

# **Model Student Essays**

**A Collection of Essays Written Primarily in Introductory Level  
College Courses**

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## P r e f a c e

We learn about writing by studying models. Sometimes nothing helps the novice writer so much as the chance to observe the technique of a more skilled one. But even the student who has been successful at writing in one mode may have trouble with another. One student may write exceptional literary analyses, but has not mastered anthropology papers; the student who excels at a laboratory report may struggle with a paper assignment in a TDF class. In all these situations, model essays can perform great instructional service. The “eureka!” moment—“So that’s a specific thesis!” or “That’s how you use and explain supporting evidence!”—is often all it takes to help students begin to raise the quality of their own work.

Model Student Essays is intended for the entire Franklin and Marshall College community. Faculty may use it during an in-class workshop or an individual conference to illustrate a principle of effective writing. Writing Center tutors will find these essays helpful in coaching their tutees about the writing process. And, because faculty members have submitted these essays as examples of the best work they received during the past academic year, students can turn to this booklet to gain an understanding of the qualities of writing we value here at F&M. A new feature this year, we have included, wherever possible, a description of the assignment to which the student responded as well as a brief comment from the professor highlighting the exemplary qualities of the student’s writing.

The essay that closes this year’s Model Student Essays deserves special mention. Jamie Koprivnikar’s “The Reflection in the Mirror: Seventies Fashion as an Expression of Gender Equality” won the 2002 William Uler Hensel English Prize.

My great appreciation goes to Ursula Gross ‘03, the summer office assistant in the Writing Center and student writing assistant, for her invaluable help in compiling and editing this booklet. Many thanks as well to Jaime Lawton ‘02 and Virginia Dearborn ‘02, two recently-graduated writing assistants, for their work on the early submissions to this year’s edition.

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Director, Writing Center  
June 2002

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# The Use of Models to Describe Evolving Traffic Systems

By Amanda Sahl

Prof. Thomas

Prof. Walter

GEO 115: Evolution

Everyday, citizens throughout the United States commute to work through busy traffic. The roads they travel on and the situations they travel through are all products of the evolution of traffic patterns. Traffic patterns can be described in terms of both macroevolution and microevolution. Macroevolution describes how traffic systems have changed through history, evolving from foot traffic to the current automobile traffic. Microevolution describes the daily systems through which commuters must travel and the states of those systems, such as whether there is free-flowing traffic, a traffic jam caused by a bottleneck, traffic congestion (also referred to as a traffic slowdown or localized traffic jam) or recurring humps as described by Lee *et al.* (Helbing and Treiber, 2001). These types of modeling systems differ according to the time scale over which they are applied to describe traffic.

Microevolutionary patterns emerging in traffic affect so many people that an entire field has developed to describe it. Traffic engineers and scientists interested in understanding traffic's evolution have created mathematical models in an attempt to predict future traffic patterns. These models can be separated into two general categories: microscopic and macroscopic models (Gazis, 1967). These models are a way to describe evolution over just a short time scale, meaning microscopic and macroscopic traffic models only describe microevolutionary traffic patterns. Another category also used to describe microevolutionary traffic patterns incorporates properties of both microscopic and macroscopic models. A popular and useful example of this kind of model is a cellular automaton model. Cellular automaton models have an increased number of variables, thus improving upon earlier types of models. All models, though never completely unerring, attempt to predict traffic systems accurately by including the most variables possible in the best combination discovered.

Numerous variables affect the microevolution of traffic. The states of these variables represent the initial conditions of the traffic system, which each model tries to accommodate. Just as Lorenz's Butterfly effect<sup>1</sup> shows the fragility of a weather prediction based on the available initial conditions, seemingly mysterious traffic jams show the fragility of traffic systems. "Traffic, like weather and the stock market, turns out to be surprisingly complex and devilishly unpredictable" (Doug Stewart, 2001). Any number of variables could cause an accident or traffic jam. Because this is theoretically deterministic, but realistically chaotic, it is called deterministic chaos. This deterministic chaos is best described by a strange attractor.<sup>2</sup>

Although perhaps difficult to predict, mysterious traffic jams do have causes. Models simulate traffic jams by including a variety of initial conditions, or variables. The vehicles on the road and the road itself are the main variables for which models account. Weather is also an important variable; however, because of its complexity most models do not account for it. Within each variable lies another level of variables, for which the more complicated models also attempt to account. For example, vehicle movement, the first main variable, is affected by other variables: drivers and their demeanor. The second main variable, road layout, is also determined by subvariables: single or multi-lane road, legality of passing, the occurrence and location of ramps, road quality and width, construction, or traffic signs and signals. Different models use varying degrees and combinations of variables.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Lorenz's "butterfly effect" a hurricane is influenced by innumerable factors, including not only temperatures, humidity, and convection patterns, but also the motion of a butterfly's wing. Impossible to calculate in reality, the exact pattern of the hurricane is fully determined by the initial conditions of the system. In the example of a butterfly's effect on a hurricane, more butterflies flapping their wings will change the initial conditions of the system and have different effects on it.

<sup>2</sup> Strange attractors arise from deterministic chaos. In deterministic chaos, exact initial conditions cannot be known and the potential error of prediction increases exponentially as time passes.

Macroscopic models describe general traffic patterns using theories of fluid motion. On the other hand, microscopic models describe traffic as a system made up of separate variables (i.e. cars) which all behave by the same set of rules (Gazis, 1967). Cellular automaton models describe cars as individual units (these units are variables, which are called cells in cellular automata) with separate agendas (another layer of variables), which react differently to similar situations.

Microscopic models are based on the car-following theory, which states that each car is a separate system with a velocity dependent on that of the car in front of it. This theory applies to single lane roads because it deals only with posterior and anterior interactions. Equations created for the car-following theory incorporate different variables, such as an average reaction time and distance between vehicles. Each car is described by a differential equation that permits the car to act independently even as the same rules govern all the cars' actions. In a model designed based on the car-following theory, every car has the same, programmed reaction to a given situation, independent of driver demeanor. In real-life, however, each car has its own reaction based on various initial conditions imposed by the driver and the chain of vehicles.

Despite this drawback, microscopic models can accurately simulate various traffic conditions. Such simulations work only to show the behavior of a specific traffic system under specific road conditions. The ideal goal of the simulation is to mimic the behavior of the cars presently on the road. However, due to the restrictions set up by the car-following theory, microscopic models do not accurately simulate the behavior of the actual road. Instead, they predict the average behavior of a road and provide insight on road phenomenon such as repeating traffic jams along a certain stretch of road. Models and simulations are only a means of finding a possible path of a system; they cannot predict the outcome.



Resinck and Barret (1996) described the rules assigned for a simulation: accelerate to preferred speed when possible, slow down or turn when necessary (such as, according to the car-following theory, when the anterior car slows down), and at random intervals change current behavior (Dr. Paul Box, 2001). These rules are analogous to the behavior of biological systems when faced with a crisis. Just as cars on an unlimited roadway in a microscopic model will accelerate to preferred speed when possible, an unlimited species will procreate as rapidly as preferred (which is often as rapidly as possible). When all limits except space are ignored in either of these systems, disaster results. In the case of a traffic system, the car will crash into the car it is following; in the case of a species' population, the species will become extinct due to lack of space for procreation or lack of food supply. The rule requiring cars to change current behavior at random intervals is also analogous to biological systems. Biological species evolve in response to local circumstances, chaotically changing the speed of direction of evolution and affecting other species in the system. This same phenomenon occurs in science when revolutionary ideas disrupt the current state. Similarly, changing the current behavior of a car will change the speed or direction of the car and affect other cars in the system, changing the state of the system as in phase changes described in chemistry. The rules of a system describe their behavior at a bifurcation point<sup>3</sup> (The Arrow of Time, 1991).

The shift that a biological system makes, as in speciation, determines the true path of the system's evolution. So too with traffic evolution. The "decisions" made by the model are determined by the rules ascribed to the system. The closer the rules approximate real life, the

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<sup>3</sup> Also known as a crisis point, this is the point at which the path of a system will change.

closer the simulated path will be to the actual path, although over time the error in the path will increase exponentially because effects are cumulative.<sup>4</sup>

Continuum models, macroscopic in nature, attempt to approximate real life traffic systems through hydrodynamic models.<sup>5</sup> Many continuum models approach or converge upon the Navier Stokes equations used to describe the motion of liquids (Nagel, 1995). Some non-fluid systems, such as glaciers, act like viscous fluids when under extreme pressure, as does high-density traffic (low density traffic does not because it does not have the requisite regular interaction between vehicles). Macroscopic models use traffic flow theory to find the relationships between three main variables: traffic velocity, density, and flow. Traffic flow is based on density and velocity. With a low density and high velocity, flow is maximized and traffic flows freely. Other variables have been added to the traffic flow theory. Payne (1971) included inertia as a variable, replacing the previous assumption of the instantaneous reaction of cars following each other. Kühne (1984) included viscosity as a variable, further relating the traffic flow theory to fluid-dynamical models for traffic flow.

Free flow traffic relates to the laminar flow<sup>6</sup> of fluid systems (Lee *et al.*, 1998). Helbing and Treiber described how a ramp may cause fluid motion of traffic congestion (Helbing and Treiber, 1998); however, it is interesting to note that the congestion will move against traffic. This upstream movement of traffic congestion occurs because a car approaching congestion must decelerate to avoid collision, while the slower moving cars ahead stay unaffected (Beatty, 2001).

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<sup>4</sup> Once again, the deterministic chaos of a strange attractor describes this occurrence.

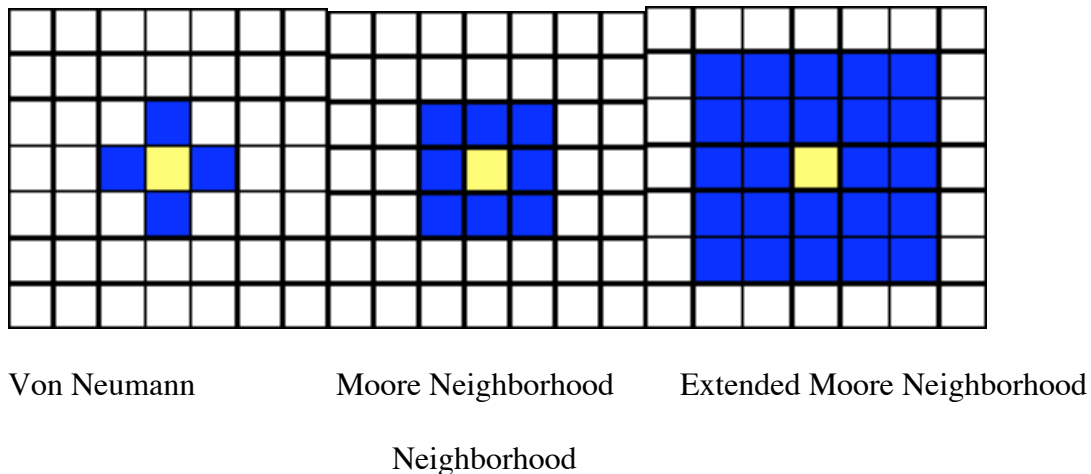
<sup>5</sup> Because hydrodynamic models deal with multi-dimensional interaction, they can be used to describe multi-lane roads whereas microscopic models, with one-dimensional interaction, cannot.

<sup>6</sup> Streamline flow in a fluid near a solid boundary (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

This anisotropic interaction, with zero effect on one system and a negative effect on the other, compares to the biological, non-trophic relationship amensalism (Nebel and Wright, 2001).

The anisotropic interactions of traffic systems may invalidate hydrodynamic models for congested traffic. Helbing and Treiber derived a formula for traffic flow using the Boltzmann factor from the Boltzmann equation for one-dimensional dense gases. The Boltzmann factor is standard for homogenous traffic, but for congested traffic, with anisotropic interactions, the factor changes according to the degree of congestion (Helbing and Treiber, 1998). Other macroscopic models can be used to describe congested traffic or traffic jams, often by manipulating an existing hydrodynamic model.

