racialized and ethnically motivated violence of the Israeli policing structure and prison systems are brought to light.

This paper looks closely at the structural similarities in two arguably settler-colonial nation states, and focuses more specifically on the emergence of these similarities and the impact they have on a similar subset of people in each respective society. What is it that makes intrusive and unrelenting carceral structures central to essentially settler-colonial nation states? For it is this theme of policing under settler-colonialism and the question of nationality in those identified nations that allows us to unpack this connection.

A close study of the origins of mass incarceration and the reasons

behind extra-vigilant policing in the United States illuminates similar prison structures and systems in the current State of Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands. This similarity in carceral structures suggests that self-appointed democracies, such as the United States and State of Israel, designate noncitizens, or second-class citizens as they are called by Alexander, who are then targeted through racialized policing.[3] Such noncitizens can be characterized as individuals whose existence is not fully legitimized by the governing bodies. In the U.S., the title of noncitizen is largely applied to racialized individuals facing persecution exacerbated due to their identities, and not in spite of them.[4] In the Palestinian territories, these noncitizens are also defined by their identification as Arabs and Indigenous Palestinians.[5] A comparison of these settler states demonstrates how ideologies of settlement and exploitation of racial caste permit and indeed perhaps seed the creation of such carceral apparatuses.

Given the rhetorical similarities and their relation to governing bodies of law, the deliberate carceral disenfranchisement that Alexander characterizes in the American context of mass incarceration is just as functional in the State of Israel. Palestinian noncitizens are committed to the criminal system en masse and through courses of action that go suppressed in mainstream media.[6] In Al Jazeera, Cristina Maza points to this exact phenomenon, chronicling the experiences of young Palestinian men, arrested and detained without charges for days on end.[7] Israel's carceral state engages in the same practice: arrest without cause. [8] This practice has not passed under the radar. Amit Gilutz, the spokesperson for Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, notes that the so-called "administrative detention centres" are a point-blank avenue for the targeted incarceration of Palestinians.[9]

The over-policing of a racial under-caste requires: the existence of citizenship status and stratified citizenship. The concept of a settler-colonial state, such as in the case of the United States and the State of Israel, among others, can most concisely be defined by the existence of levels of citizenry in a democratic state, and then consequential disenfranchisement of the subclasses of this citizenry.[10]

A very real hierarchical level of existence in these settler-colonial nation-states negates their theoretical foundation of democracy. This is particularly evident in the US, since the notions of racial and ethnic sub-castes have become more widespread over time through self-fulfilling perceptions of "Otherness" perpetuated by the media. In one salient example, Alexander looks at the "War on Drugs," the campaign piloted by President Ronald Reagan in 1982 to mitigate drug-related crime.[11] She centres this examination on those impacted by what was a mass policing

effort, targeting marginalized, most significantly Black, communities in the United States.[12] The American rate of drug consumption was not statistically more significant in one racial demographic than another. Ironically, if there was evidence arguing for a difference, it proved that BIPOC minorities were *not* those with the higher levels.[13] This statistical data contradicts the image of crime perpetuated by the "War on Drugs" through media fanfare. The specific targeting and persecution of certain minorities resulted in a highly racialized system of incarceration that perpetuates racialized carceral violence to this day. [14]

By comparing state-led policing in these two settler-colonial nations, the United States and the State of Israel, the structures of incarceration and control inflicted on noncitizens become clear. Although their systems of dominance and control do vastly differ, the mere realization of the underlying similarity in the exercise of control points to a greater issue of power imbalances and harm in the fabric of settler-colonial nations.

ENDNOTES

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Autumn view of The Glass House (photograph by Carol M. Highsmith). Library of Congress.

Built in 1949 in New Canaan, Connecticut, it was the dwelling of its designer, Philip Johnson, and its creation a significant moment in modern architecture. It is completely transparent—except of course, in the perfect darkness of the night — when glass becomes mirror.

KERRY-ANN JAMES

Looking Back on *Us*:
Race in Time and Space

Jordan Peele's 2019 horror film *Us* is terrifying, but not for the obvious reasons. To be sure, it has images of blood splattering onto the bedroom walls during a murder and it has the wet sound of a metal rod hacking through bones and flesh. But these images barely uncover what terror lies beneath the film's surface. *Us* is horrifying because it disrupts our experience of time. The film is devastating; the beginning and end merge into an indivisible unity. *Us* runs for 116 minutes and feels even longer. The camera moves through space as slowly as the narrative moves through time, visually exhausting every setting. In the opening, we spend a great amount of time watching people eat, play games and ride roller coasters. Objects and people overwhelm the frames, creating a sense of endlessness. This disorientation transforms space, making it challenging to outline, and therefore to navigate. The film's narrative and visuals turn back onto themselves. The non-linear time and distended, repeated space in *Us* attunes our experience to an alternative spatial and temporal epistemology. In "Knowledge of Freedom," Fred Moten declares that the black radical tradition is in apposition to enlightenment reason, it is remixed, expanded, and radically faithful to the forces its encounters carry, break, and constitute.[1] The liberation of Blackness necessitates interrogating, breaking and reconstructing hegemonic spatial and temporal reasoning. The circular temporality in *Us* is beneficial to Blackness because rejecting a linear time that was constructed to keep them 'outside' opens up a space where Blackness can continually move.

Us follows the Wilsons, a Black middle-class family that goes on vacation to their summer home in Santa Cruz. In 1986, the protagonist, Addy, visits the same beach in Santa Cruz as a child, where she meets her doppelgänger, Red, in a house of mirrors. The encounter continues to haunt Addy into her adulthood, and on her family trip she becomes increasingly anxious about what awaits them at the place where her story began. Sure enough, Red, along with her husband, son, and daughter interrupt the family vacation. Red leads the army of government-produced doppelgängers called the "Tethered" to their exodus, which requires the extermination of all of the 'original' American citizens.

The narrative is provocative because of its treatment of time. The film seems like it is moving toward an end, but it is returning to the beginning. The film stages a constant return to 1986 through the perpetual intrusion of Addy's memories into the present. In her child-hood home, she wanders into the basement and sees her younger self hauntingly practicing ballet in the mirror. The present and the past bleed into each other—they are inseparable. It is not until near the end of the film, when we return to the beginning, that the film starts to make sense. The return to that very night in 1986 reveals that Red stole Addy's identity when they were children, condemning the real Addy to a life underground. This return to the beginning is a temporal tool that exposes the complexities of Addy's seemingly transparent life. Addy isn't who she says she is: her life has been a play of smoke and mirrors. She repeatedly abandons the flashbacks and signs that warn her. These memories and signs resurface when Addy sees an object like a picture of her as a child or a spider. In these moments, the camera slowly zooms into the object, the sound of a spider traversing a glass table become incredibly sharp, increasing loud, and close-ups of Addy's looks of extreme focus conjure up a sense that revelation is on the brink of happening. But in an instant, a banging or the sound of a siren steals her attention and pulls us back into the present, for now. Time and space are stuck on a loop. *Us* rejects linearity by exhausting space and time through repetition. Each return to the same time and place opens up the possibility of drawing out new information about the past to better navigate the present. This non-linear temporal order is a threat to progress because it appears to be unproductive. The cinematic visualiza-tion of a collapse of the Western understanding of space and time is significant to the project of world re/building.

Figure 1. Us, Jordan Peele, 2019

Repetition in Culture:

As James Snead writes in "On Repetition in Black Culture," Black and European cultures differ in their treatment of time and space; thus, the circular rhythm of the Black culture is a disservice to whiteness, which is always trying to arrive somewhere. What separates the two is that Black culture embraces repetition and difference, while European culture disavows it. In contrast, Snead suggests that Black culture allows space for accidents and surprises.[2] Black culture's rhythm always acknowledges interruptions in its circularity, and it readjusts itself to maintain the equilibrium of its circular movement. Whereas European culture leaves no room for accidents and surprises and covers up any blocks in its trajectory forward. Ironically, European culture repeatedly denies that it repeats itself because it is concerned with maintaining an illusion of progress.[3] Black culture was defined by Europeans as the lowest stage of mass development because they did not adhere to linear time and that gave birth of a racial hierarchy that placed Africans as primitive and "history-less".[4] Time is a measurement of our progress of existence. If time, as we know it, is about progressing in a society governed by white-ness, it always excludes Black people.

In *Us*, we are always waiting. We are waiting for something, but we never quite get it. There is no explicit violence in the first thirty-minutes of the film, and even when we do get to the murders that allow the family to survive for another moment, it still does not feel like we are moving toward a resolution. There is none. At the end of the film, where there "should" be an ending, we return to the beginning, but in many ways, we were already there. According to Snead, "The African is always already there, or perhaps always there before, whereas European culture is headed

there or, better, not yet there".[5] The temporality of *Us* is unproductive because it follows a Black rhythm, one that returns to itself. Black culture's temporality is terrifying to white culture because it is resilient and incomprehensible.[6] Whiteness finds comfort in disavowing its repetitive quality because it is elemental in separating itself from Blackness. This denial in white culture is important to its commitment to constant improvement. Thus, Black time is disturbing–it is a mode of existing that identifies and lays open all illusions of progress.

I refer to Black culture as a rhythm because Black music moves in a circular direction. It starts with a pattern and introduces new elements before returning to the original pattern. Arthur Jafa's *Black Visual Intonation* pronounces Black music's tendency to "worry the note" by taking on unstable frequencies rather than conforming to Western treatments of notes as fixed phenomena (Jafa). In naming white culture, the echo is a fitting term because the original sound continually travels forward. The echo denies change, but as it propels forward, it becomes difficult to recognize.

Reflections and Transparency: Architecture of *Us*

The illusion that race is natural, and that whiteness is the standard, are concepts that were socially created and repeated by white culture to authenticate and disseminate their ownership of the status of human.[7] But acknowledging the original act allows us to track and destabilize the false narrative that whiteness has built itself on. So, looking to Black culture, a culture that embraces difference in repetition, strengthens our ability to analyze, interrupt and combat the ways in which white culture imposes its power onto Black people. The rhythm of Black culture is perceived as unproductive because it runs on a loop. Black culture and reflection are both interruptions to the linearity of white culture. Like Black culture, the reflections of mirrors are a kind of visual feedback loop. In *Us*, mirrors are often associated with moments of panic and fear. For instance, in the house of mirrors, young Addy panics to find a way out because the path to the exit is not as simple as moving from point A to point B. Addy's freedom rests on her ability to reflect, go back, and repeat different combinations. Reflections are disorienting because they distort our perceptions of space by forcing us to rely on other senses outside of the field of vision. The field of vision is significant because Fanon's *The Fact of Blackness* marks the fundamental role vision plays in the history of racism

For example, architect, Philip Johnson's *Glass House* is made almost entirely of transparent glass walls. This commitment to transparency is a means to control both the interior and exterior environments. However, transparency always fails in the face of the pitch blackness of the nighttime that transforms the transparent glass into a reflective surface. The "master" of the space loses their sense of power over the exterior and the interior, which is disorienting because all they are left with is an image of themselves and the realization that they were never as superior as they had believed.[10] In *Glass House*, mirrors were forbidden because it would disrupt the transparent quality of the home.[11] Similarly, white culture is obsessed with imposing power and control on the Other, but it fails in the face of reflection. The backwardness of mirrors interrupts the forwardness of transparency. In *Us,* Addy reveals to her husband that she thinks something bad is going to happen to them in relation to her childhood house of mirrors trauma. As she explains her anxieties, she peers into the darkness through a window that reflects her worried face back at us. She realizes that she is no longer, or maybe never was, in control of what happens to her or her family. If reflections are representative of Black culture, in both the visual and mental sense, looping an image and following a non-linear timeline threatens the foundation of whiteness. The illusions of superiority and progress become unstable and the pursuit of whiteness is exposed as an impossibly achievable task.

Figure 3. Us, Jordan Peele, 2019

White Space

The rhythm in Black culture is significant because it helps us better understand how whiteness as a system of power propels itself forward. In John T. Warren's *Performing Difference: Repetition in Context,* he argues that whiteness is always remade, making it slippery.[12] As white culture thrusts itself through space, like an echo, its repetitions become difficult to recognize. The racial incorporation process that began in the 1960s is white culture's claim to progress and inclusivity, and another example of the illusions of progress that keep white people comfortable. Their denial of the echoes of whiteness is a perpetual repetition of being well deceived that provides a sense of security and "rightness".[13] Despite the processes of integration, Black people are always kept "in their place" when in white spaces.[14] White spaces vary but the most distinctive feature of white space is the overwhelming presence of white people and the absence of Black people.[15] In *Us*, the Wilsons – along with their Tethered– are the only Black families in the film. Also, this story takes place in a predominately white city: Santa Cruz. There is a tension between staying in rhythm and following the echo because in white space there lies social and economic rewards.[16] However, no matter the economic achievements of the Black middle-class, they will always fail to be accepted into white culture. A Black person must perform in a white space to gain acceptance, and even then, it is conditional.[17] For example, Addy's husband, Gabe buys a boat that he does not need, nor does his family have any interest in it. Gabe shares the news with his wealthy white friend Josh Tyler, who subtly points out the failures associated with Gabe's purchase. This is Gabe's performance for acceptance. In white spaces, Black folks are always reminded of their outsider status to actively keep them 'in their place'.[18] The focus on

highlighting the "wrongness" of Blackness is a tool used to rationalize the discrimination of Black people. Through repeated micro-aggressions, Black people are kept in a place where they are less likely to disrupt the implicit racial order.[19] For a Black person in white space, micro-aggressions are disguised as normal interactions but over time, these repeated comments and attitudes from their white counterparts remind them that they do not belong. These acts are the echoes of whiteness that disguise their repetition of racist behavior with progressiveness and humor.

To disrupt the echo is to resist assimilation and open up a Black space that runs on Black culture's circular temporality. If this is true, the scariness of the never-ending rhythm is its potential threat to order, progress, and power. However, there is an ambivalence that surrounds upholding these patterns because European culture denies it. For Black people, maintaining their rhythm is an act of defiance that interrupts whiteness, but the echoing of European culture is utilized to keep Black people 'in their place.' The tactics used to keep Black people 'in their place', which is always just outside (or below) white space, are uncovered through reflection. Black culture's commitment to the return uncovers how structures of power persist.[20] The promise of acceptance into white space is always just that, a promise, because the echoes of white supremacy are always sounding.

The color-line persists because white culture choses to ignore its repetition by mislabeling reformed oppressive systems as radical progress. Like time, whiteness has no interest in stopping, going back and changing, instead it chooses to find alternative ways of repeating aggression toward Black people. A crucial part of truly being accepted into white space and time is *being* white. To many, the advancement of Black people in a white space is seen as a threat, believing it is at the expense of white people.[21] If the presence of Black people in white spaces is always seen as a threat to the stability and security of whiteness and white people, then they are and will always be an embodiment of the 'accidents and surprises' that European culture does not allow. A Black person in white space evokes shock, their presence demands an explanation, and if those people are an interruption in wherever whiteness is 'going', Black people and their experiences must be 'covered up' to ensure the structure that is whiteness is protected. Following Katherine McKittrick, the "absented presence" of Black people in white spaces highlights who is and is not really there.[22] White culture and white space are closely linked because they are both interested in progress, which is an inherently white concept. It thrives on the exclusion and oppression of non-white people. The protection of white space and white time necessitates both the

subjugation and eradication of Black lives. Whiteness is protected by the echoing of the original act, which here, is sustaining the racial hierarchy that places white people as dominate and Black people as subordinate.[23]

In *Us*, the government made the Tethered in an effort to control the American people, but they could never figure out how to reproduce a human soul. They failed and as expected they covered it up because the U.S government has an almighty image to protect. There is no room for accidents and surprises. The underground space where the Tethered spend their lives mimicking their American counterparts is immeasurable because it is a dark tunnel with many rooms and no end in sight. The end and beginning of this space are ambiguous. It is disturbing because how would one know how to control something that cannot be understood. The Tethered people's power is in their incomprehensibility. As mentioned earlier, the inability of white culture to understand Black culture's concept of time is threatening because of its resilience.[24] They are the "primitive" and "history-less" people that have no sense of linear time and progression, but their perceived weakness and inferiority is their strength in the film.[25] As a Black middle-class family, the Wilson's commitment to progress and the pursuit of the American Dream is a delusion. There is no forward movement for them, there is no end, and even if there seems like there is a light at the end of their tunnel, they will never arrive to it. A Black person's Blackness is their "master status" that supersedes their identities as law-abiding citizens.[26]

The negative images of the ghetto that circulate in the media are associated with Black people no matter their class. The film pushes this further by exemplifying the significance of the return in its visuals. The film seems to care about how death is visualized in white spaces. *Us* takes us on a type of visual return through Black time, as a reminder of how Black people were treated in white spaces throughout American history. These superimposed images tie Black people to slavery (a period of time) and the ghetto (an iconic space). They are always working to place us. In the film, specific murders are not explicitly seen. For example, the first murder victim is a white homeless man who is seen only in passing as he is carried into an ambulance. Another example is the slaughter of one of the Wilson's white neighbors which is shown from a distance and out of focus. Finally, the murder of the Tyler's, a white family, is obstructed when the camera jumps out of their living room and into the backyard where the audience is forced to look through the windows from a distance. Their Tethered counterparts quietly enter their home before taking them out. The film treats the murders of white people in these white spaces with some sort of care and respect, while the Black people in the same spaces do not get the

same regard. The violence shown towards them is in graphic detail. The Wilson's home is broken into with much aggression and force. Also, the deaths of the Wilson family's Tethered are brutal and reminiscent of how historically Black people have been treated in white spaces and beyond. Red's daughter dies while hanging from a tree, her husband dies after being dismembered on a boat and sinks to the bottom of the bay, her son dies by being burned alive with his arms spread out in a cross-like position. And finally, Red is strangled to death with chain shackles. The return of these images can be traumatic to a Black audience. However, the re-presentation of these visuals does not recreate the grotesque spectacle of slavery that Saidiya Hartman warns against.[27] Instead, these images earnestly highlight the presence of the afterlife of slavery. The visual returns in *Us* reflect the original acts of whiteness that articulate that Black lives are and always were expendable in a society that is insistent on holding onto illusions of progress. The horror of the deaths is a repetition with difference. It is a visualization of how the past and present are so closely connected. Nevertheless, destroying systems of power that keep Black people outside is horrifying for white culture. However, Black culture has nothing to lose in a world they are always outside of. The circular visual and narrative structure of *Us* is a return to Black culture's rhythms that make room for Black space and time. Whereas white culture has everything to lose when the echoes of white supremacy make its final sound.

ENDNOTES

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Observers walk amongst display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, Washington, D.C., between 1987 and 2006 (photograph by Carol M. Highsmith). Library of Congress.

In the late 1970s, the North American HIV strain began spreading throughout the U.S. By the early 1990s, due to severe government inaction and a continued abysmal response to the epidemic, the disease became the single greatest killer of men between ages 25 to 44. In defiance of government silence, a group of protestors put together a patchwork of posters inscribed with the names of their passed loved ones, and the NAMES Project was born. They broadcast nationally for the submission of panels to San Francisco, where they were sewn together as both a memorial and call to action. At 1,920 panels, roughly the size of a football field, the AIDS Memorial Quilt was shown for the first time in its entirety during the March for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1987, on the National Mall. The ritual solemn unfolding, and ceremonial reading of the names represented by panels, accompanies each display.

BRENNAN SNOW

Setting The Stage For An Epidemic:

The Rise Of Social Conservatism,
Neoliberalism, and the Delayed
Response to the Aids Crisis

Introduction

On June 5, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its weekly report. In it was an account of five men, all described as "active homosexuals" who had been hospitalized for a form of pneumonia that usually only presented in patients with severe immunosuppression. Two of the patients had died.[1] This document would come to be recognized as the first report of what is now known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the United States, and the beginning of what some at the time called a "gay plague" because of its initial prevalence and rapid spread within the gay male population.[2, 3] Coinciding with the late 20th century rise of social conservatism and neoliberalism, the gay community experienced not only a physiological attack in the form of the AIDS virus, but also a cultural attack on the "gay lifestyle" by social conservatives and policymakers. The rise of the New Right created a hostile environment for LGBTQ+ people in the 1970s and 1980s, and through social stigma and political-economic means, ultimately sustained the spread of AIDS in the United States.

Context: Toward Liberation

The 1960s were a tumultuous decade in which activists fought for rights on many different fronts. The civil rights movement saw major victories, anti-war protests were staged to counter the American presence in Vietnam, and strides were made in the women's rights movement, especially in regards to sexual liberation. Similarly, a gay liberation movement began to gain mainstream attention in the latter part of the decade following several protests in reaction to police raids and use of force - perhaps the most famous of which are the Stonewall Riots in June of 1969.[4,5] While it can hardly be considered the precise beginning of the gay rights movement, organizations such as the Gay Liberation Front can trace their roots back to the events at the Stonewall Inn.[6] Groups formed in the wake of these events (such as the GLF) represented a more active, intersectional, and radical form of organizing — a break from the respectability politics of earlier LGBTQ+ organizations.[7]

A Rightward Shift

The early to mid-1970s were a time of increased visibility, liberty, and sexual freedom in the American gay community. Culturally, this push for tolerance and sexual liberation was demonstrated through greater LGBTQ+ organizing and community building, and decreased shame around sex and sexuality. A number of gay-specific publications writing openly and candidly about sex rose to relative prominence within these communities, and bathhouses became increasingly common in cities throughout the United States.[8]

In politics, Harvey Milk was famously elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977, making him one of the first elected officials publicly identifying as gay in the country.[9] However, much of Milk's activism was focused on countering growing backlash from socially conservative icons and anti-gay activists such as Anita Bryant and John Briggs, who campaigned to have lesbians and gay men banned from teaching in schools in Florida and California, respectively.[10] These campaigns were carried out under the guise of protecting children and maintaining family values, and Anita Bryant succeeded in passing the Florida proposition in 1977.[11] Ultimately Milk was assassinated in 1978 by a former city supervisor whose campaign platform echoed Bryant's attitude toward homosexuality and emphasis on the importance of traditional (heteronormative) family structures.[12] This demonstrates existing tensions

of the time, where the increased mainstream visibility of the LGBTQ+ community stirred a values-based socially conversative backlash.

This shift toward social conservatism can be seen not only through a focused look at LGBTQ+ politics or political representation, but also from greater national forces. President Nixon resigned amidst the Watergate scandal, and the United States was hit with economic hardship during the 1970s in the form of rising oil prices, soaring unemployment, and the decline of industry in the Upper Midwest.[13] Paul Boyer et al. argue that social conservatism arose as a reaction to the liberalism of the 1960s and the instability of the 1970s, a shift that was characterized by a growing importance placed on the nuclear family, religion, and traditional gender roles.[14]

In the 1980 presidential election, these values played an important role in the victory of Ronald Reagan. Much of the newfound support for the Republican Party and Reagan in particular came from working class voters with socially conservative views.[15] Reagan had much support amongst the Christian Right, and accordingly, he voiced support for issues important to them throughout his presidency, including the place of religion in schools, abortion laws, and "traditional values."[16] Himmelstein and McRae argue that Reagan's success in the election came from drawing together the economically conservative values of the wealthy and the socially conservative views of the lower and middle classes.[17] These economic policies were also crucial to Reagan's time in office. Following the 1970s economic crisis and with growing globalization, he pushed neoliberal policies as the solution to the American spending problem, including reducing tax cuts for the wealthy, cutting social programs, privatization, and deregulating trade.[18, 19] Neoliberalism in the United States is so tied to the Reagan presidency that it was nicknamed "Reaganomics."[20] It was in this political-economic atmosphere that the AIDS epidemic emerged.

The social and the political-economic are interrelated, and a key social component of neoliberalism reinforces Reagan's stance, or rather lack thereof, on AIDS. Lisa Duggan asserts that neoliberalism has an inherent sexual politics, primarily expressed through its tenets of privatization and centrism or "non-politics."[21] While much of Reagan's voter base may have been socially conservative (and anti-gay rights), a sexual politics of neoliberalism would also fail to acknowledge the sexual nature of gayness, and would view gay sex as something private, to happen behind closed doors, and certainly not to be talked about in public or political spaces. Similarly to the laissez-faire approach of neoliberalism, this "non-politics" in regards to sex and sexuality was actually a very political strategy.[22] By refusing to address sex and sexuality, Reagan could pander to his Christian Right voter base. Unfortunately, AIDS as it related to the gay

community in the 1980s was inherently associated with sex in the mainstream imagination. This set the stage for the social and political-economic motivations for a delayed response to the emergence of AIDS.

Social Stigma, Lack of Awareness, and Lagging Response

The stigma against the LGBTQ+ community as a result of the nation's conservative shift directly impacted the response time to combat the spread of AIDS by delaying awareness and political will. A year following the aforementioned June 1981 CDC weekly report, CBS News reported on AIDS' classification as an epidemic, noting the frustration borne from the lack of funding and acknowledgement in the first year of the disease's discovery.[23] The news report featured an interview with prominent AIDS activist Larry Kramer, who noted that despite its spread, most of the population had not even heard of the disease. When asked why, Kramer replied, "well I think it's because it's a *gay* cancer."[24] Here Kramer identified the stigma against gay people as the reason why there had been little attention, media or otherwise, given to the AIDS crisis. The broadcast also revealed that as of 1982, the government had not acknowledged nor pursued any action towards the epidemic.

Just a few months later, Ronald Reagan's acting press secretary, Larry Speakes, held a press briefing on October 15, 1982.[25] Lester Kinsolving, a journalist, asked for his reaction to the announcement of AIDS as an epidemic. Speakes deflected the question and in a derisive tone, used the opportunity to poke fun at Kinsolving, implying that he might be gay or have AIDS. There was no discussion of policy action or funding for anti-AIDS efforts. Laughter can be heard in the background of the recording.[26] This laughter and teasing about sexuality in the context of people suffering from a deadly disease indicates an apathetic attitude despite the gravity of the issue, and reveals just how stigmatized LGBTQ+ people were, especially amongst the political elite.[27] Additionally, Speakes continually denied ever having heard of the disease, meaning that the administration had not only done nothing to stop the spread of AIDS, but also was either completely unaware that it was an issue, did not regard the issue as important enough to become common knowledge at the higher levels of the administration, or was outright denying awareness to shirk responsibility for addressing the epidemic.

Eight months later, on June 13, 1983, Speakes led another press conference in which AIDS was mentioned. He finally acknowledged that

Reagan had been "briefed on the AIDS situation a number of months ago and ordered that higher priority be given to research matters on it". In this press conference, Speakes also announced that twelve million dollars had been set aside for research. Again, joking and laughter can be heard amongst the assembled politicians and journalists during this announcement.[28] It took two years for the president to be briefed on the existence of AIDS and for this to be reported to journalists, and yet the issue was *still* not being treated with any level of gravity or respect in White House press conferences.

Political-Economic Motives
for a Delayed Government Response

While social stigma played a large role in the lack of awareness and likely had an impact on the delayed government response, Reagan had both political and economic motives to downplay the situation and limit resources as well. Early efforts into AIDS research were severely under-funded, especially compared to the resources that were usually expended by the CDC on epidemics.[29] Despite the administration admitting having knowledge of the crisis as early as 1983, a national public education plan was not proposed until 1985, and even this plan was rejected for its expense. The leader of the project was told by his superiors to "look pretty and do as little as [he] can."[30]

The first time President Reagan said the word "AIDS" in public was in a presidential press conference in 1985, when a question was raised about children with AIDS attending school.[31] While Reagan essentially avoided the question, saying he "could understand both sides" of the argument, the topic was strikingly reminiscent of Anita Bryant's campaigns to keep gay teachers out of schools.[32] The rhetoric surrounding children and schools aligns with "family values," which was vitally important to much of Reagan's voter base. Socially conservative parents protested the school attendance of children with AIDS against the school board in New York, indicating that this was a major political issue at the time.[33] Knowing this, it does not seem strange that Reagan attempted to avoid questions surrounding AIDS, in an effort to balance his public health responsibilities while also appealing to his conservative supporters. This is an example of what Duggan, in describing neoliberal leaders, calls "a kind of productive incoherence designed to appeal and appease."[34] In fact, during his presidency, Reagan made a habit of avoiding discussing LGBTQ+ people altogether. In a study by Matthew Moen, the content of Reagan's State of

the Union addresses from throughout his time in office were analysed for content relating to "traditional values" that were considered important talking points for the Christian Right. Although gay rights was a hotly contested topic by many of his supporters, it was not explicitly mentioned at all in the addresses.[35] By avoiding discussion on AIDS and LGBTQ+ people, Reagan could avoid losing the support of social conservatives, creating a political motive to leave AIDS unaddressed or under-addressed.

Reagan also had economic promises to fulfill and a mounting federal deficit to handle. His economic policy demanded tax cuts for the wealthy, therefore necessitating reduced government spending; often this meant cutting social programs.[36] If he were to approve the 37 million dollar AIDS education plan proposed by Donald Francis in 1985, or provide more funding for AIDS drug research, this would mean more spending — which certainly would not align with his neoliberal economic ideology.[37]

Conclusion

It took fourteen years after the CDC's 1981 report for an effective treatment for AIDS to be discovered in 1995.[38] By then, over 380,000 people had died from AIDS related complications in the United States.[39] While there are many factors that contributed to the rapid spread of the virus, the early years of an epidemic are vital in slowing its spread. Had funding been provided earlier, research, policy development, and outreach could ve had a very real ability to do so.[40] The dominant political atmosphere when the AIDS crisis emerged represented by Anita Bryant and Speakes' press conferences was one of social conservatism and stigma towards LGBTQ+ people. This, combined with the rising neoliberalism as demonstrated by Reagan's public addresses and inaction, had detrimental impacts. This delayed awareness of and attention to the disease, along with political and economic factors, delayed the implementation of a national strategy for prevention, and limited funding for research into lifesaving treatments.

While knowledge about HIV/AIDS has come a long way since the early 1980s, neoliberalism and homophobia continue to have impacts on those living with the virus. This is reflected by the multi-billion dollar pharmaceutical industry that sells HIV/AIDS treatment at exorbitant costs, and a privatized healthcare system that deters people from accessing the proper testing, treatment, and monitoring they need.[41,42] We now know that social stigma surrounding being gay or living with HIV/AIDS has compounding negative health outcomes.[43] However, these are struggles that people continue to face, and systemic barriers we must collectively continue to fight.

ENDNOTES

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22 Ibid.

23 Jon Cohen, "Fast Predictions" in *Shots in the Dark*, 5.

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Palestine before 1948: City life on David Street in Jerusalem, Palestine, 1906 (photograph by W.S. Smith). Library of Congress.

NICHOLAS LOVRICS

Friends Without Benefits:

Investigating America's
Infatuation With Israel

Introduction:

American-Israeli relations are enigmatic. Regardless of political association, all American presidents since Lyndon Johnson have affirmed unwavering support for Israel. What has stymied political theorists, however, is why this sponsorship is seemingly infallible. A thorough examination of scholarship on the subject yields three general explanations: the *strategic explanation*, the *moral explanation*, and the *interest-group explanation*. This essay finds mild validity in the Cold War component of the *strategic explanation*. More accurately, however, a combination of the *moral* and *interest-group* explanations promotes the relationship; private interests promote the 'fallacy of Israeli morality' emanating from the inadequacies of the *moral explanation*. To substantiate this claim, a combination of secondary and primary resources will be consulted.

A Special Relationship:

Before assessing the viability of these competing explanations, it is prudent to illustrate the distinctiveness of the Israeli-American relationship. First, support for Israel among the American populace is widespread. A 2019 Gallup poll found that 60% of Americans hold that Israel is morally

justified in its conflict against Palestine. Among Christians — specifically Evangelicals — approval ratings reach nearly 80%.[1] During times of crisis both in the Middle East and in the United States — the Yom Kippur War, the 1983 occupation of Lebanon, the Palestinian *intifadas*, and 9/11 — support increases considerably.[2] Throughout, approval has remained consistent regardless of Israeli policy.

Further, between 1945 and 2006, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided Israel with $115 billion in financial and military aid; this is more than any other recipient.[3] Today, Israel's annual assistance is second only to Afghanistan, fluctuating between $3.1 and $3.8 billion per annum.[4] Moreover, the character of American aid to Israel implies special treatment. As opposed to all other recipients, the Israeli fund is delivered as a lump sum at the beginning of each fiscal year as opposed to in quarterly instalments, allowing aid to accrue more interest.[5]

The United States (US) has also been a stalwart diplomatic supporter of Israel at every level of government. At the congressional level, strong bipartisan support for Israel is discernable. A 2014 study (Cavari and Nayr, 2014) found 538 congressional resolutions with any mention of Israel between the 93rd and 112th Congress (1973-2012). No more than 27 condemned Israel or Israeli policy. In contrast, nearly 200 resolutions either applauded Israel for its commitments to peace or celebrated the intimate relationship between Israel and the US. Although mild partisan trends are emerging on the relationship within Congress, Cavari and Nayr note that no ally has received more "broad and bipartisan congressional support" than Israel.[6]

At the presidential level, Israel also receives special attention. During the 1960s, both Kennedy and Johnson intentionally overlooked the developing Israeli nuclear program. Although American officials inspected Israel's Donimo nuclear facility, Johnson's administration permitted continued development despite global efforts at nuclear non-proliferation.[7] Six decades later, Israel is ubiquitous in presidential discourse. Throughout two presidential debates in 2012, Governor Romney and President Obama mentioned Israel on 34 occasions, combined — second only to Iran at 39.[8] At a time when other nations such as China and Russia deserve attention, such discussion over Israel is gratuitous.

Finally, at the supranational level, the US has perpetually defended Israel. The US has vetoed 43 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions against Israel.[9] This encompasses nearly half of all vetoes used by the United States since the measure came into practice in 1970 and is more than all vetoes used by other UNSC members combined. The

unconditional American symbolic, financial, and diplomatic support for Israel has been a continuous practice through crisis, recession, and war. Notwithstanding the multitude of challenges facing every American administration since World War II, Israel remains a dominating presence in American foreign affairs. This begs the question, why?