Cellular automata simulate individual cells to describe systems on a macroscopic level, often with a hydrodynamic model involving the cells (Lee et al., 1998). This is similar to describing the flow of water based on the knowledge of its molecules. The “cells” all obey the same rules and interact with one another based on those rules. They differ from the cars of microscopic models in that their interaction is not limited, as it is in microscopic models, to a car-following theory. Each cell has a state; in the case of traffic cellular automaton, the state may be defined as the speed or direction of the car (Green, 2001). Each cell has a neighborhood as well and each cell is also part of the neighborhood of the adjoining cell (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Three examples of described neighborhood in cellular automata (Cochinos, 2001)

Though the figure shows just one core cell with its neighborhood (black), each block is a cell with its own neighborhood. Different types of neighborhoods described for cellular automata include: von Neumann, Moore, and Extended Moore Neighborhoods (shown in the figure). Different neighborhoods change the patterns that emerge as the cells interact. “Evolutionary properties of the automata are properties that are affected by a rule” (Cochinos, 2001). Rules describe the relationships of neighborhood cells to the core cells, meaning that the state of neighborhood cells defines the state of the core cell in the next generation. The rules of cellular automata, coupled with the type of neighborhood, determine what kind of pattern emerges through interactions. Using cellular automata to describe traffic provides flexibility for defining the state of the cells, the neighborhoods, and the rules.

The state of the cells is defined by what the cellular automaton model is describing. For example, if the model describes a two-lane road that allows intermittent passing, the state may be described based on direction, since the primary point of interaction for cells is with those moving in the opposite direction (Beatty, 1998). If however, the model describes a multi-lane highway

with an on-ramp, then the state would be better defined as the position of the cell in relation to the ramp.

This same flexibility extends into the definition of the neighborhoods. A neighborhood for a single-lane road with no passing would only need to have a neighborhood directly in front of the cell, as there is no other point for interaction. However the cars, the cellular automaton, of an eight-lane divided highway would benefit from a neighborhood extending two cells on either side in order to determine the state of cells that may enter the lane of, and move next to, the central cell.

Rules should be determined by the culture of the area concerned; the attitude of the average driver should be reflected in the rules assigned. For example, in an area where aggressive drivers are typical, rules might allow cells (vehicles) to be adjacent. In an area with less aggressive drivers, the rules would show that more distance is left between cars; the rules in this case would provide for the movement of a core cells with the addition of an active neighborhood cell. The flexibility of the cellular automaton states, neighborhoods, and rules allows site-specific simulations.

Cellular automata simulations, in terms of cellular automaton, help describe the behavior of a site's traffic at a given site. The resulting patterns of a cellular automata model will either "die out, become stable or cycle with fixed period, grow indefinitely at a fixed speed, or grow and contract irregularly" (Green, 2001). These states are analogous to a biological system faced with an ecological crisis: extinction, migration, or adaptation. All of these behaviors result in the emergence of a self-organized pattern. Some cellular automaton form fractal patterns. As the pattern emerges, the original equation is replaced by subsequent equations and the pattern, or

evolution of the traffic system, shows irreversibility through self-organization. What may begin as a disordered, random compilation set of initial states evolves into a highly ordered system.

In traffic, cellular automata provide models on the macroscopic level, “sufficiently large cellular automata often show seemingly continuous macroscopic behavior. They can potentially serve as models for continuum systems, such as fluids” (Stephen Wolfram, 2001). Physical fluids themselves are made up of particles; they are only described as fluids when the particles act together in large groups (Cochinos, 2001). Similar to physical fluids, cellular automata describes discrete cells that interact in groups and form macroscopic patterns.

The large-scale cellular automaton models, involving numerous discrete cells, are mathematically feasible thanks to advance in computer technology. Advancing computers are able to handle increasingly complex cellular automaton models with large numbers of variables. An example of cellular automata is the computer model called Langton’s Ant. Here, cells are given a state (initially black or white although variations allow additional colors) and an ant moving throughout the system follows a rule: turn right at every white square and left at every black square (Ian Stewart, 1994). As the ant leaves a cell, the state of the cell reverses. Langton’s Ant is used to show self-organization because the ant’s path eventually finds a pattern (see Figure 2). The occurrences of hexagonal patterns in fluids in laboratories and in quickly cooling lava in the natural formation of igneous rock also demonstrate self-organization.



**Figure 2:** Langton's Ant demonstrating self-organization

Traffic cellular automaton models are based on the same principles as in the Langton's Ant Program, but they are much more complex, involving systems within systems. For example, TRANSIMS is a synthetic population program for the city of Portland, Oregon (Stewart, 2001). People are the original cells for this automaton, and subsequently, cars become cells containing people (cells). Each cell has its own assigned demeanor, just as the average person would. The cells all operate under the same rules, attempting to complete their individual agendas, but reacting to the presence of other cells as governed by the defined rules. In this way, the cells affect their environments while they are simultaneously affected by feedback from this environment. This method creates a more realistic simulation that better approximates the interactions of real cars, which depend on the drivers within them.

Both biologic and traffic models attempt to describe traffic as a strange attractor; they have been developed based on a need as determined by biologists and traffic engineers. Each of these mathematical traffic models (microscopic, macroscopic, and a combination of the two, such as cellular automata) has, perhaps unknowingly, included components comparable to biological systems. The appearance of these components in the mathematical models of traffic

systems shows the correlation between biological systems and cultural systems. Cultural systems are, after all, created by biological organisms of biological systems, thus systems such as traffic will tend to include components of biological evolution. Common in both cultural traffic systems and biological systems are interactions among parts. In traffic systems these parts are cars; in biological systems they may be species, or individuals, and in cellular automaton models they are “cells”. The interactions between these parts in every kind of system create a choice at a bifurcation point: die out, migrate, or adapt. In traffic, these choices can be reworded as crash, move, or change speed.

The similarities between biological and traffic systems allows for interchange between models, although biologists have not taken advantage of such interchanges. Just as non-trophic relationships, a model of relationships in biological systems, can be applied to the interaction between cells in cellular automaton models, so can the traffic models be used as a base for models of biological systems.

Every model, whether of traffic flow or a biological system, represents an attempt to better predict the emerging patterns of the system’s evolution. Microscopic models deal with simpler traffic systems such as single-lane roads with no passing; these models are beneficial because they can predict the simpler system in more depth than a macroscopic model.

Macroscopic models account for multiple lanes and passing, so although they are more useful for highways and multi-lane roads, they cannot include as many other initial conditions. Cellular automaton models take advantage of advances in technology and create realistic simulations that include many more variables than other models can. By including not only the main variables of vehicles and road conditions, but also the variables (or cells) within those variables, cellular automata allows more realistic modeling.



In models of strange attractors describing evolving traffic systems, any missing or inaccurate initial condition will become an error in the prediction of the system and this error will increase exponentially over time. Hence, no traffic model can predict a system with complete accuracy. However, the more initial conditions the model includes, and the smaller the time interval, the more precise the prediction will be. Models, macroscopic or microscopic, whether for biological systems or traffic systems, are an attempt to demystify the deterministic chaos of strange attractors. Though never unerring, the models of traffic systems include varying initial conditions, or variables, in an attempt to predict ever more accurately the evolution of traffic systems.

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# The Interpretations of Jihad: Detrimental Orientalist Thought and its Consequences

By Saiba Varma

Prof. Taggart

ANT 100A: Social Anthropology

*The assignment:* In response to the events of September 11, 2001, Prof. James Taggart and his First Year Seminar students designed a research project on the Islamic world. With help from Prof. Taggart and Pam Snelson, the College Librarian, students formulated their own research topics. The project culminated in both an oral presentation and an essay.

*Professor Taggart's comments:* "Saiba's essay [is] superb because it blend[s] a thorough knowledge of the subject—the Jihad—with her subtle and splendid use of Clifford Geertz's theory of religion. Saiba used her understanding of Geertz to place different forms of the Jihad in their historical and cultural context."

Any discourse on the Koran, and particularly jihad done by an outsider which fails to recognize the tentative epistemology involved could be dismissed as simplistic, Orientalist<sup>7</sup>— in a word, incomplete. Yet, if we, as ethnographers, can embrace this uncertainty even though it may contradict our initial impulses to “order” and “organize” webs of meaning, we can realize an interpretation which is not axiomatic, but nonetheless valid. This paper is an interpretation, one that is “something made” on the shoulders of other anthropological works, but not necessarily “false [or] unfactual.”<sup>8</sup> Considering the abundance of conflict that exists within and outside the Islamic world on the jihad, it is crucial that an argument is representative of different interpretations, and one which is conscious of the inherent biases of the author and the sources utilized. This paper will focus on a few salient conflicts within Islam regarding jihad such as whether it is valid only as a defensive strategy or whether it can be waged offensively as well. It will also attempt to discuss the false ontology created by Orientalist thought. What further complicates the interpretation of jihad is the material in which it is contained; the Koran and *hadiths* are often ambiguous and vague, which allows much room for varied, and often conflicting, interpretations. Jihad cannot be generalized semantically within the Islamic world as it is interpreted differently by different groups. All “outsider” and “insider” interpretations are not the same. Jihad can only be understood in an isolated context, for its position in the “webs of meaning” for particular groups differs depending on their social and geographical location.

According to Geertz, the study of religion must be done in two stages. First, an analysis of the system of meanings embodied within the religion itself need to be examined.

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<sup>7</sup> An understanding which is broadly based, overly systematic, and generalized.

<sup>8</sup> Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures. 1973. Basic Books: New York, p.15

These systems must then be related to social and psychological processes. In the study of jihad, however, the related social and psychological processes differ from group to group within the Islamic world. This means that the window that an outsider has can be drastically different from the perspective of an insider, who may be biased in a particular way based on their location in the Islamic world. Analyzing a complex semiotic system like jihad challenges Geertz's notion of the function of a cultural system. According to him, cultural systems formulate conceptions of a general order of existence; jihad, however, shapes different ethos for different people depending on their interpretation of the holy texts. In other words, "the tone, character and quality of a people's lives, its moral and aesthetic style and mood, and their world view—their comprehensive ideas of order"<sup>9</sup>, is formed to best fit their state of affairs. Jihad formulates no "general order of existence" for Muslims, as its semantic importance differs from region to region. Unlike the broad umbrella of Islam which provides universals which are adhered to by all Muslims (for example, that Allah is the only God), jihad does not fit into Geertz's mold of a cultural system. For example, there are great differences between the Sunni and Shiite interpretations of jihad. Shiites believe that jihad can only be waged under the leadership of the rightful *Imam*<sup>10</sup>, whereas Sunni interpretations are more concentrated on the verses dealing with the rules of warfare to be observed.

What also contributes to the existence of various interpretations is the text of the Koran, which, like all religious books, is shrouded in some degree of ambiguity and vagueness. Its role in society or its effect on people's psyche also changes from place to place. Weber explained this complex and sometimes contradictory phenomenon of interpretation as well as the motives of the interpreter:

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89

<sup>10</sup> leader

Neither men nor religion are open books. They have been historical rather than logical or even psychological constructions without contradiction. Often they have borne within themselves a series of motives . . . . In religious matters “consistency” has been the exception and not the rule.<sup>11</sup>

The attempt at pursuing a universal meaning of jihad is, according to Weber, futile. Instead, jihad needs to be understood within a cultural context. Culture, according to Geertz, is not “a power—something to which social events, behaviors, institutions or processes can be causally attributed, it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly, or thickly, described.”<sup>12</sup>

There is division within the Islamic world which Orientalists do not acknowledge. Some Muslims believe that there are two kinds of jihad—a greater jihad called Jihad Akbar, and a lesser jihad called Jihad Asghar. They believe that Jihad Akbar involves not just the fight against nonbelievers, but also against desires and temptation which are incongruent with Islamic law. A Muslim following Jihad Akbar would be expected to live a somewhat austere life. Others, specifically classic theologians, jurists and traditionalists, however, interpret the act of death on the battlefield as having the highest honor. Even within jurisprudence, which is itself a school of thought, there is further division between those who believe in *dar al-islam* and *dar al-Harb*. *Dal al-Harb* justified defensive jihad, whereas *dar al-Islam* can be seen as the root of modern-day fundamentalist Islam in that it propagates offensive jihad. There are parts of the Koran that seem to propagate this view but are contradicted by verses urging pacification. For example, “So when you meet in Jihad, those who disbelieve, smite their necks till you have killed and

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<sup>11</sup> Kelsay, John. Islam and War: A Study in Comparative Ethics. 1993. Westminster Knox Pr: New York, p. 43

<sup>12</sup> Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Culture. 1973. Basic Books: New York, p.14

wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly on them” (47:4). In addition, a man asks Rasulullah, “. . . and what is Jihad?” He replied, “You fight against the nonbelievers when you meet him on the battlefield.” He is asked again: “What kind of Jihad is the highest?” “The person who is killed whilst spilling the last of his blood.” These verses, which contain elements of violence in literal and symbolic interpretation, are juxtaposed against phrases in the Koran which urge tolerance: “there is no compulsion in religion,” for example (2:256). As interpreters, we need to be aware of the fact that these verses need to be carefully understood in the context of their setting by the outsider. They were written in the Koran to explain particular incidents and were written to instigate a sense of community in Muslims, and a sense of duty to protect what is sacred to them.