Explanations:

This essay will now detail the three competing explanations noted above. For each, the common arguments in favour and against will be detailed, and the most formidable explanation will be assessed.

Strategic Explanation

Countless scholars have argued that consistent American support for Israel has not been the consequence of shared values or the efforts of lobbyists, but of a pragmatic approach to secure mutual strategic interests in the Middle East. Several (Gomberg, 2013) (Frank, Klima, Goldstein, 2017) argue that the bipolar construct of Cold War international relations necessitated an ardent, capable, and influential American ally in the Middle East.[10] As the leaders of the Arab League became partial to a relationship with the Soviet Union throughout the 1950s, the Johnson Administration — acting on plans set out by his predecessor, Kennedy — concluded that support for Israel could avert Soviet dominance of the Middle East and maintain some semblance of a regional balance of power.[11]

Second, a 2006 report by the Brookings Institute (Dictar and Byman, 2006) argues that Israel's extensive history combatting Arab states makes it a powerful ally for America's 21st century war on terror.[12] Israel's proximity to the Arab world has provided it an advanced understanding of the ideological underpinnings and geopolitical implications of Islamic fundamentalism. Considering Israel's advanced military and intelligence capabilities, American cooperation is pragmatic.[13]

In contrast, Roth (2009) argues that in a perpetually unstable region, America's massive financial, military, and diplomatic budget presents leverage over Israeli action.[14] Roth illustrates the pre-eminence of security to Israel. Surrounded by enemies, Israeli leaders act through a "conditioned unique security lens."[15] As such, they can be quick to counter perceived acts of aggression. Roth features the 1973 Yom Kippur War as a case study, during which Nixon informed Israeli President Ephraim Katzir

that American arms sales were contingent on Israel not launching a pre-emptive strike against Egypt or Syria.[16] At great cost to the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), Katzir agreed.

Some truth can be found in these conclusions. During the Cold War, Israel was able to counteract Soviet expansionism and deter the spread of pan-Arabism. The rise of nationalists Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Hafez al-Assad in Syria was considered a problem in the West and an opportunity in Moscow. The Suez debacle in 1956 and the high volumes of Soviet arms sales to the Middle East incentivized Arab states toward an informal agreement with the Soviet Union. To the United States, the 1967 Six Day War demonstrated that Israel was militarily capable of defeating these Soviet proxies. A combined Arab force of nearly half a million was devastated by a much smaller Israeli force in under a week. Suddenly, closer relations with Israel became attractive.[17] Additionally, Israel's Mossad was embedded in adversarial Arab and Soviet satellite states. This intelligence advantage was also seen as an asset to the US in a period in which garnering human intelligence within and around the Soviet Union was challenging.[18] Despite setbacks, such as the 1973 OPEC oil embargo on the US in retaliation for supporting Israel, the bipolar nature of the Cold War undoubtedly made a partnership with Israel an asset.

However, the *strategic explanation* becomes less compelling after the end of the Cold War. The Brookings Institute report grossly overestimates the benefits of the US-Israeli relationship concerning terrorism. Admittedly, in an age in which Islamic fundamentalism occupies unprecedented space in US foreign policy bandwidth, Israel's pejorative stance on most things 'Arab' seems a useful if albeit prejudiced stance on regional affairs. Unfortunately for Dicter and Byman, their argument has several central flaws. In fact, Israel is a liability for the United States in the war on terror. Support for Israel has exacerbated negative attitudes toward the United States in the Muslim world. A 2003 Pew poll found that 90% of Arabs in Jordan, Palestine, Morocco, and Lebanon hold negative views of the United States because of its Israel policy.[19] Additionally, the 2002 9/11 Commission found that a major motivation for Bin Laden's attacks was the American-Israeli relationship. Bin Laden cited the plight of the Palestinians and Israel's control of Jerusalem as sinful.[20] American support for Israel was a contributing factor to the premier tragedy in American history. How can Israel be a strategic asset? Concerning radical terrorism, Israel is at best a liability.

Regarding Israeli military excellence, the relationship is also of little benefit as Israel and the United States could rarely fight alongside each other on the battlefield. During the 1991 Gulf War, Israeli forces were unable to participate in the defense of Kuwait. The coalition against

Iraq included three members of the Arab League — Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt — that refused to fight in concert with Israel.[21] Similarly, a coalition to fight rogue states today — most likely Iran — would only be able to consist of either members of the Arab League or Israel. As the combined forces of Arab states are much larger than Israeli forces, it is unclear which ally is of more benefit. This incongruity between Israel and Arab states precludes most direct military cooperation between Israel and the United States.

Finally, Roth's argument is inherently incomplete. Admittedly, the United States has used threats of aid withdrawal to meet strategic ends in Israel. However, this practice is by no measure unique to American-Israeli relations. Since the establishment of USAID in 1961, there has been an intersection between aid and national security. The practice is so common that the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace coined the term 'hard aid' to explain the manipulation of assistance to meet strategic ends. According to a report by the Endowment, current American aid to Pakistan is contingent on verifiable efforts to prevent the infiltration of extremist forces into regional and local governments.[22] As the policy is so common, clearly its use against Israel does not justify such a special relationship. Not only does Israel not justify the special relationship from a strategic perspective, the alliance is more likely a strategic hindrance than benefit.

Moral Explanation:

Israel advocates, from author Adam Gershowitz to President of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Betsy Berns Korn, most often evoke a set of shared values with the United States as justification for the special relationship. The literature reviewed for the purposes of this explanation maintain that this value system is ubiquitous, influential, and persistent in both Israel and the US. Hummel (Hummel, 2019) proposes that the nature of American political culture — one rooted in the religious enlightenment of the early Puritans — infiltrates all facets of American foreign policy.[23] Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, and George W. Bush have all embodied the extent to which religious identification can influence an approach to politics. The natural consequence of this religious impulse is a preference among American leaders toward the return of the Hebrew people to the Holy Land.[24] All Christian leaders will naturally support the security of the Jewish state consequently. This concept is a component of a broader equivalency between the Ancient Hebrews and modern Israel.

Other scholars (Zunes, 2002) (Daniel, 2015) note that the international guilt that succeeded the Holocaust motivated American leaders to support the newly formed Jewish State.[25] It was the duty of international leaders to condone and support the creation of Israel in response to the horrors of the 1940s and centuries of anti-Semitism.

Third, Lewis (Lewis, 1999) forms a connection between modern Israeli and American values. Commitments to democracy, the rule of law, and political idealism are coincident in both states.[26] As Israel is the sole 'liberal democratic' nation in the region and the democratization of the Middle East has been a hallmark of US foreign policy for forty years, the US would naturally ensure Israel's sustainability and security.[27] In sum, the *moral explanation* is founded upon three pillars: the belief that Israel is the modern manifestation of Abrahamic culture, recompense for allied inaction during the Holocaust, and value-based association between America and modern Israel.

The response to these arguments will have three corresponding components. Admittedly, a direct correlation can be drawn among the American populace between Christianity and support for Israel; American Evangelicals — Southern Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists — are the largest financial supporters of Israel globally. Additionally, the United States has had countless leaders that have espoused the relevance of religion in their approach to politics. Hummel's argument that a comparison between modern Israel and the ancient Hebrews is present in America is correct.

However, it is noteworthy that piousness has not always affected policy. Arguably the most devout Christians to serve as president was Jimmy Carter. A born-again Christian, Carter spoke at Sunday school throughout his presidency and said grace before all state dinners.[28] Notwithstanding, Carter's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was distinct; Carter has been one of few presidents to practically perceive of Israel and Palestine as equals. Since his presidency, he has labelled Israel an apartheid state and even called for Hamas to be recognized as a legitimate political organization.[29] When questioned on his motivations, Carter argued that it was more Christian to lobby for peace and equality than minoritarianism.[30] As such, Hummel's claim that unitary interpretations of religion always influence policy on Israel is acutely wrong.

In practice, modern Israel hardly resembles the teachings of Moses or Joshua. Before independence, Zionists used tactics akin to those employed by Hamas today. Zionists would ambush British occupiers, often killing civilians.[31] Upon independence, the expulsion of nearly 700,000 Palestinians often by brutal means included rape, ethnic cleansing, and

indiscriminate executions by new Israelis.[32] Not only was this senseless violence beneath the descendants of Abraham but they also arguably violated international law. In early 1948, the Swedish diplomat and UN mediator Count Folke Bernadotte was assassinated by the Zionist cell *Lehi* for his proposed peace plan that would provide statehood for Palestine.[33] Modern Israel's birth came much the same as most nation-states: through blood and suffering. To equate the prophecy of the Jewish return to Israel with its modern manifestation is wrong.

Second, it is incorrect to ascribe American political and financial support for Israel as reparation for the Holocaust. In the early years of Israeli statehood, American support was localized within the political spectrum.[34] As noted above in the *strategic explanation*, American preferences in the Middle East were originally for the Arab League — a more powerful ally militarily.[35] Although the United States supported the Partition of Palestine, it took Truman's administration nearly a year to *de jure* recognize Israel.[36] Additionally, economic assistance delivered to Israel by the first Eisenhower government was dwarfed by French aid and German war reparations.[37] To wit, in Israel's struggle against Egypt, France secretly supplied Israel with tanks, munitions, and nuclear schematics.[38] The sole element of the American polity that espoused support was the Left. Early Soviet assistance to Israel — the first nation to recognize the Jewish state in 1948 — and Israel's communal society drew the attention of American academics and radicals alike.[39] Notwithstanding, no component of the early American response to Israel's establishment included reparations or guilt for inaction during the Holocaust. Logically, the atrocities endured by the Jewish people provide a moral justification for Israel's right to exist. But it does not justify the degree to which the United States has adhered to Israel.

Third, the comparison of American values to the reality of Israeli society is a fallacy. Concerning democracy, despite Israel's Parliamentary Republican system of government, it is also a Jewish state; the phrase 'Jewish and Democratic' has become the ethos of Israeli government.[40] In 2018, the Knesset passed a bill dubbed the *Nation-State Law* that officially codified Judaism as the 'character' of the state. According to the legislation, only Jewish-Israelis have the right to self-determination, and it designates Israeli settlements in Palestine as a distinct "national value."[41] This law is indicative of the treatment of Arabs in Israel; the enjoyment of rights is predicated upon ethnicity and religion. The Israeli Government's 2003 Or Commission into racial discrimination found that 1.3 million Arab Israelis are systemically discriminated against and neglected.[42] As such, it is difficult to affiliate American political values — liberty,

democracy, and the rule of law — with Israel. This treatment of Arabs does not preclude Americans from supporting Israel, but it does prevent justification for unconditional adherence.

Other supporters of Israeli morality (CUFI, N/A) argue that Israel has maintained measures of restraint in their interaction with Palestinians.[43] However, following the first *intifada* (1987-1991), the Swedish NGO Save the Children claimed that IDF forces brutalized approximately 29,000 Palestinian children. During the second *intifada* (2000-2005), IDF forces fired over one million rounds in the first day of protests alone.[44] According to Amnesty International, for every Israeli killed by Palestinians, over 3.4 Palestinians are killed by IDF forces in retaliation.[45] Israeli treatment of Palestinians during the *intifadas* was so brutal that in 2009 former President Ehud Barack claimed that he would join Hamas if he were born Palestinian.[46] Postulating moral equivalencies between the values enshrined in the American Bill of Rights and the practices of modern Israel is entirely misleading. This false equivalency, and the equating of Israel with the Ancient Hebrews constitute the 'fallacy of Israeli morality'.

Interest-Group Explanation:

The final explanation for American fidelity to Israel concerns private interests. Powerful figures, influential lobbyists, and religious forces dispersed through American culture have contributed to an adherence to Israel. This is not to say that a conspiracy or cabal of wealthy Jews controls American political life; this anti-Semitic trope has been extremely detrimental to Jewish rights around the globe. However, the immense influence of these decentralized interest-organizations and their perpetuation of the fallacy of Israeli morality cannot be underestimated.

The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy (Walt and Mearsheimer, 2006) demonstrates how a loose coalition of like-minded individuals and organizations have molded American political and public discourse on Israel to be strictly laudatory. Walt and Mearsheimer emphasize the various avenues through which influence can be administered throughout American society, including an omnipresence in Congress, supporting or suppressing pro- or anti-Israel bureaucratic appointments, and controlling the discussion on American foreign policy concerning Israel in the media and academia.[47]

The argument is convincing. According to a 1997 Fortune Magazine poll of congressional representatives, AIPAC was the second most

influential lobby in Congress.[48] Jewish donations to campaigns are also significant. A 2003 investigation by the Washington Post found that nearly 70% of donations to Democratic presidential and congressional campaigns in 2000 came from Jewish individuals or organizations.[49] Concerning the media, organized pro-Israel advocates will inundate most criticism of Israeli policy. Former CNN Executive Eason Jordan told the New York Times that a negative story on Israel would be met with "up to 6,000 emails" in his inbox the next morning.[50] In academia, lobby influence is also pervasive. Ironically, the Brookings Institute's Saban Centre for Middle East Policy that was cited in the *strategic explanation* on the war on terror is closely tied with AIPAC. According to Walt and Mearsheimer, Martin Indyck, the Director of the Saban Centre from 2001 to 2008, worked for AIPAC for nearly a decade.[51] Controlling the discourse around issues of foreign affairs is consequential. Limited discussion promotes shifts in the political spectrum closer to adherence; existing supporters of Israel become more entrenched in their views while critics become less antagonistic.

This source contains one central flaw, however. Although lobbies and donations can influence political discourse and sentiment, it rarely determines major foreign policy decisions. Upon the discovery of chemical-weapon use by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2013, AIPAC and other Israel lobbies "pushed hard" for decisive American intervention into the civil conflict.[52] However, al-Assad would eventually relinquish his chemical munitions stockpile willingly. Despite months of lobbying by AIPAC, no consequential policy was implemented against Syria.

Other scholars (Fretz, 1996) argue that Christianity has indoctrinated Americans with fascination of Israel.[53] Fretz, referencing his own experience in Sunday school, notes that Hebrew history was taught as if it were American history; both the Hebrew and American people were chosen by God.[54] Miller (Miller, 2014) supports Fretz's thesis. They cite a distinct conservative interpretation of the Old Testament in which "God's promises to Abraham were literal and unbreakable."[55] This American dispensationalism became popular in the 1860s, and began influencing mainstream society with the publication of Cyrus Scofield's *Scofield Reference Bible* in 1909.[56] The text emphasized the creation of a modern nation for the Jewish people as predicted by God. The creation of Israel in 1948 elevated Scofield to near-prophetic status and facilitated the proliferation of dispensationalism.[57]

This argument is critical to understanding unconditional American support for Israel. Today, Evangelical Christians are the largest supporters of Israel worldwide. Christians United for Israel (CUFI) has over eight million members in the United States.[58] According to Politico, CUFI had

an annual budget of over $7 million in 2014, going primarily to churches and universities.[59] These donations aim to continue the perpetuation of dispensationalism in Evangelical Christianity with aspirations of further integrating into mainstream discussion.

There are several mechanisms through which evangelicals influence American support for Israel. The first is through the electorate. Since Reagan, evangelicals have comprised a formidable component of the GOP. PBS argues that without evangelical support, Bush Jr. would have been defeated by John Kerry in 2004.[60] Evangelicals are also extremely motivated to participate democratically. According to Pew, nearly 7 in ten eligible evangelical voters cast a ballot in the 2018 midterm elections; more than any other religious creed.[61] Although this is motivated by several factors, to evangelicals, political issues are more than political. Policies — specifically concerning Israel — are viewed through a theological lens that significantly increases their saliency.

Evangelicals also send direct financial support to Israel. Although reports cite conflicting amounts, anywhere between $50 and $60 million was directly donated to Israel between 2001 and 2011 by American evangelicals.[62] Similarly, evangelical tv-pastors from Marcus Lamb to John Hagee implore their congregants to support Israel financially and symbolically. To their congregants, not only must Israel be supported, but Palestine must be denounced; only when the Jews control all of Israel will the Second Coming occur. The massive political and financial influence of evangelicals and their disposition toward dispensationalism make the demographic a prime target for pro-Israel special interests.

Discussion:

This essay has introduced the fallacy of Israeli morality. Equating the ancient Jews and modern Israel as well as American political culture and Israeli social realities is misleading. Despite the *moral explanation's* extensive deficiencies, fundamentalist and moderate Christians alike still believe in its arguments. The missing mechanism between this false understanding of Israeli morality is pro-Israel private interests. AIPAC, the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, and other pro-Israel organizations effectively limit the political discourse regarding Israel.[63] Pro-Israel speech is actively amplified while dissenting arguments are suppressed. More importantly, these organizations prop up the teachings of pastors, theological programs, and theological texts such as the *Scofield Bible* to reinforce already positive perceptions of Israel

through dispensationalism: the fallacy of Israeli morality. As nearly 70% of the nation self-identifies as Christian, and over 30% as evangelical, it is unsurprising that Israel receives bipartisan political support.