One method of interpretation stressed by Montgomery Watt, an Emeritus professor at the University of Edinburgh, is through a liturgical understanding of the text.<sup>13</sup> Watt, although an outsider to Islam, has written multiple books on the religion and is considered an expert in the field. However, his interpretation can be seen as opposed to a symbolic or chronological interpretation of the text. Watt’s method of interpretation allows Koranic doctrines to be seen in many different ways by different cultures. This definition allows much room for the wide interpretation that a loose term like jihad requires. However, Western understanding of Islam has not always resulted in positive consequences. The word jihad has found its place in the English language for example, but unfortunately, the multiple meanings it infers in Arabic have been lost to one notorious connotation—that of armed warfare—due to outsider misrepresentation. This stresses the importance of language as a mode of symbol formation; an ignorant outsider is immediately disadvantaged then, just by a limit of vocabulary in their

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<sup>13</sup> Watt, Montgomery. What is Islam. 1979. Longman Group Publishing: London, p.104

understanding of jihad. In Arabic, the word can mean an effort, or a struggle, not necessarily against an external force. The Koran stresses the importance of self-sacrifice within the doctrine; whether this is literal in terms of terrorism or symbolic in terms of life-style decisions, is the root of many modern-day disputes. Even for a Muslim however, the question raised is what constitutes jihad? Which interpretation, if any, is ‘correct’ and closest to what Muhammad intended? The truth is that there is no universal, all-encompassing answer.

Another Western Islamic expert, Rudolph Peters advocates a different method of interpretation. In his book, Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam, Peters explains that one way of interpreting jihad is in explaining the verses and chapters of the Koran in their traditional order. This may be done from different points of view—historically, grammatically, stylistically, or philosophically. According to Peters, however, this method is flawed, because all these trends in interpretation tend to “obscure the Divine Guidance.”<sup>14</sup> The correct way, according to him, is to organize verses thematically and analyze them in their interrelations. What is undisputed is that jihad is seen as the greatest duty to Allah. This is apparent through the rewards offered for jihad—the ablution of sins to the guaranteed entrance into heaven to the guarantee of a painless death. However, one of the major controversies that arises is whether this entails self-sacrifice as the jurists would proclaim, or merely sacrifice on the battlefield.

Jihad has had important historical functions in different regions of the world, which can partly explain the varied interpretations that exist. In the Koran, the doctrine is expressed as a method in which cohesion could be maintained within the Islamic world. According to Rudolph Peters, this still is its most important function, that it, “mobilizes and motivates Muslims to take

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<sup>14</sup> Peters Rudolph. Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader. 1996. Princeton University Press: Princeton, p.87



part in wars against unbelievers, as it is considered to be the fulfillment of a religious duty.”<sup>15</sup>

Here, however, the ethnographer has to be critical of Peters’ approach which seems to be characteristic of an Orientalism. Historically, jihad has been a successful motivational stratagem but on a small-scale, such as in Taliban ideology. There are problems posed with this unitary portrayal of Muslims and the meaning of jihad as a ‘war against unbelievers’ as well as its power to motivate and mobilize them sufficiently. This assumption that jihad has the same meaning, effect and importance for all Muslims is faulty, according to scholars like Edward Said who writes that the idea of a monolithic body that comprises ‘Islam’ is flawed:

The personification of enormous entities called “the West” and “Islam” is recklessly affirmed, as if hugely complicated matters like identity and culture existed in a cartoonlike world where Popeye and Bluto bash each other mercilessly, with one always more virtuous pugilist getting the upper hand over his adversary.<sup>16</sup>

Jihad also provided a set of norms which served to govern the relationship with the unbelieving enemies and outlined a set of behavioral codes during actual warfare. It was also used as a political tool by rulers to gain leeway against each other after the political unity of the Islamic *umma* was shattered in 750 AD.

Jihad not only differs spatially, but has also metamorphosed through time. According to Abdul-Rauf: “the unmistakable predominance of jihad as warfare in Shari’a writing does not mean that Muslims today must view jihad as the jurists did a millenium ago.”<sup>17</sup> This has led to

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*,p.90

<sup>16</sup> Said, Edward. “The Clash of Ignorance,” *The Nation*, October 22, 2001, p.11

<sup>17</sup> “Martin, Richard, Ed. *Islam in Religious Studies*. “Outsiders’ Interpretations of Islam: A Muslim’s Point of View” by Muhammad Abdul-Rauf 1985. Arizona State University: Tempe, p.185

the development of many modernist approaches to jihad. He writes that today a Muslim can mean multiple things by the use of the word jihad—from the Sufi’s moral self-improvement to the modernist’s notion of social and political reform. He writes that “classical texts speak only to, not for, contemporary Muslims.” Although a Muslim can dismiss jihad as only warfare, he cannot deny the existence of the concept. Mujahideens, those who believe in the meaning of jihad as warfare, for example, embrace the literal meaning of the Koran.

Whether jihad is imbibed in the fifth pillar of Islam is a matter of debate between and within Muslim and Western scholars. Many Orientalist writers, such as Bernard Lewis in his essay, “The Roots of Muslim Rage,” identified the Islamic world as a threat to the unity of Western civilization. He asserts that jihad motivates Muslims to commit atrocities against nonbelievers and that it is intended to divide the world into two hostile camps— Muslim and non-Muslim. Scholars like Said have rejected his view, claiming that it is not Islamic law, but Orientalist arguments such as those espoused by Lewis and Huntington which have polarized the world and adversely affected relations between two artificially constructed entities. The notion of the ‘West’ versus the “Islamic world” as monolithic entities is a flawed approach to global politics, he argues. It has grave consequences according to Said:

If Orientalism . . . has a structure, this resides in its tendency to *dicbotomize* the human continuum into we-they contrasts and to *essentialize* the resultant “other”—to speak of the oriental mind, for example, or even to generalize about “Islam” . . . All of these Orientalist “visions” and “textualizations” function to suppress an authentic “human” reality.<sup>18</sup>

Muhammad Abdul-Rauf is an Islamic writer and seems to agree with Said’s belief that much of

Orientalist thought has been flawed. Although cautious of Western perception of Islam, he does acknowledge the advantages Islamic studies has had for Muslims and non-Muslims. At times his criticism is sharp, but it is softened by an analysis of Muslim misinterpretation vis-à-vis the West. The distortion occurs both ways, according to him. He attributes the prevalence of the Orientalist approach has been colored by a complicated legacy of unhappy past political experiences and continuing prejudices. An example has been the coining and overuse of the word ‘fundamentalist’ to describe traditional views of Islam which are defined as understanding the Koran literally. He claims that this term is not representative of the ‘fundamentalists’ understood by Muslims. For example, Sunnite fundamentalists accept the Koran literally, but they have other distinctive features which separates them from other groups labeled due to superficial understanding, as fundamentalists. The Shiites of Iran, who are fundamentalists in a general sense, are not committed to a literal interpretation of the Koran. Therefore, those examining Islamic texts with an Orientalist understanding of the religion and its cultural systems are essentially skating blindfolded on thin ice—and are sure to run into disaster in the interpretations at which they arrive.

The role of ethnographers, then, is essential; their books and knowledge form the backbone of our interpretations. They are the bridges that can serve to reduce the distance between the “us” and “them”, and instead of creating divisions, if done correctly, can actually help us understand the totality of human reality.<sup>19</sup> According to Geertz, the duty of the ethnographer is to try and understand what goes on in these “strange places” and relate them to his own by making them familiar.

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<sup>18</sup> Clifford, James. The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography. Literature and Art. 1988. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, p. 258

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.261

This paper has attempted to illustrate the value in understanding jihad in a given context, and the folly in trying to create a generalized position. When examining Islam, we must remember that the meaning of jihad is dynamic, depending on the context, group, and time period we are examining. Undoubtedly, there is no one correct way to completely understand the Koran. Yet there are some distinctively wrong ways of judging it, and one that must be guarded against at all costs is Orientalism.

## Richard Nixon and His Mother

By Elizabeth Rahn

Prof. Frick

ENG 172: American Dreams

*The assignment:* Select some moment from Robert Altman's film Secret Honor that interests you. Next, find out as much about the historical aspects of this portion of the film as you can in the library. By comparing your historical research with the portion from the film, suggest

- how the filmmakers transform the Richard Nixon of history into a fictional character. and
- how this fictional Nixon comments on America and the American dream.

*Professor Frick's comments:* "Liz's paper models the importance of the revision process. Her rough draft held promise, but did not say one word about her historical research applied to Altman's film. But, in the two weeks between the first draft and the final one, Liz wrote and re-wrote her essay; more than half of this last version was composed during this time. Her thesis statement grew more specific, and her essay now responded to the assignment by providing analysis of moments from Secret Honor. Liz didn't just make assertions. She offered examples from the film—and explained *in detail* why she thought those examples supported her arguments."

Dear Master: The two boys you left me with are very bad to me. Their dog Jim is very old and he will never talk or play with me. One Saturday the boys went hunting...while going through the woods one of the boys tripped and fell on me. I lost my temper and bit him. He kicked me in the side...I started to run...When I got home I was very sore. I wish you would come home right now. Your good dog, Richard. (qtd. in Abrahamsen 60)

Above is a letter Richard Nixon wrote to his mother at the ripe young age of ten. The letter can be used as a tool to gaining insight into Richard Nixon's relationship with his mother, Hannah Nixon. The character of Nixon, in the movie *Secret Honor*, reads the good dog letter. *Secret Honor*, by writers Freed and Stone, provides a fictional representation of Richard Nixon in the context of his office after he had resigned from the presidency. The movie portrays Nixon as emotionally unstable, angry, untrusting, and betrayed. Leading up to his reading of the "good dog letter," as Nixon scholars refer to it, he talks of how he owes Kissinger nothing; his mother is the only one he owes (Freed and Stone 20). His emotions shift from being extremely angry to nostalgically smiling and back to angry again when he remembers his mother and then recites the good dog letter. President Richard Nixon thought of his mother as a saint, but the good dog letter implies she may not have been a saint in reality, but rather a controlling, abandoning mother. Secret Honor implies that Nixon publicly loved and admired his mother, but underneath of that facade lays an angry search for Hannah's forgiveness. Freed and Stone present Nixon as a mercy seeking, angry son, and tell the audience that the American dream cannot be fulfilled without breaking mother's rules.

Hannah Nixon was a controlling mother and this created a close but unhealthy relationship between Nixon and his mother. David Abrahamsen, author of *Nixon vs. Nixon*,

wrote that the letter is to “master,” but Nixon is referring to his mother, which shows that Nixon thought of his mother as his leader and owner (62). “Without her he seems to be lost and vulnerable in a hostile world” (Abrahamsen 62). From an early age, Nixon needed his mother’s guidance, which in reality is the strict control she exercised over him. In Fawn M. Brodie’s psychobiography of Nixon, Marshall Clough Jr., a friend of Harold Nixon’s, said about Hannah, “She made you want to do what she wanted you to do”(Brodie 57). Nixon wanted to please his mother because she gave him the feeling that he needed to. Brodie went on to say that Hannah appeared subdued when it came to her children because her control was not straightforward (57). Nixon obviously knew she was strong, and he viewed her as his master. Brodie also implied that living with a mother like Hannah was probably very stressful for Nixon (57). Ola Jobe, Nixon’s girlfriend, referred to Hannah as “an iron fist in a velvet glove” (qtd. in Brodie 57).

These strong views on Hannah’s control were not backed up by Nixon’s outward loving personal opinion of his mother. In his book, *The Arrogance of Power*, Anthony Summers quotes Nixon calling Hannah “the gentlest, most considerate woman” (qtd. in Summers 8). Summers said Nixon always publicly viewed her in a kind eye, and others that may not have known her so well did the same. Many friends and neighbors commented on her quietness and gentleness (8). This view of Hannah goes along with the views of the Quaker faith she was brought up in. In his psychobiography of Nixon, Vamik Volkan commented that Quakers place a high importance on privacy, and are usually calm people who keep their emotions to themselves (23). Nixon said, “my mother was a saint” (qtd. in Brodie 53). He means this, too, because he portrayed her as a saint, a person who was the perfect mother to him. Brodie said Nixon also spoke often of his mother’s internal rest, her perseverance, and her ability to bring those traits to him (53).

The good dog letter shows a feeling of his mother's abandonment deep within young Richard Nixon. There are many examples of his mother's leaving Richard throughout his life, before and after the writing of the good dog letter. One can start at a very young age and trace the times Nixon may have felt abandoned by Hannah. Volkan reported that Hannah had a lengthy recuperation after Richard's birth; therefore, she was unable to give Nixon the immediate mother attention a newborn usually gets. Six months after Richard was born, Hannah nursed her ill sister's baby along with Richard (32). And later in Nixon's life, Hannah left him to take his ill brother to Arizona. The brother later died. The language within the letter shows us blatantly the issue of abandonment because it says at the beginning, "the two dogs that you left me with . . ." and at the end, "I wish you would come home right now." Clearly, Hannah is not there when Nixon needs her.

Hannah was not only physically absent to Nixon, but she was also emotionally unavailable. When Nixon felt alone and troubled, he should have been able to feel the support of his mother, but the good dog letter shows us that his mother was unavailable to him in times of need. Not only was she unavailable to him, but also she never showed outpouring of love and emotion towards Nixon or his brothers. Richard Bergholz once watched Nixon when he had not seen his mother in a long time, "all he could do was shake her hand; he couldn't show any form of affection" (qtd. in Summers 9). Nixon even said himself about Hannah, "I never heard her say to me or anyone else, 'I love you'" (qtd. in Summers 9). Nixon mentions nothing of love, or even of missing Hannah in the good dog letter. He simply says that he wishes she would come home to protect him from the troubles he is facing. Dr. Hutschnecker, Nixon's psychotherapist, said that Hannah was "not really close to Richard. . . . No woman ever gave Nixon the support he really



needed” (qtd. in Summers 9). The lack of love and emotional expression in Nixon’s young life contributed to a denial of emotions in his later, public life as well.

The dog letter shows Nixon was an extremely confused young boy, and research shows Hannah may have recognized some of the confusion. Roger Morris quotes Hannah in his biography of Nixon, “I think it was Arthur’s passing that first stirred within Richard a determination to help make up for our loss by making us proud of him. Now his need to succeed became even stronger” (qtd. in Morris 85). Hannah also said that as a child, “Richard always seemed to need me more than the other four sons did...” (qtd. in Brodie 54). So in effect Hannah may have been quite aware of Nixon’s troubles and emotional confusion, but because she was raised as she raised Nixon, she saw no problems in the situation.

*Secret Honor* uses Hannah to create a link to the emotional and angry side of Nixon’s inner self that the public never even got a glimpse of. Using the emotions that come out of the good dog letter, *Secret Honor* develops the character of Nixon through his relationship with Hannah. Nixon is a man with a mother who he dealt with only by struggling to succeed constantly in a futile attempt to gain her love. In public, Nixon was self made, strong, and independent. In *Secret Honor* he seeks refuge in his mother only to discover that thinking of her brings out more emotions he cannot deal with. The good dog letter shows us that throughout his childhood he sought emotional refuge in his mother, but she was either physically absent or emotionally unable to provide a safe haven for Nixon.

One can trace the hidden anger that Nixon feels towards his mother in *Secret Honor* through the scene of the good dog letter. Initially in the scene, Nixon is feeling angry and guilty as he tries to explain himself. He begins to look for his mother’s Bible in what appears to be a search for comfort from the mother he loves. And he flips through the album in a more relaxed

manner—until he comes across the letter. He says, “Oh, no.” The relaxed look leaves his face, and is replaced by one of sadness underlined faintly with anger (Secret Honor). The audience is made to feel that the bottom line is that as a child, Nixon’s mother made him feel like her dog. Nixon is angry about being made to play the role of his mother’s dog, but even he does not realize his underlying anger. Freed and Stone are right on because they portray his anger in this initial honest scene about Hannah as an undercurrent of emotion.

As the movie continues, Freed and Stone show how Nixon put his mother on a religious pedestal. He is enraged about Eisenhower when he suddenly reverts to talking about his mother, still with a look of anger. He says, “My mother was a saint, and I’m a liar because I’m a man who...who...I just wanted to get some power, that’s all” (Freed and Stone 25). These two thoughts do not seem to mesh with one another. He seems angry with his mother for being a saint, a woman to be worshipped, and at the same time he is infuriated at himself because he is a liar, a power hungry liar at that. The combination of saint and sinner, mother and son here screams to the audience that Nixon could not live the holy life she quietly pushed on him. And Nixon is actually screaming because Hannah created the saint-sinner relationship he has to live with.

Freed and Stone effectively show Nixon’s search for approval from his mother as a religious search for forgiveness. “I can feel my mother’s eyes right now beaming down on me, searchlights of truth burning into each crisis in my miserable life” (Freed and Stone 26). The symbolism of this line in the movie is very religious. Hannah appears to play the same role in Nixon’s life as Jesus Christ would play in the life of a devout Christian. Nixon does not just seek his mother’s approval; he seeks her mercy. “Mother, have mercy on your little dog” (Freed and

Stone 26). Nixon's request for his mother's mercy finally puts their relationship in perspective. Richard Nixon wants his mother's forgiveness, and he is angry because she never gave it to him.

*Secret Honor* moves on to show Nixon's search for forgiveness and efforts to gain Hannah's saint-like guidance through his weak attempts at explanation and admission of guilt. "I just wanted to be a man, that's all...not a dog, not a nothing...A real man...Mother? Do you understand this? ...Mother? Mother? Mother?! *I know what I did*...Mother tell me who I am" (Freed and Stone 30). Telling Hannah he wanted to be a man, not a dog, is Nixon's explanation for defying her. Nixon went against his mother's control, broke the rules of her saintly existence, because he wanted power. Now he wants Hannah to understand why because he wants her to redefine his role in life. As a child, he was his mother's dog. Obedient, he had her approval, but now he has broken the rules. Nixon does not know where he stands in the eyes of his mother the saint. He wants Hannah to make him her dog again, to forgive him.

All of his life, Nixon tried to balance his desire to achieve dreams of power with the controlling emotional force of his mother who wants him to be the good son. He broke Hannah's rule of always be honest, and he admittedly made mistakes. But Richard Nixon is angry because he has not been forgiven. He makes it quite clear in *Secret Honor* that the pardon was not enough because the American public still has not forgiven him. He is creating a legal brief in the movie in order to let the public know the whole truth about him in hopes that they will forgive him. He continuously gets sidetracked by thoughts of Hannah, therefore showing that ultimately he seeks to be forgiven by his mother, not just the American public. Hannah is the one who he knows would not forgive his actions because he slipped out of her control. He ran away from home and transformed himself from the role of his mother's dog into the President of the United States. Yet he could not be both President and his mother's faithful disciple. At the

point in his life where *Secret Honor* starts, Nixon may be wishing that he did not stray out of the yard to become the President. Richard Nixon wants his mother to forgive him for breaking the leash she held.

*Secret Honor* comments on impossibility of complete fulfillment of the American Dream by saying that one cannot obtain a powerful position without breaking mother's rules. One cannot follow the moral path mother ultimately wishes and achieve success. The American dream requires deceit, bribery, and breaking the rules. Nixon was caught by the public; many are not. But mother catches everyone. American individuals seeking a dream cannot escape the influence their mothers have on them. And if you break the rules and stray from the yard like Nixon did, you will ultimately spend your life seeking your mother's unattainable forgiveness. Not only does *Secret Honor* accurately reveal Nixon's hidden search for Hannah's mercy, but also it reveals that anyone in search of power will also seek their mother's mercy for their sins in the end.

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# The Gulag Archipelago

By Adnan Azam

Prof. Stevenson

MSS 138: Unfreedom

*The assignment:* “In crafting this assignment, I was trying to accomplish two things: to deter plagiarism and to guide students through the design of an essay. The format of a proposal for a documentary film suggested itself since we had read a book on TV news and documentaries early in this foundations course. The assignment asked students to answer the questions with which Mr. Azam has preceded each section. I suggested the length for each section, and we discussed in class various approaches to answering the questions.”

*Professor Stevenson's comments:* “Adnan’s paper earned a high grade because of its clarity, organization, and argument. He succeeded in making his writing very visual. That is, he used Solzenitsyn’s evidence to let the reader see the points he wished to make.”

### **1) What is the point of your documentary?**

In our capitalistic society, there are many things that we take for granted. As a consequence, we are not inclined to give much thought to possible differences in life in alternate social systems or to the strengths and weaknesses of various systems. *The Gulag Archipelago* is concerned primarily with labor camps and communism, which, due to their conflict with Western capitalism, are perceived by many as the root cause of the Cold War. In this book, Alexander Solzhenitsyn gives the reader an insight into the communist system at work in Josef Stalin's Soviet Union.

In my documentary, I will focus on the corrective labor camps, which, according to Solzhenitsyn, were the “very liver of events” (142) in the Soviet Union, in detail. (He means that just as the liver secretes bile in the human body, the gulags secreted revolutionary elements in the Soviet society that could not have functioned without them.) I hope that the points I discuss will underscore the fundamental differences between the communism and capitalism, which made it possible for the labor camps to exist. Finally, I want the viewer to be able to identify the restrictions on the freedom of the people in the camps and in the Soviet Union generally in that era. Conversely, I also want them to realize how apertures in the inhibitive walls erected by the state allowed for some degree of freedom for the people. In this way, the viewers will not only realize the essence of freedom, but also understand freedom in the larger context of their own society.

**2a) What are the topics it will address and why will it choose to address these topics? 3) What will each segment cover? What will be its evidence? What will it show, whom will it interview, or what will the reporter say?**

The documentary will address the following topics: the rationale behind the gulags and what they achieved; the social conditions in the Soviet Union and other factors that made their existence possible; and the living conditions in the camps.

*The Rationale Behind the Gulags and What They Achieved*

Solzhenitsyn says that there was an “economic necessity” and a “theoretical justification” for the camps (142). The development plans of the Soviet Union, designed to compete with the West, could only have been achieved at the expense of the well-being of the population, which was being decimated by the gulags. Some of the construction projects, such as Belamor Canal, were not required and were built in such a short time span that they were not suitable for commercial use. Solzhenitsyn says that such projects were designed to “devour” working hands and to build monuments that were a testimony to the greatness of the Soviet Union and its leader (86). In addition, the camps transformed the people into “builders of socialism” (qtd. in Solzhenitsyn 104) and focused on “cultural-educational” and “political-indoctrinational” measures (qtd. in Solzhenitsyn 103). In this way, not only were the principles of communism, such as collective responsibility, being forcibly ingrained in the people through the camps, but Stalin’s grip on power was also being cemented by the fear that the camps instilled in the people.

*The Social Conditions in the Soviet Union*

*and Other Factors that Made Their Existence Possible*

Absolute power for a megalomaniac, Stalin, meant that he could achieve his objectives through the means he desired without being accountable to anyone. This situation initiated a self-perpetuating cycle: the fear that gripped the people made them concerned with their survival only, and they ignored what was going on around them, thus making it possible for the Archipelago to stand firm. As Solzhenitsyn says, the mentality of the Soviet public was: “If they



are not [beat]ing you” do not interfere and get yourself into trouble (428). Solzhenitsyn mentions individualism as a trait of the people in those days (516), and that this resulted in people being involved only with their own lives in search of “negative freedom” (519). He says that “trusties” were the “magic chain” in the Archipelago, which would have collapsed without them (260-261). However, the trusties did not try to break the system and continued cooperating with the camp authorities in return for the benefits that they received. Nevertheless, there were people in the camps, “the loyalists,” who believed that the system was just and fair, and that, although they were arrested due to a rare mistake, most of the people had been imprisoned “for the good cause” (336). The existence of such people further strengthened the foundations of the Archipelago.

### *The Living Conditions in the Camps*

Brutal punishments, impossible-to-achieve work norms, and petty food rations made life miserable to the extent that prisoners mutilated themselves to get away from the camps for as long as possible. Solzhenitsyn talks about his own experience and says that he often prayed for death, which was much better than life in the gulags. He also mentions a “pleasant weakness, in which it is easier to give in than to fight back” (197). Therefore, the workers, demoralized by the atrocious living conditions, lacked the mental and physical strength to offer any resistance to the system, which eventually had complete control over their lives.

Although it would be appropriate to interview Solzhenitsyn himself, the documentary would present an alternate perspective if other surviving camp veterans or former camp officials were interviewed. The reason for this choice is that while the viewers are being exposed to Solzhenitsyn’s opinion on the issue because this documentary is based on his book, they would not be sharing the views of some other individuals with as much experience of the gulags as

Solzhenitsyn. Interviews of former camp officials would be particularly interesting because they would be asked to respond to what Solzhenitsyn has said in *The Gulag Archipelago*.