Conclusion:

This essay has systematically reviewed literature on the issue of American support for Israel. Three general explanations emerged. However, this essay found that both the *security explanation* and *moral explanation* are acutely flawed. Although Israel offered mild strategic advantages to the US during the Cold War, Israel has often been a strategic liability for America. Similarly, Israel's claim to moral righteousness is weak. However, through the efforts of pro-Israel interest organizations — lobbies, donors, and coalitions — the fallacy of Israeli morality has been perpetuated through American religious society. This fallacy has been exceedingly damaging to the Palestinian people, and objective critique of Israel is necessary.

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Juan Gris. Ace of Clubs and Four of Diamonds. 1915. Oil on board. National Gallery of Art.

Juan Gris, a Spanish painter who lived and worked in France for a great deal of his life, was best known for his connection with the art movement of Cubism. Long considered a "novel" way of representing reality in the Western canon of art, Cubism was made famous by artists such as Pablo Picasso and Paul Cézanne, among others. It has subsequently, however, come to the art world's attention that such artistic methods were not novel but copied. Indeed, much of Western "modern" art owes a public debt to the cultural heritage and artistic production—sculptures, face masks, and more—of West and Central Africa.

ARJUN SINGH

A Printer's Republic

Introduction

On July 4th, 1776, the Second Continental Congress ratified the Declaration of Independence and created a new nation from the Thirteen Colonies. In listing the "injuries and usurpations" compelling such a decision, the Declaration enumerated offences against the 'rights' of the colonists — i.e. of authoritative government, violence, and economic exploitation — by Britain, personified in King George III.[1] To the colonists, these acts — both "arbitrary" and conflicting with "a free system of English laws" — embodied despotic corruption; with independence being necessary to reverse the same.[2]

Through such expression, the colonists presented their grievances through the intellectual tradition of classical republicanism — viewing 'civic virtues' (e.g. liberty and equality) as the objective of the state, made possible through self-governance.[3] Such alignment did not merely arise in opposition to British despotism but was the dominant political current in the colonies before their revolutionary acts.[4] As Benedict Anderson contends in his monograph on nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, this was due to the proliferation of 'print capitalism' — or the commercial sale of newspapers, books and pamphlets — in the colonies, which enabled both the transmission of such ideologies from Europe to America as well as their popularization in the latter.[5] Per Anderson's thesis, print capitalism would be the best agent to have transmitted European zeitgeist ideas into the colonies. In the context of the American Revolution's global influence, such alignment by the colonists would have contributed to other

nations and colonies' adoptions of republicanism as well — according American printers considerable significance in the history of modern republicanism and democratization. The extent to which they achieved this distinction, thus, merits examination.

Hence, with reference to Anderson's thesis in *Imagined Communities*, this essay will examine how print capitalism contributed to the emergence of republicanism in the United States and as a characteristic of international relations through the American Revolution. It will contend that print capitalism fostered nationalistic consciousness in the Thirteen Colonies and thereby organized republican ideals central to American nationalism. Consequently, it will assert — via the Revolution's status as a global convulsion — that print capitalism conveyed republicanism beyond the Colonies; and thus, ordered nations' foreign practices as well as their international relations along republican lines.[6]

The Press, for Freedom

In proposing 'print capitalism' as an agent of nationalism, Anderson claims its agency was mechanised by printer-entrepreneurs.[7] These capitalists, seeking profits from the sale of newsprint, were responsible for spurring ideological support in readers for the content they circulated — which, later, served as the political bases for emerging ideologies' activation.

In British America, the story was no different. Alongside their traditional production of almanacks for farmers, American printers took their cues from the financially successful British press — leveraging improvements to the intercolonial postal system in 1692, which enabled distant communication — to begin printing newspapers.[8] These printers' activities gradually engendered a nationalistic consciousness in the Colonies that was key to the Revolution, and its ideals' internationalisation later on.[9] Their role in this process was two-fold.

The first aspect of this role was the creation of a "community [of] intellectual life" among the colonists; fostering cohesiveness and common resentment towards Britain, which were predicates for the Revolution.[10] Before this, the Colonies had largely existed as separate polities linked by geography and commerce.[11] Indeed, such newspapers initially served as "appendages of the market" — relaying the "arrival of ships," commodity prices, and "improvements in agriculture" to paid subscribers.[12] Gradually, as greater trade fostered mutual awareness, newspapers began to include matters of general intercolonial note: e.g. electoral results, marriages, deaths, literature, and moral discourses.[13] Such material drew interest

among the public, who — via the practice of 'franking' (printers mailing out free copies, for publicity) and reprints from other papers — consumed similar material and imbibed common worldviews.[14] As a result, printers laid foundations for a communitarian sentiment among the colonies — organizing a "specific assemblage of readers" bound by the knowledge of others' affairs and perspectives.[15]

Such communitarianism was essential to developing a nationalistic sentiment among the colonies — who began to view onerous actions by Britain against individual colonists as injuries to their collective body politic, affecting all members.[16] It was through printers' publications that taxation increases, disallowances of legislative bills, and violence by British garrisons against civilians were publicized among the colonists, which created resentment towards the Crown in "every segment of society."[17] This was enhanced by printers' publishing of individual pamphlets, letters to the editor, and longer polemics that critiqued the Crown — with readers adopting the views these pieces articulated. For instance, John Dickinson's "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania" — presenting the Townshend Revenue Acts as "servitude" under "usual and respectable terms" — proved widely influential in fanning flames of fury against Britain.[18] Printers' decisions were often sustained by capitalist motives. The sensational, exaggerated, and often false framing of events — particularly, as exclusive revelations or "exposes" — generated greater interest, outrage, and subscriptions. Embodying this, Samuel Adams' *Journal of Occurrences* gained repute for exposing British garrisons' violence against citizens during the British occupation of Boston in 1768, describing it as "abhorred" and unworthy of a "civil power."[19] Through consistent use of the 'exposé', printers portrayed Britain in a malevolent and tyrannical light, which exacerbated anti-British (or 'patriotic') sentiments and generated solidarity among the colonists.[20]

While publications grew in quantity, the existence of a few, influential printers with widespread circulation enhanced this growing nationalism.[21] Their inclusion of patriotic content at the risk of official sanction — e.g. the widely reprinted, serpentine "Join, or Die" cartoon by Benjamin Franklin in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, calling on the colonies to resist Britain — bolstered support for patriotic causes, such as petitions to Crown officials, pickets, demonstrations, and, eventually, militia enlistment.[22] In addition, printers' role in manufacturing content for publishing (i.e. as "printer-journalists," publishing anti-British editorials and pseudonymous content written by themselves) endeared a widespread patriotism within the print industry (if only for commercial, and not ideological, imperatives).[23] As a result, these printers rallied patriotic

attitudes among their readers and fomented a national identity distinct from British loyalty.[24]

Secondly, print capitalists conveyed foreign news from the wider British Empire — exacerbating differences between the colonists and other nations, and reinforcing their distinct identity. With many publications running reprints from English journals, printer capitalists gave colonist readers insights into the conditions of British metropolitan subjects — making differences between them and the colonists apparent.[25] The former's commercial freedom, inalienable rights, and lack of arbitrary taxation stood in marked contrast to the colonists' experiences.[26] Additionally, reportage of the Crown's activities in other regions of the Empire fostered discontent among the colonists — particularly, of the Quebec Act of 1774, which granted Catholics in the Province of Quebec equal civil rights to Protestant British subjects. In response, drawing on longstanding sectarian tensions, American newspapers raised fears of a neighbouring Catholic province threatening the "free exercise of [their] Protestant religion" in their colonies.[27]

In sum, such asymmetric conditions under a common Crown were presented as examples of British prejudice — and gave credibility to suspicions of its intent to subjugate the colonies. Among printed critiques at the time, the *Votes and Proceedings of the Town of Boston* — which compared British metropolitan liberties to those held by the colonists, identifying the difference between them — were most influential.[28] These were printed in newspapers across Massachusetts and came to be replicated in the other colonies — where committees were formed and their minutes published to publicize such asymmetry.[29] By highlighting experiential differences, printers generated national consciousness among the colonists — who came to view their "exclusion" from English political rights as markers of political distinction.[30] As a result, references to 'American' identity emerged — giving rise to a new national consciousness.[31]

A Printed Republic

In conjunction with fostering national consciousness, print capitalism was responsible for the proliferation of republicanism among the colonists, ensuring the latter would become a cornerstone of American nationalism. The infusion of these ideals resulted in the American Revolutionary War's primary objective being the replacement of the British monarchy with a republican system of government.[32] The eventual international spread of

American republicanism — as embodied in both the Revolution and post-revolutionary political order — finds its genesis in print capitalists' purveyance of republican writings throughout the Colonies during the pre-revolutionary period.

The emergence of republicanism in the Colonies' print media is a sequential phenomenon beginning with the popularity of similar sentiments in England at the time. Following the Glorious Revolution's weakening of the Crown's absolute political supremacy and social prestige in British society, counter-monarchical ideological sentiments of the Enlightenment — stemming from Roman, Florentine, and Grecian classical traditions — gained ground in England's political discourse.[33] Embodied in the works of, *inter alia*, Montesquieu (notably, *The Spirit of the Laws*), Adam Smith and David Hume, such discourse championed republicanism as a better form of government for Englishmen.[34] While zeitgeist publications and topical political discourse were normally transmitted from England as general news reprints (via "improved trans-Atlantic communications"), these writings were demanded by colonists owing to a perceived congruity of experience — identifying their disgruntlement of "taxation without representation" as akin to state "corruption" in Britain, which republicanism claimed to resolve.[35] Thus, printers furnished copies of these works and reprinted extracts in newspapers to meet demand, enabling their initial percolation into the literate classes.[36]

Additionally, republican notions gained greater popularity in print due to their binary opposition to monarchist intellectual traditions. At the time, English political discourse was subject to a divide between the 'Court' party (supportive of the monarchy) and the 'Country' faction (sympathetic towards republicanism). Hence, when faced with the Crown depredations — under Britain's then-establishment 'Court' faction — the colonists' were thus left with 'no alternative tradition' to seek an intellectual critique of Britain from writings that were available in print, readable in English and appealed to their English values.[37] In seeking an ideological deviation from the British governance, intellectuals in the colonies thus adopted republicanism with near uniformity — becoming a "compulsive force" of the revolution as a result of such a printed dichotomy.[38]

Furthermore, print capitalism reinforced such republicanism amongst the wider populace.[39] In pamphlets and published letters, authors' use of republican terms and vocabulary — e.g. critiquing Britain for their absence of "civic virtue" and styling themselves as "American Whigs" advocating for a "commonwealth" to replace the Crown — proliferated republicanism within popular discourse.[40] These articles transposed the concept of republican 'virtue' to a less academic form for public

consumption. In their writings, they appealed to deeply held religious beliefs among the populace — convincing readers that a government without 'virtue' would corrupt society and erode their Christian values, with self-governance being necessary to guarantee the same.[41] Moreover, the dominant practice of anonymity in newspaper pieces served to bolster the effectiveness of these articulations. Used widely by writers and publishers, anonymizing the authors of pro-republican, anti-British articles enabled an abstraction of their content — separating views from possibly negative associations with the person's identity, and enabling the sale of printed products without prejudice towards the author.[42] The use of republicanized pseudonyms in lieu — e.g. *Publius* ('public') in the Federalist Papers, *Determinatus* ('stability') by Samuel Adams, and *Pacificus* ('peace') by Alexander Hamilton — symbolized that the views articulated sprung from a populace of an intrinsically republican character.[43] To that end, printers fostered the organic spread of republicanism beyond the colonial elite and among the working classes — embedding it into their political aspirations away from and in contrast with monarchical Britain.

Consequently, through their proliferation via print media, republican sentiments were embedded within the colonists' nationalist consciousness. Republicanism thus served as a conceptual framework for the colonists to critique Britain, an idea for a replacement system, and a mechanism to solicit military service during the Revolutionary War given republican ideals of 'virtue' entailing service to the body politic.[44] As evident in the Declaration of Independence — declaring the colonies "free and independent states" — and subsequent Constitution, mandating a "republican form" of government for all states, the colonists sought to make print-origin republicanism the central tenet of the new American nation.[45]

The First Exemplar

As a consequence of republican ideals' infusion into American nationalism and the new American state, the print capitalists responsible for this indirectly influenced the new international order following the Revolution. This influence was mechanized through the domestic constitutional order and the spread of colonists' republican writings to other nations.

Concerning the domestic order, the American Revolution was eventually succeeded by a republican government in the newly-independent United States — creating novel paradigms in foreign relations designed to maintain 'civic virtues' (i.e. liberty and equality). Foremost among these was an aversion to inter-state military conflict, seen as

characteristic of monarchical Europe at the time. To the colonists, the prospect of frequent warfare served as a threat to citizens' liberties given the necessity of taxation to support war efforts and the risk of violence to the population.[46] In this regard, the ideas of peace among states of a republican character — articulated by Thomas Paine in the pamphlet *Common Sense* — and the abolition of standing armies gained ground, where civic virtue and peace was to be maintained between nations through commercial reciprocity.[47] The idea became a cornerstone of American foreign policy for the subsequent century, incentivising isolationism in foreign relations.[48] Symbolised in Thomas Jefferson's 1801 Inaugural Address, a United States' objective in its foreign policies was to maintain "peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none...against anti-republican tendencies."[49] These principles were early articulations of 'democratic peace' theories that would later assume prominence in the international system.[50]

As corollaries, the republican nationalism of the United States gave rise to two further innovations in inter-state conduct; the first being limitations on the executive prerogative in warfare and foreign relations — executive prerogative evoked recent memories of the Crown's military despotism in colonists.[51] Distinct from Western European monarchies, the new Constitution did not endow the President with plenary powers in this realm — giving the legislature the sole power to declare war, shared powers of treaty approval, and the appointment of ambassadors (with Senate advice and consent). These checks were built to ensure "republican restraint" on the executive.[52] This was an unprecedented departure from the conduct of foreign relations at the time — where the executive branch dominated foreign relations in a secretive fashion — and the new system exercised modular influence on the formation of republican constitutions in other states (i.e. bifurcating powers of foreign affairs).[53] The second innovation was a newfound commitment to 'the law of nations' in foreign relations — seeing its precepts, entailing "faith and justice" over *realpolitik*, as normative guides for maintaining and proliferating civic virtues.[54] While notions of a 'law of nations' had previously existed in Europe, its manifestation in American policy was based on republican reason instead of religious precepts. Such a conception pre-empted the development of secular (i.e. positive) international law, which garnered influence in the nineteenth century.[55]

Outside of the domestic constitutional order, print-articulated American republicanism exerted a considerable impact on the international order via its influence over the French Revolution. With French newspapers reprinting writings of the American revolutionary period (e.g.

the *Courier de l'Europe*), colonist publications exercised considerable transitive influence on the country's pre-revolutionary radicalism.[56] French reformist Condorcet claimed that based on "ideas by means of the press", the "spectacle of equality" in America was exemplary for Europe, and proposed American-style constituent assemblies to resolve class tensions.[57] The published writings of colonist republicans complemented the sentiments of radical change in France — and influenced the emulation of its republican order in the formation of the National Constituent Assembly in 1789.[58] Coupled with the subsequent invasion of France by European powers and the former's resistance — evocative of the colonists' opposition to the presence of foreign troops in their territories — these ideals were conveyed across Europe via the French Revolution.[59] Consequently, American republicanism, articulated via print, was able to transitively stimulate international convulsions, creating a Transatlantic revolutionary phenomenon.[60]

Furthermore, the ideological fervour of the colonists was transmitted via print within the Americas itself — serving to enhance republican sentiments in Spanish and Portuguese colonies. With the circulation of the *Federalist Papers*, *Common Sense*, and other pamphlets — espousing self-determination against similar metropolitan economic burdens — Iberian creole intellectuals such as Manuel Belgrano, who translated the Declaration of Independence, began to seek reform in their colonies.[61] The *Gazeta de Buenos Aires* was a prominent conduit for these writings — impelling Iberian creoles to "follow their *(sic)* example" by reprinting Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* to extol republicanism.[62] Hence, print capitalism further spread American republicanism into Latin America — contributing to the eventual formation of republican governments in the colonies following nationalist rebellions.[63]

Conclusion

From the evaluation presented, it is clear that print capitalism in the Thirteen Colonies affected the growth of republicanism in both the foreign conduct of individual states and the nineteenth-century international order. In their fostering of national consciousness, these printers circulated republican writings among the Thirteen Colonies — thereby, popularizing such sentiments, and resulting in colonists' nationalism being organized according to republican ideals. With the formation of a republic following the Revolution, these writings influenced American foreign relations markedly, seeking to uphold republican civic virtue.
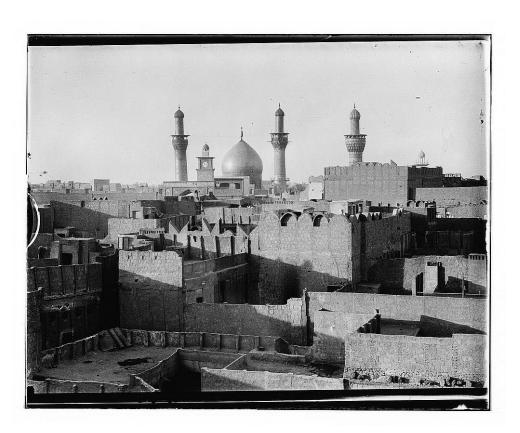
Moreover, as the success of the American Revolution was globally transmitted, its ideals of republicanism fostered through print were conveyed to foreign populaces — likewise, in printed form — which led to their emulation and adoption. These, subsequently, facilitated global convulsions of a republican nature. To this end, print capitalists validate the "decisive historical role" that Anderson accords them — having written themselves into the annals of world history; the arc of which has, since, bent towards republics.[64]

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View towards the Shrine of Imam Husayn at Karbala, Iraq, 1932. Library of Congress.