**2b) What are the topics it will have to omit and why will little be lost if they are omitted?**

The book contains several anecdotal accounts of the experiences of particular people in the gulag. For instance, he talks about Sergei Andreyevich Chebotaryov, who was tragically separated from his wife and two sons, but was later united with his wife and one of his sons (403). He also gives the account of a woman thief in a camp, Beregovaya (437), and how she lives her term in the camp. Although such accounts are unique and help one to realize the conditions in the camps, one can understand the author's viewpoint and the message that he intends to convey even when they are omitted. In the introduction to this book, Solzhenitsyn himself says, "To taste the sea all one needs is a gulp." Consistent with the author's personal view, an understanding of the camps will not be hampered by the omission of such accounts.

**4) Concluding segment. How will this experience be summed up for the viewers?  
What overall impression do you want the viewer to have?**

After watching this documentary, the viewer should have an understanding of how the population of the Soviet Union, inside and outside the camps, was being subjugated to complete servility by the brutality of their ruler, Josef Stalin. The prisoners were deprived of physical and mental freedom. They were, obviously, confined to the camp compound and the guards had the permission to shoot anyone trying to escape or not complying with rules and regulations. Those who managed to break the shackles by escaping were not guaranteed freedom either: first, the surrounding population was encouraged by generous rewards to hand over fugitives (396);

second, former prisoners had to change their identity by acquiring false documents to avoid being tracked down by the state intelligence agency, the MGB (395).

Moreover, under Article 12 of the Criminal Code of 1926, children aged 12 and above could be sentenced to terms in the camps. As a result, by 1927, 48 per cent of the prisoners were aged between 16 and 24 (448). This surprisingly high proportion had great implications for the freedom of the camp population: due to their young age and limited exposure to life in freedom, these prisoners were not only more susceptible to ideas that they were exposed to, but also felt that any resistance from them would not be efficacious against the system. Means for exploiting the vulnerability of such prisoners included theatrical performances with “politically relevant themes” (471) and a “free camp press,” which Solzhenitsyn dubs “the best collaborator of the Security Section” (475).

The population outside the camps, especially people with relatives in the gulags, was under strict surveillance of the MGB, which was looking for a pretext to make arrests. Thieves were encouraged by the state and were only extended minor punishments. The philosophy behind this was that as theft was antithetical to capitalism and not hostile to communism, thieves were “socially friendly elements.” Having to deal with this menace without the cooperation of the state apparatus, people were not even allowed to report crimes in the newspapers because reporting crimes would have implied the existence of classes in Soviet society, and the existence of classes was not compatible with communism (432). Other such restrictions meant that the press was merely a voice of the state, and the people were told what the government wanted them to know rather than what the truth was. Hence, Soviet society lacked the major requirements for freedom—a free press, an active citizenry, and different perspectives.

Therefore, by identifying the differences in that society from the society that we live in, the reader would value freedom more and not take it for granted. In addition, I hope that the viewers would be able to recognize restrictions on their freedom, however subtle and seemingly innocuous they may be.

##### **5) Self-criticism: What are the limitations of your proposal?**

The documentary that I propose does not analyze works that praised the gulags, such as the book edited by Maxim Gorky, I. L. Averbakh, and S. G. Firin titled *The White Sea-Baltic Stalin Canal* (81). Such works would provide a different perspective to Solzhenitsyn's arguments and would give the viewers greater insight into the working of the Archipelago and the philosophy behind them, which justified killing innocent civilians.

Furthermore, literature containing Stalin's personal position on the issue would undoubtedly make an invaluable contribution to the discussion. It would be interesting to know whether Stalin had any intent other than maximizing his own power. Another question that arises is whether Stalin intentionally confined his people to the abyss of ignorance, or whether he believed that communist indoctrination would intellectually enrich the people and thus promote freethinking. Because such material does not exist, the assumption that the people of the Soviet Union were shackled by the ruling elite, who only sought to maximize their powers, cannot be verified.

Finally, I feel that by ignoring the details that Solzhenitsyn gives in his book, the documentary gives the viewers a relatively superficial picture of life in the Soviet Union. Although this seems to contradict the aforementioned quotation of Solzhenitsyn that "to taste the sea all one needs is a gulp," it is, nevertheless, also true that a mere gulp does not enable one to judge the depth of the sea.

## Narrative and Self Final Paper

By Melissa Hediger

Prof. Bernstein

MSS 129: Narrative and the Creation of the Self

*The assignment:* Choosing two or more novels they had read during the semester, students were to write a comparative paper.

*Professor Bernstein's comments:* She praised Melissa's skillful embroidering of her argument with well-chosen, well-placed quotations from the texts and her nice balance of the parallels with the differences between the two novels.

In one of the Beatles' many hit songs, John Lennon croons, "All you need is love." Cynics may argue that humans also need food, shelter, water, and such to survive, but, nonetheless, it is difficult to ignore the powerful and important role that love plays in life. A slightly less discussed aspect of life, but one that is also important in a balanced life, is the search for self, for the realization of who we are and what we want. Many novels contain at least some sort of romantic interest, and these relationships can have different effects on the characters and result from different causes. Similarly, self-understanding has different causes and consequences. In Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice and Ivan Turgenev's Fathers and Sons, Elizabeth and Arkady both engage in romantic relationships and reevaluate their perspective on life, thus, resulting in a greater understanding of their true self. However, Austen and Turgenev illustrate through these characters two very different ways that realization of self and romance can be related; Elizabeth achieves such a relationship due to her recognition of self, while Arkady experiences the opposite cause and effect relationship, where the romantic relationship causes his self-realization.

For a very long time in Pride and Prejudice, Elizabeth embodies the prejudice part of the title in how she views Darcy. Their very first meeting sets the tone of the relationship for many months to come; Elizabeth agrees with the general consensus that "he was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world" (Austen 12). Granted, he does not make a favorable impression on her with his rude remarks when refusing to dance with her (13), but this first impression is very resistant to change. Darcy points out this flaw of Elizabeth's, saying her defect "is willfully to misunderstand [everybody]" (51). However, she continues to view Darcy negatively for a very long time. She automatically believes Wickham when he slanders Darcy, yet when Miss

Bingley tries to tell her that Wickham lied and actually Darcy was innocent, she refuses to believe it (80-1). Right before this conversation with Miss Bingley, Elizabeth says it would be “the greatest misfortune of all!—To find a man [Darcy] agreeable whom one is determined to hate!” (77). With the word “determined,” she admits that she is biased against Darcy yet does not seem to have intention of changing this perspective. Elizabeth's character is prejudiced as she insists upon viewing Darcy a certain way and refuses to change such a view or even reconsider it in the face of conflicting reports.

Because of these feelings against Darcy, Elizabeth initially rejects his marriage proposal and the possibility for a romantic relationship (157). However, his letter explaining the true situation with Wickham makes her realize that she misjudged Darcy and causes her to reevaluate how she viewed the world. After reading the letter, she looks closely and critically at herself and sees that she was “blind, partial, prejudiced, absurd” (171), all adjectives that do not reflect well on her character and, therefore, show that she experiences true introspection since many people do not like to look at themselves so negatively. This “discovery” makes her reevaluate how she acted, apparent in when she exclaims, “How despicably have I acted! I, who have prided myself on my discernment!—I, who have valued myself on my abilities! who have often disdained the generous candour of my sisters, and gratified my vanity, in useless or blameless mistrust—How humiliating is this discovery!” (171). She thought she was one kind of person, but truly was not, and she does not approve of her old self. However, now that she knows, she achieves self-knowledge and realization, admitting that “vanity has been my folly” and that she “courted prepossession and ignorance” (171). Until this moment of revelation, she “never knew [her]self” (171). Elizabeth therefore comes to understand her true self and reject her past prejudice. Only after this realization occurs can a true possibility for romance exist for her. If she had developed

a deep romantic relationship with Wickham and married him, she would forever be prejudiced against Darcy due to how spiteful Wickham is of him, and therefore she would never “know” herself. She would not be basing her decision to marry him on what she truly wants, because her view of the situation would be warped. By understanding who she is, she can now make the best decision as to what is right for her, and she realizes that actually a relationship with Darcy is what she wants. Such a romantic relationship could not develop until Elizabeth had her revelation, acknowledged her biased mindset, and decided to change her behavior accordingly.

Elizabeth does change her behavior, and such a transformation permits her to attain romance. Her reading of his letter begins “with a strong prejudice against every thing he might say” (168), but reflecting on it afterwards results in her realization that she had fallen victim to “vanity” (171). Upon seeing the truth of the Wickham-Darcy situation, she no longer holds the great hatred towards Darcy that she did earlier and even longs for a renewal of his proposal (216). She now respects Darcy and feels gratitude towards him, which is more than she ever did with Wickham. These feelings are a strong basis for a romantic relationship, and she would not have them for Darcy if she had not gained a deeper understanding of herself and realized her biased outlook. Eventually, the mutual attraction is realized (295), and Elizabeth and Darcy form a strong romantic relationship that ends in a happy marriage. Elizabeth finds a “true love” after she clearly sees who she is and how she should view the world.

Turgenev's novel was written approximately sixty years after Austen's, but romantic relationships and realization of self continue to be major concerns for the characters involved. Arkady starts the novel professing nihilist beliefs and conveying a haughtiness stemming from the basic beliefs of that philosophy: that current society is problematic, inferior, not worthy of acceptance, and only nihilists are enlightened in how they can see these problems that most of



society cannot. Arkady later admits that when he followed nihilism he was a “haughty little boy” (Turgenev 137), which he demonstrates for instance when he tells his uncle and father, “We [nihilists] destroy because we're a force, one that doesn't need to account for itself” (41). This feeling of superiority characterizes a nihilist outlook, one that Arkady adopted early in the novel.

However, Arkady is not truly comfortable with these superior nihilist attitudes and actually lacks a clear sense of what defines him and in what he believes. He illustrates several times early in the novel how, although he professes nihilist beliefs, he cannot think in terms of and fully subscribe to its anti-romantic ideals and need to destroy everything. When he starts praising how wonderful the air and sky are at home, he stops “suddenly, cast[s] a furtive glance behind him, and [falls] silent” (8). Nihilists are not supposed to be praising nature, and he stops when he thinks of Bazarov, a committed nihilist who would frown upon such sentiments.

Even though Arkady tries to suppress these feelings, he is unable to do so completely; upon arriving home, he admires the beauty of a spring day around him and feels the impulse to hug his father (10), actions that a nihilist would view as overly romantic and foolish. Also, Arkady feels that his father should marry Fenechka and falls silent when Bazarov says, “So you still attach significance to marriage; I never expected that from you” (33). He thus does not agree with a major nihilist belief but does not further defend his position after his friend's criticism. Next, Arkady does not smile when Bazarov laughs at Nikolai Petrovich's playing of the cello (34). Finally, when Katya mentions that she loves nature, Arkady does not dare mention that he adored it too, since appreciating the beauty of nature is silly to nihilists (70). He, therefore, does not fully understand himself since he professes a belief to which his emotions cannot fully commit.

Fortunately, Arkady shifts away from nihilism, and the close proximity of his change to episodes with Katya show how she played an influential role in this transformation. His disagreements with Bazarov do not really start until after they leave Nikolskoe, a departure that causes Arkady some sadness, since he leaves Katya over whom he even shed a tear (83). Arkady and Katya spent a lot of time together during Arkady's stay at her house, time during which they were able to form a close connection. As Arkady leaves Nikolskoe, soon after his bitter thoughts of leaving Katya (83), Turgenev describes how he realizes that Bazarov is using him as a tool; to his "friend," he is only a "fool" and "dolt" (83). The close proximity of these two feelings links his feeling towards Katya with knowledge that he is not viewed as a true nihilist. Moreover, after they leave Nikolskoe, Arkady and Bazarov argue about their beliefs. Arkady thinks one must "organize [his or her] life so that each moment is significant" while Bazarov sees life as empty and boring (98). Bazarov criticizes Arkady's character (99), Pavel (100), and the sense of justice that Arkady respects (100). Also, he criticizes Arkady when he reflects on nature and becomes metaphorical (100). Arkady defends himself; no longer is he worried only about whether his mentor will approve of his conduct. All this occurs after they have left Katya, to whom Arkady has become attracted.