The seventh century Battle of Karbala was a highly significant moment in Islamic history. For Shi'ite Muslims in particular, many of whom have made pilgrimage across centuries to this shrine — a mausoleum at the site of the death of the Imam Husayn, grandson of the Prophet — it holds immense spiritual resonance. However, due to the long lasting effects of colonial occupation and the War, for diasporic Iraqis and Shi'ite Muslims around the world whowho left, had to leave, and face great difficulty going back, it has become unreachable.

ANMAR ATTAR

Why Did the US Invade Iraq?

In 2003, the United States invaded Iraq with the stated goal of removing Saddam Hussein from power due to his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The Bush administration argued that Hussein was an ally of Al-Qaeda, and that Iraq's acquisition of nuclear and chemical weapons posed an imminent threat to the United States, because Al-Qaeda would have access to the weapons, thus empowering the group to repeat a 9/11-style attack with far greater destruction.[1] It was presented as a war between good and evil, in which America was always unquestion-ably the good.[2] With such seemingly straightforward goals and framing, and in the aftermath of an unprecedented terror attack, it is unsurprising that most of the foreign policy establishment, media, and public supported the war.[3] Yet two decades after the war began, most Americans believe that it was a mistake and that all US presence should be withdrawn.[4] This suggests that Americans no longer believe in Bush's initial reasoning. Hence, the question must be asked: Why did the United States invade Iraq in 2003? The motivation to invade Iraq was not consistent with the rhetoric and ambitions of the Bush administration at the time. Rather, the war was inspired by the administration's dreams of an all-encompassing political transformation of the Middle East, which would be triggered by the democratization of Iraq. Furthermore, the invasion was used to demonstrate American willingness to use force against states seeking WMDs. Lastly, war-profiteering, known as the military-industrial complex (MIC), was a dangerous influence in the decision to go to war.

There is uniform consensus among historians that no WMDs were found to seize and no Iraq-Al-Qaeda alliance to unravel, which were the

stated purposes of invasion by the Bush administration.[5] Disagreement among historians seems to hinge on one question — did Bush lie? That is, did he lead the United States into war on the basis of an imminent threat while knowing that no such threat existed, possibly pointing to ulterior motives? There are differing approaches to answering this question. Most historians, such as Jeffery Record, agree that there was insufficient evidence of WMDs and ties between Iraq and Al-Qaeda, and certainly not enough to justify an invasion.[6] They also agree that there were ulterior motives. What separates Record from the rest is his approach in writing history. In the introduction of *Wanting War*, he states that he is not seeking to assign blame to anyone, nor establish a narrative.[7] Rather, the book is solely aimed at finding the motivations for the invasion. His methodology is evident throughout the book, as each chapter begins with primary sources — quotes from the Bush administration arguing in favour of the war, followed by quotes offering differing opinions and conflicting information. While showing evidence that there was no proof of WMDs and ties between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda like other historians, Record exceeds them by arguing that the Bush administration still genuinely believed in the war regardless of the evidence because of their neoconservative propensity to reduce disagreements into a conflict between good and evil.[8] Each time Bush spoke of Iraq, he was sure to frame it within the context of good versus evil, asserting that America should intervene wherever evil is found.[9] Record rightly highlights the danger in such a mentality, because by following that logic, the United States ought to have declared war on both Hitler and Stalin in WWII.[10] In essence, he argues that Bush believed his own lies about the extent of the evidence. Although the word *lie* is never mentioned throughout *Wanting War* (in keeping with his desire to not assign blame or craft a narrative), Record makes it clear that the basis for the war — WMDs — was not true.

One of the most ambitious goals for launching a war in Iraq was the belief that it would trigger a full transformation of international relations in the Middle East. The United States was never satisfied with its policy in the region, and specifically, towards Saudi Arabia.[11] Considering itself a beacon of freedom and democracy, it was inevitably going to be uncomfortable to be so closely allied with the theocratic dictatorship. The relationship has endured since 1950 on the foundations of cheap Saudi Arabian oil in exchange for the United States offering security for the militarily weak state.[12] Although the security-oil bargain is what facilitated endurance, the relationship was primarily triggered by the Cold War. The United States' top priority in that era was the containment of communism, and Saudi Arabia just so happened to also be a Soviet-fearing,

communist-hating state.[13] The awkward alliance continued over the following decades without any serious probing within the United States concerning their support of an antithetical theocracy;[14] however, 9/11 caused a shift in American attitudes toward the kingdom. After 60 years of the United States sacrificing democracy for stability in the Middle East yet achieving neither,[15] President Bush's 2000 inauguration ushered in his Democracy Doctrine, which was determined to spread democracy wherever possible.[16] 9/11 was the first opportunity for the United States to feasibly distance itself from Saudi Arabia.[17] Regime change in Iraq was the method by which they could replace the radical, oil-rich Islamic dictator-ship of Saudi Arabia with a new, moderate, oil-rich Islamic democracy in Iraq as their top Middle Eastern ally.[18]

The purported advantages of an Iraqi democracy were endless. It could "transform Iraq both into a democracy and a surrogate for U.S. security interests in the Persian Gulf."[19] It was an opportunity to shift dependence from a fundamentally anti-American regime to a democracy that would still boast Islamic credentials, consequently retaining religious credibility in the Middle East, still able to exert pressure on neighbouring states to embrace the same philosophy of the new liberal democratic Iraq.[20] It would open the possibility of a dominant Islamic power recogniz-ing and embracing Israel.[21] Such prospects were irresistible to an adminis-tration that was fed up with a 60 year plateau in Middle Eastern democ-racy and stability. Applying the Bush Doctrine in Iraq by invading was about far more than WMDs in the state; it was believed to have set the stage for a complete political transformation, causing democracy to naturally spread throughout the rest of the Middle East and free the United States from being so closely allied to an antithetical regime.[22]

Another concealed objective of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq was to demonstrate on a global level the United States' willingness, ability, and sense of obligation to exert force against any state that seeks WMDs. As the first post-Cold War president, George H. W. Bush (Bush 41) did not have a foreign policy status quo to maintain. The United States foreign policy of the previous 40 years — containment of communism — was now obsolete, and Bush 41 was charged with developing a new approach to international relations.[23] The new approach no longer had a chief enemy to be centered around, and as a result, pursued many timid and aimless strategies.[24] The presidency of Bill Clinton was also mired in many of the same decisions. For example, Clinton's listless use of military force in Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans fuelled neoconservative criticisms that this type of foreign policy had reduced the United States to a gutless superpower.[25] Bush 41 and Clinton believed that the use of military force

in the post-Cold War era would rarely be needed because American dominance had just been firmly established, and other states would be left no choice but to comply when America made demands.[26] On the other hand, neoconservatives believed that American dominance needed to constantly be demonstrated through the use of force, and that any United States intervention was inherently just on the basis that America stands for freedom and democracy.[27] George W. Bush happens to subscribe to neoconservative ideology.[28] His administration was also stacked with likeminded war hawks, such as Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.[29]

Although their flippant willingness to go to war is highly questionable, the neoconservatives were right about one thing — rogue states seeking WMDs would not simply listen to American demands solely based on their status as the leading superpower.[30] Continued nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea are among the finest examples of that. So, in an effort to demonstrate that the United States would not tolerate a rogue state acquiring WMDs, the Bush White House considered invasions of Iran, North Korea, and Iraq.[31] Whichever state they chose, it would send a strong message to the others. Being the most vulnerable of the three and having the potential to yield the array benefits discussed earlier, Iraq was chosen.[32] Additionally, it was the easiest state for the Bush administration to rationalize an invasion for in the aftermath of 9/11.[33] The terror attacks resulted in the American electorate agreeing with the neoconservative view towards an invasion of Iraq for the first time, a view the neocons had held long before 9/11.[34] The toppling of Saddam Hussein was planned in the 1990s as a rebuke to the Bush 41-Clinton foreign policy and as a demonstration of American exceptionalism.[35] So when the opportunity to invade came, neocons seized it as the arena in which they could threaten states who sought WMDs, export democracy wherever they please, and maintain their idea of American dominance.[36] Indeed, it was a recycling of strategy employed by the United States in 1945. Just before the end of WW2, the United States dropped atomic bombs on Japan not only to force them into unconditional surrender, but also to intimidate the Soviet Union into political concessions.[37] In Iraq, Bush used the same tactics, in hopes that it would intimidate enemy states to toe the American line.

The final ulterior motive to be discussed in the United States' decision to invade Iraq is the undue influence of the military-industrial complex. The MIC refers to, as the name suggests, the relationship between military and industry. It has been defined as "a network of public and private forces that combine a profit motive with the planning and implementation of strategic policy."[38] The term was popularized by

President Eisenhower in his farewell address in 1961, when he warned against "the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex."[39] As will be demonstrated, his warning has fallen on deaf ears. The MIC has gained such a high degree of influence within American foreign policy circles that it has become known as the fourth branch of government.[40]

The invasion of Iraq saw the largest amount of influence exerted by its insiders, and cemented the role of the MIC as policymakers, rather than influencers.[41] This was largely due to the Bush administration's woeful lack of planning on the military operation itself,[42] which is not to be confused with the extensive planning of the merits that would come out of it. The lack of planning on the strategic implications of fighting a war by the commander in chief created a circumstance where private military contractors were turned to as an answer to many of the war's problems.[43] The degree of their influence cannot be overstated, as one 2007 Department of Defense study conservatively estimated there to be 180 000 American private contractor employees working in Iraq, 20 000 more than actual troops stationed.[44] While lack of planning certainly contributed to the rise of the MIC's influence, perhaps the greatest proponents of the war were the Bush administration officials that worked in the industry before taking office (and maintained ties to the industry while in office). One would expect that the largest contractors in a war would be weapons manufacturers, but in Iraq, Halliburton-KBR held the most lucrative government contract to provide mission logistics and restore the Iraqi oil system.[45] This has been attributed to the fact that Vice President Cheney assumed the office of CEO at the company in 1995,[46] and upon resigning to run with Bush in the 2000 presidential election, was given an unprecedented $33.7 million retirement package.[47] Surely, receiving such a lucrative payment from a defence contractor on his way to the White House would incentivize him to champion an expensive war. This assertion is bolstered by the fact that while in office, Cheney was devoted to expanding the powers of the presidency on matters of national security,[48] and he himself was afforded unprecedented control by Bush on matters of foreign policy, making him the most powerful vice president in history.[49] Having an insider of the defence industry serve as the lead decision maker in foreign policy is an emphatic representation of the influence that the MIC had in the decision to invade Iraq.

A review of history demonstrates that the Bush administration had ulterior motives and ambitions for the invasion of Iraq, significantly more than their rhetoric implied. It could not have been to seize WMDs from Saddam Hussein, because the US intelligence community's evidence

suggested that he did not possess them. The documentation of an Iraq-Al-Qaeda alliance that needed to be unraveled was even weaker. The United States invaded Iraq hoping that it would trigger a reorientation of international politics in the Middle East while also serving as a threat to rogue states seeking WMDs. The decision was also made because of its promotion by those in the highest levels of the military-industrial complex, who stood to profit from a poorly planned war. This position is consistent with most historians, who believe that the Bush administration was deceptive in their statements regarding the threat that Saddam Hussein posed in order to pursue their philosophy of American exceptionalism.

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Ka-Man Tse. An individual holds a tray of tomato plants, Chinatown, New York City, New York. Created 2017, printed 2019. Photograph. Library of Congress.

This image is from from Ka-Man Tse's award-winning photo series narrow distances, *a project examining the tension between public and private, longing and belonging, to be in place and to be without. This particular photograph is imbued with her negotiations of the multiplicity of diasporic identity, at the meeting point of Asian and Pacific Islander and queer communities. Against a backdrop of an everyday urban space—New York and Hong Kong—Tse depicts the city's historical identity and constant transition. To Tse, it is crucial that marginalized communities be photographed in the public domain, taking up space that is their own to hold, in gestures clear and coded.*

THOMAS ELIAS SIDDALL

The Way Boys Do:

Transforming White and Asian American Citizenships

Introduction

The American response to the COVID-19 pandemic, characterized under the Trump presidency by an incitement of explicitly racist rhetoric, has seen the rise of anti-Asian violence, amongst other forms of brutality. These waves of anti-Asian violence figure the heteropatriarchal settler-colonial state, the United States of America, through a system of discourse that creates racialized, gendered, and sexualized variations of American citizenship. Following this violence, as a mixed white and Asian person, I wonder: how are Asian im/migrants figured in relation to the idea of American citizenship? How is this difference always-already mobilized to sustain the white supremacist state?

Ocean Vuong's semi-autobiographical novel, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019), tracks the upbringing and life of Little Dog, a Queer Vietnamese American male, through letters to his illiterate mother. Both Little Dog and his mother are refugees who settled in Hartford, Connecticut, after the Vietnam War (1955-1975). The vehicle of my exploration, in answering those questions above, will comprise the relationship between the main characters Little Dog and Trevor, a white boy who lives in a trailer park. Deconstructing the racialized and gendered bodily signs of Little Dog as im/migrant and Trevor as settler, an exchange of unresolvable doubt and disjunction that is both their own condition and a manifestation

of Vuong's epistolary style, reveals unstable nuances in racialized and sexualized Asian and White American bodies. These bodies act in accordance to heteropatriarchal norms where the designation of raced, gendered, and sexualized citizenship sustain American racial capitalism.

This essay will be informed by a close reading of a selection from the novel, in which Little Dog and Trevor first engage in sexual intercourse. Decoding through a Marxist and queer of colour critique, I will locate and historize the formation of Asian and White American citizenships in a white supremacist state that always-already excludes Asians, a result of the aporic condition coproduced between perpetual im/migrant and settler. In exploring the position of race and sexuality in American citizenship, I seek to reveal the contested modalities of that very paradigm.

Complicating Im/migrant Categories of Belonging

The American heteropatriarchal state's categories of belonging, as exemplified through the concept of citizenship, is inherently racialized, gendered, and sexualized. Citizenship relies on racialized sexualizations of all who enter its borders.[1] In examining the manner in which the white supremacist state has always-already excluded Asians, I look to the social barriers erected between White colonists and Asian workers as a means to determine difference and deviance.[2] The Asian American male designation as a racial and sexual 'bottom,' deriving from the derogatory sexual designation as the submissive and inactive partner,[3] both complicates and reconstructs contemporary forms of White American heteropatriarchy. This section will engage with the concept of the nuclear family, the American Chinatown, and porn, to historicize the production of White and Asian American racial interactions and intimacies from the mid-1800s to the end of the twentieth century in order to flesh out the designation of "bottom" as a technology of White supremacist heteropatriarchy.

The Asian Body Arrives
From the arrival of Chinese indentured labour in the United States, the Asian body has been read as foil to the White body. Its fetishization, by Whiteness, in social and political culture as a function of American imperial and extractive economic structures, underlies the ordering of citizenship in the republic.

Vuong refers to this as he writes, "I [Little Dog] glanced back and

caught the thrilled mischief in his eyes."[4] The thrill in Trevor's eyes is consequential—his position as a white male topping Little Dog, figured as an Asian male, has precedence. A long history of governed racial relations exists, between White American colonists and Asian Americans imported as indentured im/migrant labour. In regulating these relations, the White gaze and fetishization created and perpetuated difference, and White Americans' economic dominance during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[5] This dominance bolsters the methods by which fetishization operates, through fixating on a phallic 'lacking.' Through reading the position of Rene Gallimard, a French diplomat stationed in Beijing, in David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988), David Eng argues in *Racial Castrations* (2001) for a psychoanalytic reading of Asian American subjectivity, that is formed in the white fantasy of a highly eroticized Asian body.

> [F]etishism describes a psychological process whereby the man attempts to obviate the trauma of sexual difference by seeing at the site of the female body a penis that is not there to see... [R]ather than seeing at the site of the female body a penis that is not there to see, Gallimard refuses to see at the site of the Asian male body a penis that is there to see.[6]

Eng posits that this fetishization derives from the perceived absence of sexual agency in Asian American men. The lack can be articulated as an outright refusal to see the Asian American penis or as a psychological 'lack.' In both cases, this perceived absence feminizes Asian American men and becomes part of the trace of Asian American male-sign. Simultaneously, this lack prescribes the possession of that 'something' by White American men, which signals White masculinity's perception as the dominant masculinity. This critical moment in forming the American heteropatriarchal ideology interpellates Trevor as an always-already White American man, thus securing his position in American subjectivity as dominant.