In such behavior, Arkady demonstrates how he begins to move away from his previous nihilist outlook and towards ideals that are compatible with his true self due to the influence of another person. This person is Katya, and he says to her, "[ideals are] appearing to me much closer at hand. My eyes have recently been opened thanks to one feeling" (137). This revelation, this opening of his eyes, results from the love he feels for her. He truly has changed from being concerned with nihilist ideals and the approval of Bazarov to caring for another and discarding the beliefs that contradict his emotions. He sees how before he "didn't understand

[him]self” but now he does (137), and it is the romantic relationship that blossoms between him and Katya that is the cause for it. Katya sees this transformation in him and remarks on how he has changed during his time at Nikolskoe, especially during his time there without Bazarov (128-29). He acknowledges that he owes this change to her (137). Nihilists scorned romantic love, but Arkady admits that he “wouldn't trade [her] for anyone else in the world” and tells her outright, “I love you irrevocably, forever and ever” (131). The “feeling” that her love gives him is happiness, for when she says that she loves him too he was so joyous and was “sighing with ecstasy” (139). The happiness and satisfaction that he finds in life after marrying her show that finally he is at one with his true self. Through his love of Katya, he finds the “ideals” to govern his life and realizes that nihilism was not the path for him.

People may differ in their attitudes about love, but no one can deny that it plays an important role in life. Similarly, while the general consensus is that it is important to understand one's self, many people have a different perspective as to what the self is. Both Austen and Turgenev explore love, self-understanding, and the connection between the two in their novels, each showing how this connection can differ. Elizabeth attains a true romance only after she understands herself, while Arkady comes to understand what he truly wants and believes in due to the romance that develops with Katya. Although the perspectives in the two novels on love and self-understanding differ, they both show how true love ultimately is inexplicably connected to who we really are. Lennon may sing that love is all you need, but these novels seem to imply that self-understanding deserves similar recognition as an additional element that every “full” life needs.

## Modern Dance: A Tool in the Search for Self

By Stephanie Parent

Prof. Bentzel

MSS 103: Self in Life and Literature

*The Assignment:*

“You should write a paper, 8-12 pages in length, in which you relate at least one text from another course you are taking this semester with at least one text that we have read in MSS 103. Your paper should show how what we have read here allows you to think more critically or deeply about what you read in the other course and vice versa.”

*Professor Bentzel's comments:*

“Stephanie’s paper is exemplary because she demonstrates in it both a broad and deep command of the theories that we studied in MSS 103 and relates them very convincingly to texts she read in a dance course. She chooses specific quotes from the texts studied in the two courses to support her arguments in which the reader can immediately recognize the parallel she draws, a feat that takes a lot of work and acumen. She has organized and structured the paper very clearly with a direct and effective thesis statement and sustains a sophisticated level of stylistic complexity. As a reader, I wanted to hear more about each individual theory and its pendant in dance history. Stephanie easily could have developed one or two of the theories she discusses into a paper of sufficient length.”

In his book *Identity: Cultural Change and the Struggle for Self*, Roy Baumeister suggests that the decline of traditional Christian values during the Victorian era made the choice of personal beliefs and values a problematic feature of identity. In the same period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a few dancers began to break away from ballet traditions for the first time, creating the art form of modern dance as a way to explore and express identity. As the identity problems Baumeister identifies led to a proliferation of writing on the self in the 1900s, modern dancers developed correspondingly diverse ways of viewing the self in their art.

According to Baumeister, in the Victorian Era “society once and for all lost its ideological consensus” (75) and it became

viable for an individual to believe *or to disbelieve* in Christianity . . . values, beliefs, and priorities became a matter of personal choice. The inner self inherited the awkward responsibility of deciding what to believe in. (76)

In the 1800s, ballet served much the same purpose as Christianity in the artistic area of dance, prioritizing conformity to standardized techniques and styles over new, individual ideas. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, dancers Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Loie Fuller, and Mary Wigman were the first to rebel from the confines of ballet and choose their own artistic values. In 1927, Wigman, the leader of the German modern dance movement, wrote:

We find ourselves in a process of change as far as the dance is concerned: abandonment of the classical ballet in favor of an expression representing our time . . . ballet denied the expression of [individual’s] creative ideas because of its set vocabulary and style. (35)

Wigman said that modern dancers “see in the dance a possibility to express their very being” (37), a way to define personal values and other aspects of identity, rather than conforming to

ballet standards simply “to make a living” (37). As modern dance became a way to explore identity, the diverse possibilities for perceiving the self led to a number of distinctive dance philosophies throughout the twentieth century.

For instance, Baumeister himself says that “continuity (unity) and differentiation are the two *defining* criteria of identity—something contributes to identity if it unifies over time and differentiates one from others” (121). One of the first dancers to break away from ballet, Isadora Duncan, affirmed dance’s ability to meet these two criteria and help one construct identity. Writing “I would like to no longer dance to anything but the rhythm of my soul” (9), Duncan departed from ballet conventions, distinguishing herself from others as she established her concern with the self. Duncan established a unique style involving free, wave-like movement inspired by nature. She perceived:

a constant, absolute, and universal unity which runs through all the manifestations of Nature . . . there is between all the conditions of life a continuity or flow which the dancer must respect in his art. (8)

By aligning the “rhythm of her soul” and the continuity of nature in her dancing, Duncan found a way to express the uniqueness and unity of her self and successfully craft an identity.

In another aspect of Baumeister’s theory of identity, he suggests that individuality goes beyond differentiation from others, also requiring a “striving to fulfill one’s unique potential by something like the self-actualization of a creative destiny” (91). This idea was exemplified by a modern dancer of the generation following Duncan, Doris Humphrey. In 1937, Humphrey wrote:

The dancer is born with, or cultivates an overwhelming desire to dance, and to communicate his findings about life in this medium. No, he doesn’t think of

dancing as “nice work,” or as a way to make a living, but as an imperative urge, a call. He wants to make his art mean something to people . . . to their real selves.

(57)

Clearly, modern dance was a creative destiny for Humphrey, one she could realize by forming and conveying dance statements that bear meaning for the “real-self.” Humphrey’s artistic partner, Charles Weidman, said, “the artist must not run away from himself, from his ‘center of being.’ He is the bearer of a message, and it is his responsibility to tell it” (67). In Humphrey and Weidman’s conception, the inner self is a source of inspiration and knowledge, and it is one’s duty and destiny to communicate this knowledge.

Of course, Baumeister’s ideas are not the only way to perceive the self and identity. For instance, the twentieth-century psychologist Carl Rogers placed an emphasis on the inner self that is shared by some modern dancers. Rogers wrote that one achieves self-satisfaction when

He moves away from being what he is not, from being a façade. . . . He is increasingly listening to the deepest recesses of his physiological and emotional being, and finds himself increasingly willing to be, with greater accuracy and depth, that self which he most truly is. (175-176)

According to Rogers, a person finds fulfillment by introspecting to discover the “true self” within, then presenting the world with this identity rather than a false exterior. Similarly, Hanya Holm, the German student of Mary Wigman, wrote:

You must search within your own body . . . Don’t think you can hide behind a gimmick, or a little bit of extravaganza you have learned to master with great flourish. Even the simplest movement will be marvelous if it is fulfilled by you, by your real self. (71-73)

Like Rogers, who wrote that “the type of person from whom creative products and creative living emerge” (193) has discovered his or her “real” self, Holm believed that a great artistic statement comes from inner direction. Just as Rogers scorned façades, Holm said fancy “gimmicks” are ineffective devices that inhibit true expression. For Holm, the individual freedom of modern dance provides a way to listen to, express, and *be* the true self in the way Rogers values so highly.

Other writers were also concerned with the “true self” Rogers described, including intellectual and novelist Hermann Hesse and modern dancer Ruth St. Denis. In Hesse’s novel *Demian* and Denis’ *Denishawn Magazine*, both spoke of freeing their inner selves through a connection to the natural and spiritual world. Hesse wrote:

The surrender to Nature’s irrational . . . formations produces in us a feeling of inner harmony with the force responsible for these phenomena . . . For it is the same indivisible divinity that is active through us and in Nature . . . every natural form is latent within us, originates in the soul whose essence is eternity. (108)

Hesse identified a divine, eternal and inexplicable force within every human being and the natural world, a force that provides “the power to love and create” (108). Ruth St. Denis described the same “power” in her personal love, artistic creation in the form of modern dance. She wrote, “the Dance reveals the soul. The dance is motion, which is life, beauty, which is love . . . To dance is to feel one’s self actually a part of the cosmic world, rooted in the inner reality of spiritual being” (22). For St. Denis, movement that expresses inner emotions revealed “the same indivisible divinity” that Hesse identified within humans and nature. St. Denis recognized that through movement, a natural, inherent human ability, people can align their selves with larger, spiritual forces.



In fact, *Demian* and St. Denis' essay were both written during the 1920s, a period when technology, frivolous entertainment and warfare carried people's attention away from exploration of the inner self. In *Demian*, Hesse spoke "about the spirit of Europe and the signs of the times," of a community "inwardly rotten," in which "men fly into each other's arms because they are afraid . . . A whole society composed of men afraid of the unknown within them!" (140) Hesse suggested that, due to fear of the inner self and severed connections to spiritual forces, people drew together in shallow pursuits. Like Hesse, St. Denis described "crowded cities" and "the inert mass of humanity" (25) who join together in superficial entertainment rather than living as individuals. She said people have

too much now of concert, stage, vaudeville and movies. We are . . . always to be the silent, negative part, providing an audience and support for another's hours of joyous experience . . . we do not know how to release the divine urge to strength and beauty within ourselves! (23-24)

St. Denis lamented the passivity of modern society, one that erases knowledge of the "beauty within ourselves," leaving people spiritually empty. However, unlike Hesse, St. Denis proposed one specific way to combat superficiality: exploring the depths of the self through modern dance. She said that, if people experience rather than watch dance, the art will "give meaning to many things now hidden, new power to the self, a new value to existence" (24).

In contrast to Hesse and Rogers, Holm and St. Denis, some thinkers and dancers see value not in the inner self, but in the façades that can cover this self. For instance, in his work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, sociologist Irving Goffman wrote that "each individual plays a part" (17) in societal interaction, that instead of revealing the inner self "an actor" or person "takes on an established social role" (27). Goffman found such social performance

beneficial in shaping the self, saying, “in so far as this mask represents the conception we have formed of ourselves—the role we are striving to live up to—this mask is our truer self” (19). According to Goffman, one should not look for an inner self, but should present a “mask” to society in order to create identity. Furthermore, Goffman said that “a performance presents an idealized view of the situation” (35) as “the performance of an individual accentuates certain matters and conceals others” (67). Goffman suggested that, when a person deliberately constructs a certain mask, highlighting positive aspects of identify and downplaying negative ones, “the audience can be held in a state of mystification in regard to the performer” (67). A person can impress others, gaining their awe and admiration, by displaying an ideal appearance.

One of the earliest modern dancers, Loie Fuller, who began performing in 1892, incorporated Goffman’s theory of “masks” in her identity as an artist. Fuller’s success was due to spectacular effects in her performances, as she used colored theatrical lighting to illuminate “the voluminous folds of silk that were her costume” (Brown 11). Fuller even invented new pieces of lighting equipment and employed many technicians to carry out her special effects (Brown 11). All these elaborate measures created a beautiful picture on stage; however, the emphasis on lighting and costumes obscured rather than clarified Fuller’s movement. Therefore, the effects constituted a “mask” Fuller presented to a societal audience. Like Goffman, Fuller saw little value in exposing the “inner self” of unadorned, personal movement. Rather, she embellished and covered her dance with the “gimmicks” and “extravaganza” that Hanya Holm criticized.

In her own writing, Fuller revealed her concern for presentation before an audience, noting:

In the quiet atmosphere of a conservatory with green glass, our actions are different from those in a compartment with blue or green glass. These are...things that must be observed when one dances to an accompaniment of light and music properly harmonized. (16)

Clearly, Fuller was interested in the manipulation or “mystification” of an audience through her artistic performance, performance that relied on outer elements of light, color, and music. The “accompaniment” Fuller deemed necessary directly corresponds to Goffman’s theory, as he wrote of the “front” or “expressive equipment . . . employed by the individual during his performance” (22). The front includes “setting” or “background items” (22), Fuller’s color, lighting, and music, as well as the “personal front” that includes “clothing” and “bodily gestures” (23-24), Fuller’s costume and dance movements she performs. By organizing her artistic expression around elaborately staged productions, Fuller exemplified Goffman’s way of viewing the self and identity as a “performance” before the “audience” of society. In this socially constructed identity, self-definition comes from outer characteristics of a “front” rather than from inner feelings, beliefs, and motivations.