In upholding white supremacy, the fetishization of the Asian body is both a psychological and material technique that devalues the Asian American body. The rise of the American industrial state and its westward expansion coincided with what Lisa Lowe calls a logic of "Chinese [people] as...a plentiful, tractable form of labour that could alternately oppose, replace, or supplement slavery."[7] With the nineteenth-century abolition of slavery, imported Chinese indentured labour aided the concurrent construction of railways for the United States' genocidal

westward expansion.[8] Control of the Asian body and the American settler-colonial perception of the West as 'virgin lands', are processes of fetishization. Following Eng, the notion of 'virgin lands' projects notions of capitalist development that could be developed by the "benevolent" white supremacist American state. The Asian male body is similarly fetishized by the notion of their 'bottomhood,' thus subjecting them to white male domination in service of the American state.[9] This process of fetishization for colonial genocide and techniques of ascribing value to Asian bodies is captured in Trevor's "thrilled, mischievous" eyes, that let slip the fantasy of the virgin land and Asian body. Consequently, fetishization arose and maintains as a powerful tool to designate control over specific populations.

By ensuring White supremacy in the American state, borders secure upon those who cross the confines of contested racialized, gendered, and sexualized citizenships. It follows that production of Asians as Asian American citizens began with their crossing across the gendered border, wherein their race, gender, and sexuality "come together in various configurations to secure and organize a genealogy of Asian American male subjectivity."[10] Simultaneously, however, the production of knowledge informing the bottomhood of Asian American men coproduces the ideological tophood, which comes from the derogatory labelling of a more active sexual partner, of White American men as always-already dominant. Both identities uphold the other. This mutuality is replicated in queer sexual intimacies: White gay men are national citizens *because* they are tops, and so Asian American citizenship *must* be read through a queer lens in order to challenge how sexuality, gender, and race operate to coerce and control non-White bodies in the settler-colonial system.

The Expulsion of the Chinatown from the American Town

Control over Asian American labour through systems of citizenship materialized in urban formations and legislation in the late-nineteenth century, most notably through the development of Chinatowns – historically politicized Chinese enclaves.[11] Yet the development of Chinatowns highlights how American urban life secured violence against Asians through modalities of racialized and sexualized control.

Vuong writes of a painting of peaches in Trevor's mobile home that "you could only see [it] from inches away;" which begged closer inspection.[12] After bottoming for Trevor, Little Dog observes that "the pinkish smear of Trevor's dollar-store peaches," evokes the queer future "where everything is still possible because nothing is revealed."[13] Here,

visualizing a possible queer future is set against the sexual submission expected of Asian American men[14], and draws on nineteenth-century American categorization of racial and sexual forms of social belonging, tools of bodily control. Such structures feature in Vuong's novel, pulling upon Chinatowns to reveal how various approaches of American sexual citizenship in the settler-colonial state are powerfully contested. Indeed, there is a history of state-sponsored discrimination against the Asian American Male:

> "the racial construction of Asian American manhood [...] propagated the view of Asian men as lascivious sex fiends threatening white womanhood [... and while simultaneously] a series of exclusion and anti-miscege-nation laws instituted forced "bachelor societies.""[15]

The formation of Asian bachelor societies in Chinatowns was the result of discriminatory statutes, such as the Page Act (1875), which specifically targeted immigrant women from East Asia under the perception that they were lascivious prostitutes, deviants of White Christian sexuality.[16] To put it another way: explicitly racist American immigration laws saw Asian men as people without sexuality, and Asian women as entirely sexual, allowing the institution of a system of labour control and white sexual hegemony.

Further, ascriptions of queer sexuality onto the feminized Asian male body simultanouesly signal the Chinatown as an impossible part of the American urban space, and the impossibility of Asians as members of the United States. The lack of Chinese women within Chinatowns perpetuated the idea of the white gaze as objective and moral.[17] It also placed the onus of proof (of non-lack) on Chinese communities – whereby the Asian American male body bears the burden of deviating from the normalization of the White American male body.[18] In the ways that the urban form materialized fetishization's psychological techniques, the removal of Chinese enclaves from the American city engendered the Chinatown to be the queer urban form contrasting against the valorized White American citizenship located in the White American town. This had the effect of conflating Chinese abjection as a precursor to the category of "Asian." In this, the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), the California Alien Land Law Act (1913) and the Johnson-Reed Act (1924) set in motion immigration quotas, removing and preventing Asians from land ownership, thus coercing them into Chinatowns.[19] Through such means was the Chinatown's permanence as an always-already queer space built in opposition to the heteronormative form of the American town.

The Visuality of Porn and the Visuality of Rights Bearing Citizens

Bringing the peaches' selection of Vuong's text to the contested American urban form allows a queer critique of racialized and sexualized American citizenships. In a queer reading of the peaches scene, Little Dog acquires agency through fluidity.[20] He refuses to exist in stagnant and imposed categories of race, gender, and sexuality, thus disrupting nineteenth-century American citizenship modalities in his presence as an Asian American man. Problematizing the abject Chinatown sign and twentieth-century changes to American immigration law gave rise to new possibilities for Asian American lives within the system of American citizenship.

Although the peach can be read as a symbol of the bottom, Little Dog chooses to see and claim his bottomhood as his agent, which leaves Trevor "with his face turned away, [Trevor] cried skillfully in the dark. The way boys do."[21] This moment is not about the success of conforming to heteronormative expectations of bottoming. Rather, Trevor's reaction stems from the visuality of Little Dog's Asian body, whose specifically Asian sexuality expands the definition of Asian masculinity to include bottomhood. Eng described the onus of proof of 'lack' that Asian men are required to fulfill, but Trevor discovers that Asians who *choose* to bottom do not lack any phallic parts or suffer anxieties about their positionality.[22] Trevor's crying reveals Whiteness' anxieties around its position as the peak of an imagined racial hierarchy, especially as it relates to the epistemic violence it produces about Asian bodies, which mirrors the physical violence in the destruction of Chinatowns.

Trevor's anxiety around the possibility of Little Dog's sexual agency further elucidates the phallus' centrality to American society and institutions, encoded in the white supremacist state's adaptations to the reckoning with race. With the Fourteenth Amendment Right of *jus soli*, as one of the Reconstruction Era (1865-1877) amendments, second-generation Asian Americans were granted *de jure* citizenship rights.[23] New spaces, or the possibility of these spaces, and new urban formations emerged with the development of new organizations and businesses connecting Chinatowns to broader Asian nationalist movements. The postwar era immigration reform under the Immigration and Nationality Act (1965) signalled a new subjectivity of Asian Americans as politically active, coinciding with the Asian American movement's cooperation with the Civil Rights Movement.[24] Yet, while the peaches' occupation of the bottom position invites the perception of the liberation of the bottom, it also occupies a rehabilitated Chinatown-sign and demonstrates the necessary visibility of Asian

American citizenship in the United States after the Second World War.

As I have demonstrated, citizenship in the United States of America is not a stable category. It always demands renegotiation, even within our time. The concept of 'governmentality,' a series of control techniques used by those in power to grant and control forms of life, necessitates specific methods to transform White citizenship to ensure maintenance of a White heteropatriarchal state that appears receptive to immigrants but in reality, is anything but open. Where the transformation of sexual engagement through porn-as-technology renders state-sponsored sexual intercourse legible, translating this into queer relationships upholds and perpetually disseminates coproduced White and Asian racialized sexualizations in an era of sexual capitalism. This contains a rapidly thickening dependency on the visuality of the body to advance bodily control. In a scene describing the first time Little Dog and Trevor engage in sexual intercourse, Vuong writes,

> we did what we had seen in porn. I wrapped my free arm around his neck, my mouth searching and taking any part of Trevor that was closest, and he did the same, pressing his nose into the crook of my neck.[25]

It was porn which stirred their understanding of the performance, the endeavour of the act. Nguyen Tan Hoang (2014) writes that:

> porn's visual logic consistently insists on larger-than-life penises, and its sexual numbers invariably conclude with performers—both tops and bottoms—jacking off to ejaculation. That is, pleasure, even for the bottom, is signified as the pleasure of the cock.[26]

Nguyen writes on the means by which Asian American bottomhood is constructed as secondary to the position of White tophood. In this, porn opens the racialized body as both a sign that produces sexuality in the contemporary U.S.,[27] a technology of the White heteropatriarchal state, and an emblem of its increasing importance, coinciding with the end of the Vietnam War (1955-1975) and the arrival of large populations of refugees from Southeast Asia. Porn materialized the visual representation whereby "the racialized sexual differentiation of Africans and East and South Asians emerged as a normative taxonomy that managed and spatially distanced these groups from the spheres within which 'freedom' was established for European subjects."[28]

Through its development as a technology, American citizenship sustained its dependence upon racialized sexual differentiation. This pornographic logic is part of the "symbolic prohibitions against homosexuality and nonwhiteness" which "secure the very boundaries by which subjects are granted social legibility and cultural viability."[29] Porn helps ensure the dominance of White Americans within a broader American sexual citizenship. State-sponsored sexual capitalism subjects racialized and sexualized peoples to the state's right to grant particular categorically normative lives. This governmentality upholds White American lives through a *Scientia Sexualis,* a body of discourses on sexuality grounded in a perception of truth,[30] that knows all bodies. For Queer bodies such as Trevor's and Little Dog's, Trevor's citizenship is only granted legibility based upon Little Dog's willingness to be interpellated within American pornographic logic and sexual capitalism. This aporic quality of increased citizenship rights but higher demands of coproduced racial and sexual submission further propagates how Asian American men come to experience home and body changes. Thus, the American state ensured the dominance of white supremacy's heteropatriarchal systems upon Asian and other coloured bodies, after the civil rights era.

In this section, I demonstrated the discursive nature of technologies of control through the deconstruction of signs, as well as the artificial creation and bottomhood-designation of Asian American subjects to build White heteropatriarchy. With the historical importation of Asian American men and the banning of Asian American women in the nineteenth century, the white gaze oriented toward racialized and sexualized people ensured control over their economic labour. The separation of Chinatowns from the American town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrate how Asian bottomhood was secured, and upheld Whiteness. However, with changes to immigration policy during the Cold War period, and after the Civil Rights Movement, a queer understanding of American citizenship signalled a new wave of governmentality. The next section will consider how technologies of control racialized and sexualized bodies entering the American republic.

The Renegotiation of Contested Citizenships and the Possibility of Pleasure-Liberation

Having established the contested nature of White and Asian American male citizenship and their mutual productivity, I now turn to a queer reading of intimate signs between Trevor and Little Dog. This analysis will

reveal how Asian American men's submissions are in fact positions of strength and rejection of heteropatriarchy which provide the possibility of liberation for Asian Americans in their contested American citizenships.

The buttocks-as-sign represents a subversion of imposed and artificial sexual modalities, contrary to the proliferation of the ass in contemporary sexual capitalism. Following Eng's (2001) position on the 'lacking' of Asian men, Nguyen (2014) writes, "Asian men appear to occupy the most unsexy, undesirable position of all, seen as soft, effeminate, and poorly endowed."[31] Pornographic capitalist logic suggests then that Asians must occupy a position from the bottom, and so "by surrendering his asshole to be penetrated, the grown man accesses the forbidden pleasure of 'being a woman' (or his fantasy of being one) [sic], and in the process forfeits his claims to masculine subjecthood."[32] Where Nguyen bears this painful truth about capitalist perceptions of the bottom, Eng suggests there are moments where the breakdown of sexualized and racialized difference occurs, which can be seen in a few ways: the bottom's choice to open up, Little Dog's use of his hand, and the reversion of the White gaze onto White American subjects. [33] These are potentially liberating actions, highlighting the necessity of awareness as they figure consent and negotiation as a challenge to white supremacy.

Firstly, as portrayed in this selection, the bottom's consent to sex represents that Asian American men may subvert the pornographic logic of contemporary capitalism and its demands on masculinity. Nguyen (2014) writes, "a crucial component of ethical manhood involves the acknowledgment of vulnerability and the commitment to care for others,"[34] which, as a form of ethical masculinity, coincides with the increasing representation of Asians in American popular culture and literature, that itself reads as another form of opening. Openness subverts American, Christian discourse on chastity, by placing explicit and non-normative identities in front of those who want to perceive others, ultimately breaking down White expectations for conformity. For Asian American men, the act of openness frees them, and potentially those held by American masculinity, from the confines of Western masculinity. The emotionlessness fundamental in American capitalism, seen as rational, haunts the contemporary American mental health crisis. Akin to a masculinity open to the liberation of affect, this openness challenges the capitalist system that gave rise to White masculinity. Therefore, working against American capitalism is about awareness through opening the body, challenging restricted categories of belonging, and reclaiming experiences of the body.

Secondly, and in addition to opening up, Little Dog's choice to use a hand represents the possibility of a discourse of choice, which breaks

down sexual capitalism's modalities. The model minority myth is predicated upon the hard-working, asexual Asian American doctor/lawyer/businessperson whose emotionlessness enables a successful United States capitalism free of racism.[35] One repercussion of the model minority myth is the stereotype of the hard-working Asian parent who works hard to provide for their children and produces emotionless and hard-working children. By reading Little Dog's choice to use his hand as awareness to modalities of "bottoming," the possibility to imagine "Asian"/"American" life beyond the white collar professions demanded of the stereotyped Asian American male also opens the transformation of the totality of American economic and sexual modalities to non-neoliberal potentials.

Thirdly, and finally, the reversal of the White gaze, and for my purposes here — a Yellow gaze (an inversion of the White gaze) — presents a chance to challenge White American citizenship and its categories of belonging. White American masculinity is paradoxical - it is a performance of baring all, as a function of control, without actually showing off anything. A yellow gaze reverts the notion of passive and submissive bottoming and immediately shifts the power dynamic of fetishized sexual intercourse by incorporating the openness of being one's own sexual agent as a function of sustainable and receptive masculinity. The rejection of the White American sexualized capitalist system and the engendering of sustainable desire in Asian American men counteracts the White fetishization of production, and ensures the development of belonging which can break submissive citizenships. No matter from above or below, the ability to gaze from the bottom uniquely demands desire and the reception of being desired, and therefore makes possible liberation, disrupting naturalized White American systems of belonging. Altogether, these breakdowns of naturalized racialized sexualizations reaffirm the possibility of Asian American male respacialization against the contemporary American sexualized capitalist system of control.

Conclusion

On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous (2019) illustrates how queer, Marxist and psychoanalytic readings of racialized and gendered bodies can reveal the aporic conditions of racialized citizenship/s in the United States of America. From the construction of and violence enacted upon indentured Chinese labourers, to systems of pornographic visibility, the categories of belonging in American history have been challenged and transformed. As the civil rights movements carried on in the 1960s, changes to immigration policy and the appearance of Asian migrants and refugees after the

Vietnam War all demanded new technologies of control to ensure the White American heteropatriarchal state's continued dominance. Pornography was that technology, which led to new categories of submission within the American social fabric, guaranteeing new mechanisms to ensure state management over sexualities, and the submission of Asian American men. However, these forced submissions are not zero-sum, and were accompanied by the coproduction of White American masculinity.

In this, American masculinity became the focal point for my polemic on racial capitalism, highlighting the possibilities for disrupting this unsustainable system of masculinity through the possibility of dominant reception and openness. These disruptions were predicated upon the notion that White American masculinity is vulnerable to the aporic condition between im/migrant and setter entailed within racialized sexuality, and that condition has furthered increased aggression of contemporary neoliberal capitalism. *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019) ends with a message of the submissive as a conduit for liberation: to be an im/migrant, queered, racialized, translator, and bottom will always have the possibility of joy—power modalities at present seek to destroy those possibilities, but at the end of the day, those artificial and anxious dominances will hopefully realize their unsustainability, and then turn around and cry—the way boys do.

ENDNOTES

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5 Need to add a citation here – refer to a text

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9 Fung, *Looking for my Penis.*

10 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 16.

11 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 17-18.

12 Vuong, *On Earth,* 113.

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14 Fung, *Looking for my Penis,* 239.

15 Nguyen Tan Hoang, *A View from the Bottom: Asian American Masculinity and Sexual Representation,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014): 4.

16 Kerry Abrams, "Polygamy, Prostitution, and the Federalization of Immigration Law," *Columbia Law Review* 105, no. 3 (2005): 643.

17 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 3.

18 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 31.

19 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 17-18.

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26 Nguyen, *A View,* 10.

27 Fung, *Looking for my Penis.*

28 Lowe, *Intimacies,* 34.

29 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 13

30 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume One,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978): 54.

31 Nguyen, *A View,* 2.

32 Nguyen, *A View,* 16.

33 Eng, *Racial Castration,* 29.

34 Nguyen, *A View,* 23.

35 Yomee Lee, "From Forever Foreigners to Model Minority: Asian American Men in Sports," *Physical Culture and Sports Studies and Research* v. 72, no. 1 (2016): 23-32.

James Fitzallen Ryder. *Atlantic & Great Western Railway.* 1862. *Albumen print. National Gallery of Art.*

A railway curves around a hill of earth, stretching into an obscured line. Immediately alongside, a forest continues in its own line, the remains of construction and miscellaneous debris upon the ground. In the upper corner, roots lie revealed to the air and the stump of a tree trunk cuts the sky.

AMORY S. ZHAO

Subverting Domestic Ideals:

The Erasure of Social and Physical Boundaries in Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*

Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson challenges the traditional concept of domesticity, rooted in the perceived permanence of physical dwellings, by exposing its impermanent state of existence. The domestic space is typically structured and maintained according to a strict set of duties and principles which constitutes the illusion of safety and constancy. In *Housekeeping*, Sylvie is tasked with the preservation of domestic order in order to care for her orphaned nieces, Ruth and Lucille, despite her preference for a transient lifestyle. Under Sylvie's housekeeping, traditional domestic order is undermined by the encroachment of the natural world into the home. Her approach to domestic upkeep is disparaged by the residents of Fingerbone as it upsets the idea of stability and comfort associated with a physical home. Sylvie's lack of regard for the conventional ideals of a home exposes housekeeping and tangible possessions as deceptive impressions of permanence. The opposition against Sylvie is exacerbated by Fingerbone's predisposition to natural disasters: "it flooded yearly, and had burned once."[1] In an inconsequential small town such as Fingerbone where "a diaspora threaten[s] always," any semblance of constancy is seized and cultivated so the residents might disregard "how shallow-rooted the whole town [is]."[2] Therefore, conventional housekeeping emphasizes a clear bifurcation between nature and domesticity; the lack of an inherent distinction between the natural and the civilized world is substituted by a socially reinforced separation of the two. In juxtaposition, Sylvie freely embraces nature and seeks to minimize the gap between the natural and

the artificial; any perception of barriers between the two is resolved through earthly solvents: darkness, air, and water. By blurring the physical boundaries between wilderness and civilization, Sylvie remains homeless despite occupying a distinct, domestic space. The consolidation of transience and constancy exposes the enduring conflict between the social idealization of the house as a place of security and its impermanent reality.

In *Housekeeping*, the comfort of domesticity is associated with the presence of light, both natural and artificial. The "spring sunlight" is used to hang "basket[s] of sheets" while artificial lights serve as a defense against the intrusion of nightfall.[3] The disjunction between natural darkness and manmade illumination exaggerates the boundary between the natural and domestic space. In opposition to conventions, Sylvie "dislikes the disequilibrium of counterpoising a roomful of light against a worldful of darkness,"[4] preferring "to eat supper in the dark."[5] In the absence of artificial light, darkness prevails over the visual senses and erases the physical barriers hindering the approach of night. The breach of darkness into the household departs from the traditional characterization of the home as a place of safety with its "comfortable yellow lights."[6] There is no apparent difference between the indoors and outdoors as Ruth recalls entering the house is stepping from "sheer night into sheer night."[7] Sylvie's violation of traditional housekeeping is further illustrated when Lucille unexpectedly switches on the overhead light and the kitchen "leaped, so it seemed, into being."[8] The restoration of sight allows the children to notice that their dinner is served on "plates that came in detergent boxes" and "jelly glasses."[9] The kitchen exists in a state of continual decay as "everywhere the paint was chipped and marred" while "two cupboard doors had come unhinged."[10] Sylvie's deviation from the traditional domestic aesthetic paints her as an unfit guardian and attracts the scrutiny of "neighbour women and churchwomen" with "a clear intention, a settled purpose" of rescuing Ruth.[11] However, Sylvie is not a neglectful caretaker as Ruth remembers that "Sylvie always had a fire in the kitchen when we came home."[12] She plays board games with the girls, brushes their hair, and scolds them "for coming in late, for playing in our school clothes, for staying out in the cold without our coats on."[13]

In many aspects, Sylvie still retains and practices the traditional role of a parent by caring for and protecting her nieces from harm. The kitchen scene of apparent disorder, only visible in the sudden flood of artificial light does not offer an accurate representation of Sylvie's effort to instill stability into the physical space. Ruth also comes to recognize the illusory nature of housekeeping when she is lost in the woods with Lucille. While Lucille "never accept[s] that all [their] human boundaries [are] overrun,"[14]

Ruth "simply let the darkness in the sky become coextensive with the darkness in [her] skull and bowels and bones."[15] By succumbing to the natural darkness, Ruth understands that "[e]verything that falls upon the eye is apparition, a sheet dropped over the world's true workings."[16] The illusion of housekeeping connotes that physical homes are "permanent fixtures of the world," when "nothing is more perishable" in actuality.[17] Sylvie's inclination for darkness does not signify a lack of domestic comfort or stability — especially since Ruth considers lightness "uncomfortable"[18] — but a consolidation of her desire for transience and her responsibility as a caretaker. The disjunction between the unkempt house and Sylvie's determination to care for her nieces reflects the false idealization of a physical house as the source of stability.

　　　Water pervades every crevice of human existence in Fingerbone. The town is built upon an arid lake and is adjacent to one that overflows annually. The constant portent of the watery depth threatens to expose "how shallow-rooted the whole town [is]."[19] Under the care of Ruth and Lucille's grandmother, "the flood never reached [their] house" and the sanctity of the domestic space prevails.[20] Sylvie's arrival coincides with the spring that water "poured over the thresholds and covered the floor to the depth of four inches."[21] The remnant of the grandmother's vigilant housekeeping is forsaken to nature as water trespasses into the household. This breach of human boundaries compels the residents of Fingerbone to camp on the nearby hillside in order to retain a clear distinction between the natural and the domestic. The flood forces the residents to reverse roles with nature as water occupies their homes; they "peer in at their attic windows" without any chance of entering the household.[22] By virtue of its higher position, only the first floor of Sylvie's house flooded while the second remains habitable. Therefore, Sylvie and her nieces must coexist under the same roof as the prevailing force of water, which persists for the remainder of the novel in every crack and fissure of the home as a reminder of the inevitability of impermanence. Upon peering outside after the flood, Ruth and Lucille discover that the neighbouring house "had indeed been lifted from its foundations."[23] The intrusion of water destabilizes the actual and ideological permanence of the physical home as it invades through the walls and usurps ownership of the house. Water creates disorder in the organization of human space as it floods the library "to a depth of three shelves, creating vast gaps in the Dewey decimal system."[24] Similarly, water generates disruptions in the home as countless domestic items — "hooked and braided rugs and needlepoint footstools"[25] — are purged. In Sylvie's house, "the house flowed around" its inhabitants while "the flood bumped and fumbled like a blind man in a strange

house."[26] Yet, Sylvie's housekeeping mirrors the sense of disorganization created by water as she adopts a habit of collecting "newspaper and magazines" while metal cans are "stacked to the ceiling."[27] Inside the domestic space, "things massed and accumulated" like the depth of Fingerbone lake, allowing Ruth to denote the watery depth as "a place of distinctly domestic disorder, warm and still and replete."[28] Ruth's characterization of "disorder" as "distinctly domestic" contradicts the conventional depiction of the domiciliary as an area of order and control.[29] In reality, domesticity does not exist in the absence of natural disorder but rather persists within it.

In *Housekeeping,* the death of Sylvie's mother forces her to return to the family home built by her father, Edmund Foster, who "had grown up in the Middle West, in a house dug out of the ground."[30] The lack of separation between the house and the earth forces a grown Edmund Foster to temporary transience as he "took a train west" with no set plans.[31] In juxtaposition, the house in Fingerbone is constructed on the principle that natural and domestic space must be segregated as a defense against inconstancy: it is mounted upon the earth instead of within and stands on a hill away from Fingerbone's annual flood. However, a change begins to take place under Sylvie's occupation that erodes the household as a "human stronghold"[32] against nature: "the lawn was knee-high, an oily, dank green and the wind sent ripples across it… it seemed that if the house were not to founder, it must soon begin to float."[33] Under Sylvie's care, nature appears to uproot the foundation of the house and the sense of security associated with the physical place as the house, divorced from the ground, is subjected to the volatility of its landscape. Sylvie offers Ruth a glimpse of the house's inevitable fate by bringing her to an abandoned cabin adjacent to the lake. There, Ruth confronts the inevitability and ephemerality of nature as she observes the deserted dwelling, which "fell into the cellar hole years ago."[34] Yet, the demonstration of instability does not frighten her as she seeks warmth and comfort in the collapsed cellar — inside the very corruption of the domestic space. In the same woods, Sylvie claims to have felt the ghostly stirrings of families and children despite the cabin's obvious state of abandonment and decomposition. Ruth also senses their existence even though "there would be nothing there" when she turns towards their presence.[35] The imperceptibility of the children suggests that they must exist on another plane of being where perception is obsolete, alluding to the illusory nature of sight. The emphasis on perception proposes that the decrepitude of the cabin is simply an optical illusion while the children's inhabitation of the space suggests that the tangible existence of a house is not imperative to the

establishment of a family and home. Instead, permanence and transience are inseparable from each other and constantly co-inhabit the same space.

The objective of a house is to stand vigilant against the natural elements that threaten to infiltrate the domestic space and reduce it into intangible nothingness. Sylvie disputes the traditional idealization of a house as a demarcated space of stability by allowing the encroachment of darkness, water, and earth into her household. The erosion of tangible boundaries between the natural and the artificial disparages the permanence of the house by disrupting the appearance of domestic order. In the end, Sylvie and Ruth elect to abandon their house in pursuit of an utterly transient lifestyle on the railroad. Their departure is prompted by Fingerbone's persecution: they can either conform to the conventional ideals of domesticity or leave town entirely. It is Fingerbone's inability to accept the futility of a distinct domestic space that forces Sylvie and Ruth into constant migration. Ironically, the desertion and destruction of the house is the only way to retain the familial bond between Sylvie and Ruth. The necessity of transience in order to maintain domesticity disproves the need for a physical space to attain a sense of constancy.

ENDNOTES

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3 Robinson, 16.

4 Ibid., 99.

5 Ibid., 86.

6 Ibid., 35.

7 Ibid., 99.

8 Ibid., 100.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., 101.

11 Ibid., 179; 182

12 Ibid., 99.

13 Ibid., 100.

14 Ibid., 115.

15 Ibid., 116.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid,

18 Ibid., 101.

19 Ibid., 177.

20 Robinson, 61.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., 62.

23 Ibid., 65.

24 Ibid., 62.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 65.

27 Ibid., 180.

28 Ibid., 113.

29 Ibid., 113.

30 Ibid., 3.

31 Ibid., 5.

32 Ibid., 3.

33 Ibid., 124.

34 Ibid., 148.

35 Ibid., 154.

An imposing cathedral, in a marked colonial architectural style, imposes over the market, which abounds with people in various modes of dress, settled around baskets carrying goods. A young woman with a basket at her hip returns the gaze of the camera lens, a slight frown from rays of the sun evident as she regards the viewer. Antigua, Guatemala, 1902. Library of Congress.

EMILY LARMAN

'Postcolonial Unity and Gendered Exotification:

Formal Visual Techniques in Rae Sremmurd's "Guatemala"'

Released in 2018, the visuality in Rae Sremmurd's music video for "Guatemala," a single on *SR3MM's* second volume *Swaecation*, desires its audience to examine a unique sociopolitical interplay between gender and culture. The hip-hop duo, comprised of brothers Swae Lee and Slim Jxmmi, has come to embody posthuman rap, contributes to the movement of those "reclaiming a space for those who have been denied humanity" in western contexts, and intends to show up as relevant and provocative.[1] The inclusion of "Guatemala" in Sremmurd's *SR3MM* discography thwarts hip-hop's propensity to depict racial marginalization and class disparity, yet also attempts to render cultural unification at the expense of gender exotification.

The reggae-influenced song lyrically explores escaping to 'exotic' Guatemala to cavort with women, but visually conveys a layered history of postcolonialism, impacted by the works of Snoop Dogg and Michael Jackson. Postcolonialism here is intended to imply the interplay of the aesthetic, economic, and social impact of European colonial rule within the contours of the reclaimed national identity by those oppressed.[2] 'Guatemala's' genre hybridization not only signifies a distinct expression of youth from marginalized sectors, but also fuses the voice of Blackness and marginality, adopted to sympathize with the oppressed and blurring the boundaries of what constitutes genre specificity (national identity versus exotic othering).[3] 'Guatemala's' visual style upholds this desire,

subverting expectations and ultimately representing gender as an exotic construct instead of a nationalized exoticism, through its use of color, lighting, and movement, while also engaging the same formal mechanisms to establish a postcolonial unity between Black and Guatemalan culture through its imagery.

Throughout the video, clothes and colour are used to integrate with and complement the decayed colonial architectural and natural surroundings.[4] It becomes immediately apparent that this is an image seeking to respect the culture it is employing. Visual language and colour matching propose that the foreign women belong with the men——implying affiliation yet cultural deference. There are slow motion captures of various local women's facial expressions, tokenized for the viewer through the lens of the male gaze, as they become synonymous with the culture itself. Swae's outfit blends with the bright blue hues of the decomposing architecture; buildings that are patently colonial, grand yet decaying in their presentation and brightly colored in hues of yellow, coral, and blue. Movement is key, as the local children are shown mimicking the boys, mixing traditional dances and emphasizing hand motions. The repetition of sequences surrounded by decaying colonial structures, repainted and repurposed, suggests the importance of establishing postcolonial identity, and the colors used in Swae and Slim's clothing only heighten that evolution of claiming culture beyond domination.

The choice of Guatemala is deliberate. Hip-hop serves as anti-colonial discourse (in this context a reactionary tactic against imperialism that precedes postcolonial theory) in a country actively fighting back against Indigenous oppression. Guatemala has faced external and internal discrimination of its own people, both Indigenous Mayan and non-Mayan, showcasing a shared marginalization coupled with the subjugated Black experience that Rae Sremmurd embodies.[5] The absence of whiteness serves to stoke this visual claim. Corresponding use of colour, movement, and lighting emphasizes appreciation and unity for the culture that they use as their backdrop. "Guatemala" offers an opportunity to establish a postcolonial moment through its use of hip-hop as a genre, and a language of imagery. This technique aims to derail colonial discourse functioning on the basis that the intermingled sectors tend to lack 'cultural authenticity' in their artistic depictions.[6] Guatemala's deference to culturally authentic presentation challenges hip-hop to establish postcolonial identity in the wake of a repressive history. Thus, through such visuals, Rae Sremmurd's interactions with hip-hop and Guatemalan culture remain in conversation with each group's cultural history, extending both the borders of the country and elements of its heritage to a wider audience.

The use of movement is contrasted in competing sequences, with the women providing erotic and sensational moments fueled by a kind of exotic desire, whereas the fluid, mirrored gestures of the children seem to signify transnational unity.[7] These gestures function at the intersection of performance and communication, conscious of their social message and structure of colonial domination, not fetishizing ownership but invested in remembrance and environmental symbiosis. Here neither race nor environment are spectacle—the women are. Hip-hop and dance are able to "gain power from the subversive Black stance outside the moral law of white America," and "Guatemala" offers an opportunity for this stance to be celebrated both in and outside of physical, confined borders.[8] African Studies professor Thomas DeFrantz asserts that the Black body "dances about unequal power relations, self-awareness, and kinetic fun."[9] On one hand, Rae Sremmurd's video upholds this reflexive inclusivity through cultural attentiveness (particularly through the children), but on the other, it cultivates a power imbalance of gender through exoticizing and carelessly interchanging its presentation of women. Dance ergo becomes a mode distinctly signifying the unity and disunity present in "Guatemala."

Swae and Slim are later pictured dancing in a Mayan cave carved with hieroglyphics, a cauldron of fire obscuring their shadows and Blackening them so that they become one with the cave, their silhouetted movements highlighted. This sequence yet again seeks to centralize Mayan culture and match the subjugation of the Black body with that of the Indigenous, through a deliberate use of lighting which gives power to the cave by masking the bodies. The dialogue between race and culture endures, exploring and intertwining a complicated subtext of both histories—the bodies simultaneously enjoy and occupy the space, but also honour it.

The women in "Guatemala" are softly lit, as if to illuminate their angelic demureness, shining like the bling worn by Swae and Slim, cementing their 'objectness.' Low-angle shots of Swae smoking and dancing against the blue sky are intermixed with the past scene of Slim and his original girl (as the lyrics "yeah my ex girl had to move on" play), denoting interchangeability.[10] The steady stream of women entering the frame, all Guatemalan, classically beautiful, and dancing sexily for the men in question, are indicative of the image's desire to gaze at their to-be-look-at-ness, cementing them as objects.[11] With men as the bearer of the gaze in "Guatemala," this objectification paints women as "indispensible elements of spectacle," serving as erotic contemplation for both the subjects and the audience.[12] Furthermore, this tension is intensified due to the lack of males in the video, with Slim and Swae as the primary subjects, the only other men present when the women are performing for them. The

women are positioned in order to be observed, subjects whose exoticiza-tion is only heightened by their location. Such is how the image desires the women be viewed––Guatemala is not merely an exotic backdrop––their striking qualities and sensual movements out of the ordinary, there to serve their male counterparts.