While Rogers and Goffman presented two opposing concepts of the self, seeing identity as derived only from inner or outer sources, other thinkers proposed that both societal and individual forces shape the self. For instance, Dan McAdams stated that, instead of finding a “true self” inside or creating one from a social mask, people combine inner and outer influences into a “personal myth” that creates identity. In *The Stories We Live By*, he wrote:

We each seek to provide our scattered and often confusing experiences with a sense of coherence by arranging the episodes of our lives into stories. This is not

the stuff of delusion or self-deception . . . Rather, through our personal myths, each of us discovers what is true and meaningful in life. (11)

According to McAdams, a personal myth gives “unity and purpose” to the self (11), organizing one’s experiences in the logical flow of a story. In addition, myth-making is an artistic “act of imagination” that makes “a compelling aesthetic statement” (McAdams 12). Of course, dance is also a creative act that speaks through “aesthetic” visual impact, and some modern dancers have used the art form in the same way McAdams uses personal myths. Ted Shawn, the artistic partner of Ruth St. Denis, said “the human soul continually reaches out for something permanent, something enduring . . . this eternal desire of the soul is the greatest argument for the value of ‘constants’ in art” (28). According to McAdams, this desire for unity over time drives people to organize experience as a personal myth; Shawn added that such continuity can also be achieved through art. Furthermore, Shawn saw dance as a mode of storytelling, making it a viable way to express one’s “personal myth” of identity. He said that “to tell a story” through dance, “there should be complete clarity in the mind of the creator as to what he intends to do . . . there must be unity of style in the composition . . . the work must cohere” (29-30). The constancy, coherence, and unity Shawn valued are the same attributes McAdams required for a successful personal myth. Furthermore, the artist’s “clarity” of his intentions is like the “purpose” illuminated by personal myth; McAdams spoke of “goals and desires . . . consolidated into stable dispositions” and “reflected thematically in their personal myths” (36). Each individual needs a stable motive both to create a work of art, including a dance, and to craft the ultimate artwork of identity.

In addition to exploring dance’s storytelling power, Ted Shawn emphasized the influence of modern dance on the self. He wrote:

Art is experience, vital experience, and nowhere does one experience the reality of art so greatly as in the dance. Here the constants of beauty . . . vitality . . . are within one's body-soul—they are as much you as your blood and your breath.

(32)

For Shawn, art provided a way to organize one's experience and reveal "constants" and consistency, crafting identity in the same way as a "personal myth." In addition, Shawn addressed the special power of dance, an art form that employs the physical body to express the inner self, making of the two one "body-soul." Just as McAdams said personal myths are "not the stuff of delusion," Shawn affirmed the *reality* of art. Dance in particular, movement that allows one to feel the "vitality" of creative expression within the physical body, convinces its maker that artistic constants truly exist. One of these artistic constants is identity itself, crafted from one's experience to bring "beauty" and "vitality" to the self.

One specific technique of crafting an identity, looking to one's heritage for self-definition, has been explored by both writers and dancers. In her novel *Song of Solomon*, author Toni Morrison creates a protagonist, Milkman, who simultaneously discovers his heritage and his identity. As a child, Milkman dreams of flying but doesn't understand why, wondering "again and again why he had to stay level on the ground" (Morrison 10). However, after researching his family's past, he finally appreciates, as an adult, this aspect of his identity. He discovers a legend that his great-grandfather Solomon, a slave, "flew" back to Africa to claim his freedom. Milkman is inspired, exclaiming, "He just took off; got fed up. *All the way up . . . my great-granddaddy could flyyyyyy*" (Morrison 328). Milkman realizes that desire for the freedom of flight defines him as well as his ancestors, and he fulfills a personal destiny by "flying" off a

cliff, taking control of his life and death. As Morrison writes, “now he knew what Shalimar [Solomon] knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could *ride* it” (337).

In a sense, Milkman’s flight is an artistic act of crafting his self, and he is not the only artist to look to his heritage for inspiration. For instance, modern and ballet dancer Alvin Ailey connected his experiences as a black artist to the African-American heritage of discrimination. Ailey wrote:

The question of dance and race is an ever-present one . . . You still don’t see many black dancers in classical companies . . . Does one really want to see a black swan among thirty-two swans in *Swan Lake*? . . . It’s historically inaccurate, is the line taken by many of those in charge. (133)

Ailey recognized the importance of his ancestry in shaping his identity as a dancer, a legacy of racism that makes blacks “historically inaccurate” in the white-dominated history of “classical” art. As Ailey pointed out, the discrimination passed down through generations still influences modern society, limiting Ailey’s opportunities for creative expression of his identity.

However, like Milkman’s in *Song of Solomon*, Ailey’s heritage gave him the means to free his identity from inherited constraints. Ailey used traditional African-American blues music to choreograph his dance *Blues Suite*, and from the “blood memories” of “very theatrical, very intense” black churches he attended as a child he crafted *Revelations* (Brown 131). According to Ailey, the African-American religion that demanded “intense” emotional involvement taught him to embrace “humanism, respect, and loving people” (134) as personal values, reflected in his identity and his art. In *Revelations* and *Blues Suite*, Ailey used Japanese and white dancers in addition to blacks because “their presence universalizes the material” (Ailey 133), exemplifying his belief in respect and love for all people. Furthermore, Ailey’s dance creations were not only

reflections of his heritage, but were also essential parts of his identity in their own right. Ailey spoke of fulfilling a “compelling desire to participate fully in the dance world” with “my own ideas,” making “my own decisions” (Brown 131). Ailey saw dancing as a personal destiny that brought him identity, a way to realize “ideas” and make “decisions” from his own conception of self.

Other dancers and writers, while also focused on the construction of identity, are less concerned with creating finished products such as Ailey’s dances. For instance, modern dancer Anna Halprin and writer Mary Catherine Bateson focus on the process of artwork instead of the end result. In her work *Composing a Life*, Bateson discusses self-definition as an art form, an “act of creation that engages us all” (1). Bateson writes from the standpoint of today’s society, when “the materials and skills from which a life is composed are no longer clear” (Bateson 2) and “children cannot even know the names of the jobs and careers that will be open to them . . . it will become less and less possible to go on doing the same thing through a lifetime” (Bateson 6-7). She warns that, when people construct identity by moving towards fixed goals like a career, they become “damaged by their dependence on continuity” (Bateson 8) and are unable to adapt to changing situations. Bateson proposes an alternate method of self-definition through her metaphor of improvisatory jazz music, which “involve[s] recombining partly familiar materials in new ways” (Bateson 2). For Bateson, the constant focus on “new ways” of living is essential, as she believes people “will recognize the value in life times of continual redefinition” in the future (Bateson 7), life times that encompass growth and change rather than fixed stagnation.

While Bateson chose improvisatory jazz as a metaphor for a fluid way of life, she could have discussed modern dance with equal success. Like jazz, *modern* dance is one of the most contemporary of art forms, responding to the constant changes of today’s society. In fact,

improvisation has been a central tool for some modern dancers, including Anna Halprin (Brown 141). Halprin, who began performing and choreographing in the 1950s and still works today, certainly shares Bateson's standpoint on the contemporary world. Like Bateson, Halprin recognizes the problems of rigidity, writing, "I've never taught classes in which I teach a style, or a pattern, or a set progression. First of all, I keep changing from year to year. I keep finding new things that I keep incorporating" (143). Halprin suggests that, by constantly changing rather than maintaining one movement technique, she is able to grow as an artist. Her interest is not in "imposed style" but "in movement as an expressive medium for communication" (Halprin 142), and she is willing to incorporate new things, improvise, and adapt her artistic methods in order to communicate different ideas.

Just as Bateson discusses the self through artistic metaphors, Halprin also connects art and personal life. Halprin explains, "I try not to separate the experiences of life, because we are in confrontation with our experiences, constantly, in art. And this brings me to an appreciation of, or an emphasis on, the relationship between personal growth and artistic growth" (143). By expressing her experiences through the art of modern dance, Halprin achieves "personal growth" which helps her to construct an identity. Furthermore, Halprin is not concerned solely with an end product, a complete dance or a fixed conception of self. She says "faith in the process is the only goal or purpose I need...I don't question the purpose beforehand; I've already accepted the process as the purpose" (147). Halprin recognizes the value in the fluid, unfixed, and unending activity that stimulates artistic creativity, and Bateson sees the same value in the *process* of self-definition. She says, "I believe that our aesthetic sense, whether in works of art or in lives, has overfocused on the stubborn struggle toward a single goal rather than on the fluid, the protean, the improvisatory" (4). Bateson sees the beauty in lives "still incomplete . . . parables in process,



the living metaphors with which we describe the world” (Bateson 18). Like Halprin’s, Bateson’s theory takes into account the important fact that the self is *living*. Both writers embrace the creative process that brings life to the self, not a fixed purpose that is ultimately separate from the constantly changing self.

In fact, Bateson’s term “living metaphor” is a very appropriate one to describe the art of modern dance. For by its very nature, dance is “living,” requiring movement of the entire body to express the dancer’s vision. In another sense, modern dance is also a “living” art form in that it responds to the specific conditions of today’s world. One of the most influential modern dancers, Martha Graham, wrote that in the twentieth century “man is discovering himself as a world” (50). She said that “because of the revitalized consciousness came an alteration in movement,” the “enhanced language” of modern dance “for a deep, stirring, creative communication” (51). One of the main “enhancements” that distinguished modern dance from earlier forms, the free choice of style and subject matter, made “creative individuality” possible (Brown viii). In a time when people began to explore their selves and the world in new ways, modern dance was developed with the goal of “integration of movement and meaning through three-dimensional kinetic design” (Brown viii). Unlike the earlier form of ballet, which focused on a uniform standard of beauty and the technical skill necessary to meet this standard, modern dancers saw movement as a way to express individual meaning.

Clearly, modern dance is related to the greater exploration of the self in all areas of twentieth century society. However, dance claims a particular relevance to the self that few other art forms, metaphors, and philosophies of the self share. Modern dancer Erick Hawkins wrote:

Dance, more than any other art, still exists only in the “now” and no place else.

This might make it less attractive and less profound to our world so bent on

hanging on to each hard complacent thing . . . the momentness of dance is one of

its most precious gifts. Actually only the nowness of ourselves really exists. (95)

Hawkins directly connected dance and the self, as both are made up of living moments that exist only in the “now” of their occurrence. Modern dance creates meaning from the “kinetic design” of human beings, a message that exists only in the moment of its creation, just as “only the nowness” of the human self exists. Hawkins pointed out that in today’s society, people “hang on” to a sense of permanence and “hard” things, so they are less likely to look for meaning in the transitory. However, favoring the eternal is ultimately an ironic tendency, as human lives and identities are themselves transitory. Therefore, dance may serve as a particularly powerful form of communication and self-expression in the modern world, one that portrays the momentary nature of the self that many people are unwilling to confront. As the many comments of modern dancers above show, participating in or viewing dance allows one to actively “live” a moment of the self’s existence, to experience it with all the physical and mental resources of the body. As in life, one can never recapture a moment of dance experience; one must find meaningful, enduring qualities in self-expression that cannot be tied down in one lasting form.

The unique vitality, timeliness, and openness to individuality in modern dance probably accounts for the large number of modern dancers who articulate a search for self in their work. Furthermore, the emphasis on creative freedom in modern dance leads to a diverse range of viewpoints, including a focus on expression of the inner self, concern with the presentation of self before an audience, the exploration of one’s heritage, and an improvisatory, process-oriented artistic method. In all of these viewpoints, a connection can be made between modern dancers

and other writers exploring the self, revealing the relevance of modern dance to questions of identity. Modern dancers, exploring the self through the expressive and communicative use of the human body, provide new ways to view and experience the search for identity.

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## Flat Characterization in the Early Empire

By Ethan Lavine

Prof. Castor

CLS 114: History of Ancient Rome

*The assignment:* Compare how two ancient sources represented the Roman emperor Claudius.

*Professor Castor's comments:* “Ethan’s essay is an excellent example of a tightly structured analysis, with a strong introduction.”

The dimwitted, impetuous Claudius portrayed in the writings of Suetonius and Tacitus seems no match for the maniacal influence exerted over him by his wives Messalina and Agrippina. Similar in their interpretation of the character of Claudius, the texts of Suetonius and Tacitus shed light on the emperor's personality through seldom-flattering biographies that portray him as easily manipulated and often foolish. Neither historian writes particularly kindly of Claudius' wives either, depicting both Messalina and Agrippina as morally bankrupt and overly manipulative. While Claudius, Messalina, and Agrippina never come across as particularly complex characters in the writings of either historian, Tacitus' more detailed development of the characters makes for a greater degree of effectiveness in his writing. Through both descriptions, as well, some light is shed on the role of dynastic marriage in maintaining and perpetuating power in early Imperial Rome. Suetonius and Tacitus' fairly flat and static characterizations shape their descriptions, as both present a history in which the weak-minded Claudius proves no match for his controlling, power-hungry wives.