There is a distinct tonal shift as the video evolves into evening at a tropical nightclub. It becomes evident that all three women Slim had previously been seen with throughout the video are there, two looking eerily comparable. With all of the women together, an added layer of gender subjectivity is introduced, as some girls are depicted demurely, whereas others, such as the girl with the blonde afro, flaunt highly provocative, revealing movements. Swae's interactions with the former seems to indicate the image's ideal woman, whereas the second's oversex-ualized representation and his flippancy suggests his noncommittal intentions, exhibiting a "predatory masculinity that ends up reading women's sexual display as invitation."[13] This reading of contrast is ensured through use of colour, clothing, and movement. The video concludes with an aerial of Guatemala at dawn, an invisible city that seems to suggest it could be just like any other, symbolizing the universality of their lived experience as opposed to denigrating the difference.

"Guatemala" is a hybridization of the cultural interweaving and gendered exotification evidenced in its earlier counterparts: Snoop Dogg and Pharrell Williams' "Beautiful" and Michael Jackson's "They Don't Care About Us." "Beautiful's" imagery exotifies the seductive potential of women at the expense of its foreign locale, more than it uplifts its back-drop, serving as a precedent for "Guatemala," but without the cultural unification displayed by the latter. The visuals in "Beautiful" capitalize on Brazil to aid in its provocative and objectifying execution, whereas "Guatemala" works in tandem with the country in question to advance a dual intention, with objectification still present, but more respectfully so.

In contrast, Michael Jackson's "They Don't Care About Us" prevails on the opposite end of the spectrum, illustrating similar formal mecha-nisms present in "Guatemala," but without the gendered exploitation. "They Don't Care About Us" elucidates a complicated interplay of transna-tional Blackness, pointing to a postcolonial future that aims to reinvent identity through contexts of the diaspora.[14] The imagery in "They Don't Care About Us" presents a culture that exists in unison with its subject, Michael Jackson, illustrating colorful architecture, luscious landscapes, scores of adults and children singing, dancing, and playing instruments together, "the vivacious musical performance backed by local cultural and music groups."[15] By reinventing their collective identities, this image

serves to mediate transnational dialogues, much like "Guatemala's" commitment to confraternity.[16] This is an image about celebrating postcolonial identity, without distinctly manipulating gendered sexuality to advance its cause. "Guatemala" showcases the influence of "They Don't Care About Us" through its visual propensity to transnationalism, centered around unifying shared experiences of marginalization, devoid of the dilution of anti-feminist imagery.

Ultimately, Rae Sremmurd's "Guatemala" presents unity through culture but disunity through gender. As an object, the video draws inspiration by mediating its predecessors, to create an intersection of gendered exoticism and postcolonial unity between marginalized groups––Guatemalans and the African diaspora. These are two peoples who have dealt with rampant, structural racism and oppression at the hands of their colonizers, united on the basis of this affinity. The imagery integrates distinctive hip-hop artifacts—chains, tattoos, flashy brand names, nightclubs—while utilizing formal mechanisms of color, movement, and lighting to show up as conscious, respectful and interconnected with the culture from which it borrows, in order to fit in seamlessly with its surroundings.

With hip-hop arising as anti-colonial discourse in Guatemala, the video strives to integrate culture deferentially, to display complementary experiences of oppression, suggesting a transnational unity as opposed to highlighting cultural difference. However, although the locale is not sensationalized, the exotic construct is thus displaced onto its depiction of women, the slow-motion, open-mouthed closeups, sexualized dancing, and clothing all reducing their bodies to their imageness and addressing their binary opposition. The women in "Guatemala" are meant to be gazed at, the image desiring the viewer to see Rae Sremmurd as negotiating the space and culture respectfully, while the women show up as secondary and dispensable objects. "Guatemala" had the potential to devolve into exotic othering, and it subverted stereotyping by showing up as culturally inclusive, but consequently sensationalized gender by presenting women in its place.

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John Vachon. Rain. *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. June 1941. Negative. Library of Congress.*

Beside a Pittsburgh street slick with water and a handful of cars, a man walks down the sidewalk. Dressed in a coat and cap, he grasps an umbrella. His other hand covers the base of his neck from the deluge of rainfall.

KYRA BINGHAM

The Continuous Consequences of Displacement:

A Psychology-Based Approach for Understanding the Racially Stratified Effects of Urban Renewal in Pittsburgh

Objectives and Failures of Urban Renewal

Urban renewal was a federal project run by the United States government after World War II, meant to revitalize cities by spurring economic growth. This strategy centered on bringing the wealth of upper- and middle-class families into impoverished city centers.[1] The projects offered federal subsidies to demolish and replace areas of cities that were perceived to be "blighted" with highways and civic centers. These projects had material goals, to visually clean up the city and make it more attractive for investors and wealthier populations, as well as social and economic goals. Williams (1969) outlined the "official" objectives of urban renewal in five points: to supply decent housing, to provide a "suitable living environment" to every family, to attract and retain the middle class and their economic activity in urban areas, to assist in desegregation, and to mitigate social issues by "bringing families into contact with service agencies."[2] Urban renewal

policies were highly contested and controversial due to their destructive nature. From urban renewal's implementation in 1949 to its end in 1974, the United States government funded the destruction of over 2,100 urban neighborhoods.[3] The effects of urban renewal on city planning, on tax revenue, and on economic growth are today widely appreciated.

At the time, criticisms of urban renewal argued it had not achieved any of its desired effects. Anderson (1967) argued that it failed to increase city tax revenue, eliminate slums, prevent the effects of blight, increase private investment, bring back the middle class or improve living conditions for poor and minority communities.[4] This is because cities were not able to attract growth and development in the spaces they cleared. Some former slums, to attract developers, required subsidies high enough that cities lost tax revenue.[5] Others that were unable to attract private investment sat empty and became urban prairies or parking lots in the middle of downtown areas. Scholars also recognized the shortcomings of urban renewal in making the transition for displaced residents, who were disproportionately people of colour.[6] Gans critiqued the lack of financial support for families forced to move, and the lack of social services employed to assist in the readjustment process.[7]

The social effect that urban renewal had on the populations and individuals they displaced are less well examined. One of the unintended but highly impactful outcomes of urban renewal is the trauma experienced by populations that were displaced after their neighborhoods were destroyed. The psychological and social consequences of displacement, understood as "root shock", offer a unique explanation for the continuity of uneven development between White and Black populations in American cities following renewal. The case study of displacement from the Hill district in Pittsburgh, PA shows how urban renewal created trauma that is still experienced to this day.

Conceptualizing Social and Psychological Trauma After Displacement: "Root shock"

Research on the psychological effects of urban renewal has been done by clinical psychiatrist Dr. Mindi Fullilove, who coined the term "root shock" to explain the phenomena of trauma related to displacement from one's neighborhood.[8] According to Fullilove, root shock is the "profound emotional upheaval that destroys the working model of the world that had existed in an individual's head."[9] Root shock occurs on an individual level when the physical and social connection to one's built environment,

referred to as a "maze way," is forcibly changed or destroyed.[10] On a community level "root shock undermines trust, increases anxiety… destabilizes relationships, destroys social, emotional, and financial resources and increases the risk for every kind of stress related disease, from depression to heart attack."[11] Thus, because of its relationship to increased stress, root shock is not only an individual social and mental issue, it is also tied to communal, long-term problems impacting public health and collective well-being.

The concept of root shock is also crucial to understanding individual and community resilience over time. That is, the capacity to respond and adapt to challenges after an initial trauma. Resilience determines an individual's ability to reestablish themselves in new places. The chronic psychological stress of root shock puts people at a higher risk for health problems and exacerbates the existing stresses and health risks associated with living in poverty. These include health risks such as diabetes and asthma associated with poor diet and poor housing conditions. These risks are further compounded when a community experiences displacement more than once. To capture this, Fullilove and Wallace introduce the concept of serial displacement, which includes "the cumulative effects of: segregation, redlining, urban renewal, planned shrinkage/catastrophic disinvestment, deindustrialization, mass criminalization, gentrification, HOPE VI, and the foreclosure crisis" (notably, this list is not exhaustive).[12] The effects are similar to root shock, defined by a related set of social and physiological issues including raised levels of violence, family disintegration, substance abuse, and increased transmission of sexually transmitted disease.[13] Moreover, the effects of serial displacement are shown to have epigenetic effects.[14] This means traumatic effects are intergenerational and persist beyond the originally displaced community.

The psychological stress of displacement is further compounded by an individual's ability to financially provide for themselves or their families. In an analysis of the foreclosure crisis, Saegert (2011) argues that displacement is also a part of "the inheritance of loss" experienced by Black populations wherein assets are lost and there is nothing for the next generation to inherit.[15] This has further implications for the financial stability and health of families and communities. Lost financial assets are reinforced by the disintegration of social networks when more resourced members are physically separated from the community or socially estranged.[16] Additionally, loss of wealth adds to the physiological and mental stress experienced by individuals who are displaced, which is further worsened by their inability to pay for treatments of any stress- or root shock-related diseases or health issues. Therefore, the relationship between low resilience

and experiencing displacement can be explained by the transmission of trauma and financial loss between places and between generations.

Importantly, Fullilove connects root shock to narratives and larger systems of power that shape the experiences of all Black communities in the United States. Given that urban renewal disproportionately affected Black communities, Fullilove argues that root shock has consequences beyond just communities within a region. These effects contribute to a sense of loss in the national Black community, which resonates globally. In her words, "the current situation of Black America cannot be understood without a full and complete accounting of the social, economic, cultural, political and emotional losses that followed the bulldozing of 1,600 [Black] neighborhoods."[17] In doing so, Fullilove connects the psychological effects of displacement to systemic and institutional anti-Black racism, which shape the wellbeing of Black communities in the United States.

The Psychology of Place: Understanding the social, emotional and cognitive dimensions of displacement

In order to understand how the "loss" of place (through either destruction or displacement) affects an individual's psyche, it is key to define the psychology of place. From the psychological perspective place is more than just the built world an individual is situated in. The natural and built structures of a place inform the ways an individual relates to the world by shaping the way they physically move through their environment, but also the ways an individual relates to others.[18] For example, porches in neighborhoods with houses that are close together provide a way to enjoy the outdoors - crucially, they are also an important place to socialize, and therefore build community. Additionally, familiarity of place is important because it molds an individual's cognitive map for how the world works.[19] Thus, when space changes, the comfort of this cognitive map or maze-way is destroyed, and that creates a sense of physical and mental disorientation.[20]

Further, the psychology of place links an individual's attachment to place and sense of identity connected to place. When place is destroyed, the detachment from the physical space and people who inhabited it is impossible to uncouple.[21] Sadness, longing, and nostalgia follow.[22] In some cases, nostalgia impacts people's ability to readjust to new places by restricting them to a constant state of "yearning" for another time.[23] In this way, the sense of loss from displacement may reduce an individual's ability to attach to new places to call home.[24] Lastly, spatial identity is an individual's sense

of self within society as defined by their connection to their physical environment.[25] Therefore, without a place, or without positive acknowledgement of place articulated by others, individuals become alienated.[26] Altogether, the psychology of place explains the way displacement, through the loss of place, creates disorientation, nostalgia, and alienation which negatively affect an individual's ability to adapt to new places.

Rust-Belt Root Shocks: Black Displacement in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh provides an excellent case study for the emergence of root shock and the long-term implications of root shock. Pittsburgh is a former steel manufacturing city situated in the Rustbelt that underwent severe redevelopment and investment in the 1960s. The Hill District neighborhood is a well-known example of a neighborhood that underwent urban renewal and experienced root shock when the lower Hill was razed for the building of the Civic Arena. Before urban renewal, the Hill District was characterized by a strong Black community, defined by active civic organizations and strong interpersonal connections.[27] One example of this was the perceived "shared responsibility for child rearing," a community practice of keeping an eye on children in the neighborhood and making sure they were safe.[28] Culturally and politically, the Hill was notable, both the heart of the Jazz scene in Pittsburgh and a hub of Civil Rights-era activism. A psychological study of social networks in the remaining Hill District offers empirical evidence which supports the claim that social networks there protect against psychological distress.[29] The researchers found that a trusted network of neighbors was related to a perceived sense of community safety. Following urban renewal, the remaining neighborhood was seen as more disconnected and less interdependent.[30]

Although residents of the Hill readjusted to the best of their ability, the unacknowledged effects of displacement reproduced conditions for disintegration by weakening individuals and communities, making them more vulnerable to crisis.[31] In the Pittsburgh context, one of the main crises was the loss of unskilled jobs following deindustrialization and the decline of the steel industry in the 1960s. Due to discriminatory employment practices rampant in this time, Black people were typically the first laid-off from manufacturing jobs.[32] Fullilove and Wallace (2011) argue that this was particularly impactful to those in the Hill due to root shock. The increase in violence, crime, and drug dealing is tied to the inability of communities to cope following mass unemployment.[33] This in turn, also

sets the main condition for further social disintegration: a lack of trust, which continued to erode perceptions of safety in the Hill.[34] This contributed to the Black community moving to other parts of the city following urban renewal on the Hill. According to Sala Udin, a former resident of the Hill, there is a direct relationship between the physical "fragmentation" of the Black community due to their displacement and the political disenfranchisement and weakened cultural ties in Pittsburgh's greater Black community now.[35] This shows how the effects of root shock reverberate, in the lack of a social and political collective, which has implications for people's ability to resist further displacement.

In particular, the systemic and intergenerational effects of root shock offer a lens to appreciate the way that displacement, emerging from urban renewal on the Hill, is intertwined with the reinforcement of socioeconomic spatial disparities faced by Black communities in Pittsburgh. As discussed, root shock can be considered contagious in that it is carried by individuals to the neighborhoods they move into, as well as by epigenetics to the generations that follow. Due to discrimination that prevented non-white groups from moving into primarily white areas, as well as the lack of financial support from the government, displaced families moved to other low-income areas in cities, that were typically Black. In Pittsburgh, following the destruction of the Lower Hill, some people stayed in other parts of the Hill but many were redistributed into low-rent or public housing in the majority Black neighborhoods of East Liberty, Larimer, and Homewood.[36] Many also moved outside of the city to Wilkinsburg and the suburb Penn Hills.

This had two notable effects; first, it reinforced the segregation of Black and white neighborhoods. Second, it brought individuals and families experiencing root shock into areas already experiencing poverty and neglect due to a history of racist housing policies including redlining. These patterns set certain neighborhoods in the city up to be vulnerable to further displacement due to the re-concentration of poverty, which led to abandonment and perceived neglect. For instance, the neighborhood of East Liberty — where many large public housing projects were built during and after urban renewal — is now experiencing gentrification, which leads to displacement in poor and racialized communities.[37] In examples like this, it is evident that legacies of root shock persist in the Black communities in Pittsburgh which reinforce the segregated and uneven socio-economic characteristics of the city.

Still, some challenge the idea that all displacement will be detrimental to the residents of a neighborhood. In a case study that compared movers to non-movers in a declining neighborhood in Glasgow, UK

Kearns and Mason (2013) found that residents did not experience entirely negative effects of displacement. In fact, they were mostly positive physical, functional, social, and psychological effects for those who decided to move.[38] They posit that in some communities that are suffering from the physical deterioration of the neighborhood, such as poor housing conditions, residents welcome relocation.[39]

In the case of the Hill District, despite the physical conditions of the neighborhood, it is evident that the displacement was unwelcomed. Evidence for this can be seen in the protest by community groups seeking to save the Hill such as the Citizens Committee for the Hill District.[40] It is important to note that Kearns and Mason's study did not consider the context of race nor repeated displacement. The displacement and effects of renewal on Black residents in Pittsburgh, for example, are impossible to understand without considering the disproportionate effects urban renewal had on Black communities. Additionally, Kearns and Mason argue that it is important to disrupt the myth that restructuring decisions are necessarily going to disrupt a 'cohesive community'.[41] However, communities may seem non-cohesive because they have experienced fragmentation and disinvestment deriving from racist policies, which is why it is crucial to consider root shock in analysis of redevelopment in this context. As discussed in the example of the Hill District and East Liberty, root shock's reproductive and intergenerational effects generate the conditions in which a lack of community exists. Thus, root shock serves as an effective lens to examine a nuanced historical context that continues to have implications for displacement and urban planning now.

Root Shock Reverberations: Implications and Conclusions

The psychological consequences of displacement as they relate to racially and socioeconomically stratified geographies in Pittsburgh connect the destabilizing policies of urban renewal to the present day. Fullilove's theory of root shock uniquely focuses on the lived experiences of those who were displaced, and what their experience of displacement did to shape not only their communities, but the city as a whole. Furthermore, the added complexity of the social and behavioral issues associated with serial displacement, compounded by the loss of inherited wealth, helps explain weak resiliency within affected Black communities.

Mental, emotional and financial resiliency are connected to the myriad of poor health issues and social outcomes still experienced in these

communities. An analysis of root shock in the historically Black neighborhood of the Hill District offers a connection between urban renewal and the continuous reproduction of racial inequities, as seen in the outcomes of segregation and poverty in the city. It is necessary, then, to interrogate the capitalist and elite-driven urban redevelopment that Pittsburgh pursued. Beyond that, as Fullilove suggests, the physically destructive and emotionally traumatic outcomes of renewal are tied up in the experience of the Black community on a national and global scale. This understanding of root shock demands further attention by planners and policy makers in their consideration of the social and psychosocial outcomes of redevelopment or shrinkage policy in the future.

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