The generally harsh depictions of Claudius by Tacitus and Suetonius present a ruler very who is un-heroic in his nature, has a brash temperament and is easily swayed by the influence of those closest to him. Neither deny him some degree of praise for his effectiveness as emperor, both retelling the achievements of his reign, and Suetonius dictating letters by Augustus in which he describes Claudius as having a "very decent character," and the ability to "speak in public with such clearness" that he has trouble understanding his generally awkward nature (*Claudius* 4). Such praise, however, amounts to little more than a side note in the biographies of Claudius. Suetonius, focusing on Claudius' inelegant and clumsy nature, points out his lack of social skill in a speech in which he referred to Agrippina as "my daughter and foster child" while planning



their marriage (*Claudius* 39). Both say a great deal about the amount of influence those close to Claudius had on nearly every aspect of his life. Tacitus describes the Emperor as one “whose likes and dislikes were all suggested and dictated to him” (*Annals* 253), and Suetonius claiming “everything that Claudius did throughout his reign” was “dictated by his wives and freedmen” (*Claudius* 25). Focusing on his lack of social grace and independent will, Tacitus and Suetonius stress the negative aspects of Claudius’ nature and use such disadvantages as a means of explaining the events in his life.

Characterizations of Messalina are also very flat, and nearly all descriptions of her portray the woman as an immoral wife with an all too extravagant lifestyle while focusing on her scandalous affair with Gaius Silius. Suetonius mentions Messalina only in passing, but calls her bigamous affair “disgraceful” (*Claudius* 203) and her behavior in the matter as both “wounding and insulting” (*Claudius* 207). Tacitus lists among the outrageous actions in her near “maniacal love affair” the affection with which she address her lover in public and the manner in which she “showered wealth and distinction upon him” (*Annals* 237). Messalina might not had been discovered, writes Tacitus, if not for the marriage to her lover that appealed to her for its “sheer outrageousness,” which is, as he put it, “a sensualist’s ultimate satisfaction” (*Annals* 245). Including such moralistic judgments, the Messalina of Tacitus seems reckless and her lifestyle sumptuous and sinful. Both historians exploit the love affair in order to showcase the actions of Claudius’ third wife as the antithesis of the ideal Roman woman’s.

In a similar fashion, the Agrippina described by Suetonius and Tacitus presents (in all likelihood) a grossly oversimplified characterization of the final wife of Claudius, depicting a manipulative woman driven only by the desire to gain power. As one of several candidates for Claudius’ next wife when she first appears in the text, the Emperor’s driven niece uses sexuality

to help seal the deal. “Agrippina’s seductiveness was a help” (*Annals* 253) according to Tacitus, while Suetonius notes Agrippina’s “kissing and caressing” of Claudius and its “noticeable effect on his passions” (*Claudius* 26). Such tactics proved effective, and with her marriage to Claudius, she began (according to Tacitus) “a rigorous, almost masculine despotism” (*Annals* 255).

Tacitus’ descriptions of Agrippina portray her as completely driven by power. Through manipulation of Claudius, he writes, “complete obedience was accorded to a woman” (*Annals* 255) whose mission to acquire political power for her son (the future Nero) made him the “rival of Britannicus” for the throne (*Annals* 255). Once heir, Agrippina employed “criminal methods” to marry her son to Claudius’ already betrothed daughter Octavia, nearly ensuring his rise to power (*Annals* 253). Culminating with her murder of Claudius (a factual event according to Tacitus and an idea speculated at by Suetonius), Agrippina’s hunger for power proved his downfall, and both writers portray her life as one of tyranny and immorality.

Such characterizations of Claudius, Messalina, and Agrippina most likely represent an oversimplification of the motivations and personalities of the figures by Suetonius and Tacitus, though, the interpretations by the two prove effective to varying degrees. Suetonius’ focus never pays the same attention to detail in the lives of the characters, as does Tacitus’. The focus on character development by Tacitus, though usually based on one or several overgeneralizations about each personality, adds a degree of interest and helps him to explain their actions.

Occasional moralistic judgments by Tacitus also appear in his writing. Explaining Claudius’ discovery of Messalina’s affair, he calls his punishment of her “a preliminary to coveting an incestuous substitute” (*Annals* 245). Such didactic interludes, however, make the credibility of Tacitus’ analysis highly suspect. Nonetheless, Tacitus’ detailed accounts of the lives of

Claudius, Messalina, and Agrippina prove more effective than do the accounts of Suetonius for the greater amount of character development present in his writing.

Both interpretations, though, help shed light on the role of strategically planned marriages in maintaining the power of dynasties in the early Roman Empire. A main motivation in Claudius' marriage to Agrippina was to "unite two branches of the Claudian House, rather than [to] allow [Agrippina]...to transfer the name of the Caesars to another family" (*Annals* 252-253). Thus, the marriage helped cement the authority that came with the name Caesar in the hands of Claudius and his heirs. In Agrippina's maneuvering to convince Claudius to give his daughter Octavia to her son in marriage, the future Nero would become the emperor's son-in-law (though already his adopted son), making him a logical choice for heir. In a similar fashion, therefore, this marriage helped to accrue power for the parties involved. In the early empire, such marriages seem to indicate, strategic nuptials helped preserve the power of the dynasties and those who could marry their way into them.

The marriages of Claudius, however politically brilliant, seemed only to work against the spineless emperor as his manipulative wives used him to satisfy their own immoral appetites in the writings of Suetonius and Tacitus. The characterization of Claudius focuses completely on his weak will and lack of personal grace. Equally one-sided are the characterizations of Messalina and Agrippina, both portrayed as manipulative and immoral. Neither writer really strays from these generalizations about the personalities of the three figures, yet Tacitus' greater character development results in a more effective, interesting text. Through these texts on the life of Claudius, the role of the dynastic marriage in early Imperial Rome is displayed, and though the characterizations of Claudius and his wives may be oversimplifications, a fairly clear image of the Emperor emerges.

## Manhood

By Yeshwant Holkar

Prof. Whitesell

ENG 105: Voices of the American South

*The assignment:* “Write a four page essay on the following topic: what does A Gathering of Old Men suggest about manhood? who demonstrates manhood and how? who lacks manhood? why? Consider at least three characters.”

*Professor Whitesell's comments:* “This essay is the final assignment in English 105, College Rhetoric: Voices of the American South. This essay is well organized with a thesis that clearly answers the question posed, and the writer provides good textual evidence, integrating it smoothly into his analysis.”

“A man got to do what he think is right . . . that’s what part him from a boy” (85).

Mathu’s words are the essence of what manhood means to the characters in Ernest Gaines A Gathering of Old Men. The concept of manhood resonates in the actions of three of the main characters: Mathu, Charlie Biggs, and Fix Boutan. These three individuals come to personify manhood as the novel progresses by adhering to a shared maxim: stand up for what is right. Mathu lives by this maxim, and his peers respect him greatly for it. His son Charlie, however, first appears in the novel as the very definition of boyhood, but, after following his father’s example, he can confidently declare, “I’m a man” (186). Fix Boutan’s manhood shows in his dogmatically placing family above all else, regardless of his personal vendetta. These three characters all portray the quintessence of manhood by standing up for what they believe is right.

Mathu lives by the belief that he is equal to, if not better than, all those around him. His manhood manifests itself in the fact that he stands up for this belief, never backing down from anyone who questions it. The resulting respect his companions have for Mathu is the clearest indicator of his manhood. The first indicator the reader gets of Mathu’s character is that he “was the only one . . . who had ever stood up” (31). When Fix Boutan tries to get Mathu to act like a “nigger boy,” Mathu has nothing of it. Mathu believes he deserves to be treated better than that and is willing to risk a lynching to uphold that belief. The local sheriff, a white man by the name of Mapes, considers Mathu a friend, because “to him Mathu was a real man”(84).

This friendship rises from the surest testimony of Mathu’s manhood possible: respect. Mapes likes Mathu because “[Mapes] respected a man. Mathu was a man, and Mapes respected Mathu” (84). The sheriff “knowed Mathu had never backed down from anybody” (84) and “that’s why he liked him”(84). This respect is not limited to Mapes but is prevalent across practically every character in the book. The old men who gather at Mathu’s home are all willing

“to die with him, ‘side him, if [they] have to, out of respect for him” (179), out of respect for how he always “stood up to anybody who tried to do him wrong” (179). None of these men had ever stood up to anything, and standing there, beside a man who stands, is their last chance at self-respect. Clatoo states that his trouble in life is that “[he] ain’t had no trouble with the law” (86), showing how he always gave way to oppression. Tucker claims that not standing up and protecting his brother “out of a fear of a little pain to [his] own body, [he] beat [his] own brother . . . as much as the white folks did” (98). These men have lived without standing up for anything, but now they are “too old to go crawling under [the] bed” (31). For them “this is the day of reckoning” (94), and they go to Marshall out of respect to stand beside a man who stands.

The respect the old men feel for Mathu is mirrored in his son, Charlie Biggs. Charlie spends fifty years, “half a hundred,” of his life running from people and, finally, by following the example of his father, he realizes “they comes a day when a man must be a man” (189). Charlie is physically the representation of Mathu’s manhood, but, emotionally, he is the epitome of boyhood. Charlie works for the notoriously racist Beau Boutan, who repeatedly abuses him on the basis of his race alone. “No matter if [Charlie] did twice the work any other man could do, [Beau] ‘bused [him] anyhow” (189). In the face of this unfounded abuse, Charlie does nothing, because “as long as [he] was Big Charlie, nigger boy, [he] took it” (189). When he reaches fifty, Charlie no longer sees himself as a “nigger boy,” and starts to demand some respect from his employer. “You don’t talk to a man like that, not when he reach half a hundred,” Charlie claims, explaining why he raises his hand against Beau (190). After an initial burst of courage, Charlie’s conviction falters, and he runs to the man he was trying to emulate, his father.

Mathu’s influence on Charlie’s sense of manhood shows in how he receives his son and in the subsequent change seen in Charlie’s personality. Mathu warns his son that “if he [runs]

from Beau Boutan, he [will] beat [him] himself” (191). He forces Charlie to stand up to the abuse, just as he had stood up to Beau’s father years ago. In running from Beau, Charlie shows that he is unable to stand up for what he believes is right: namely, that he should be treated with a level of respect. Charlie can tell that, if he refuses to take the gun Mathu pushes into his hand, “[Mathu] was go’n stop Beau himself, and then he was go’n stop [Charlie] too” (191). Charlie does stand up to Beau, but initially he runs from the consequences. When he returns to face the ramifications of his actions, Charlie finally demonstrates his manhood and truly stands up for himself, unafraid of the consequences. It is only now that Charlie can proclaim, “Now I know I am a man,” (193) and finally, “[Mathu is] proud of [him]” (193). Following his father’s example, Charlie understands that “life’s so sweet when you know you ain’t no more coward” (208). “[Mathu] told [him] to stand,” and “[he stood] up to [his oppressors]” (208). In his death, Charlie gains some of the respect his companions have for his father and dies a man of half a hundred, not a boy of fifty.

Charlie gains respect by standing up for what he believed is right, and the same respect should be given to the novel’s antagonist, Fix Boutan. Fix believes that family comes first and protects this belief from an internal aggressor, his urge to lynch. When the reader meets Fix Boutan, he is “sitting in a soft chair by the window [with] a little boy in his lap” (133). This image portrays the character of Fix, showing not a bigoted killer, but a father figure who protects his family at all costs. Up to this point in the novel, Fix’s character has been the approaching storm, full of prejudiced wrath and racist fury. Instead of a bloodthirsty Klan member, the reader sees an infuriated yet compassionate father, whose first concern is not revenge but to see the body of his murdered son. He is not upset that Mapes doesn’t want him at Marshall, but that “[his] boy is laying dead in the morgue, shot down like a dog, and Mapes don’t want [him] in

Bayonne” (135). Family is Fix’s primary concern, and “all his life, that is all [he] found worthwhile living for” (146).

The struggle between Fix’s lust for revenge and belief in family clearly shows how he stands up for what he believes is right. Even though he thinks “a member of the family has been insulted, and the family must seek justice” (147), Fix “won’t go [to Marshall] without [his] sons, all his sons. There will be no split in [his] family” (145). He warns the local deputy that “only [his] sons can keep [him from Marshall]” (141), and the decision on whether to ride that night is “[his] to make, and his sons’ ” (141). Fix’s vengeful side manifests itself in the character of Luke Will, and despite Luke’s provocative remarks, Fix sides with his family’s decision not to ride. “[Fix is] not interested in [Luke Will’s] war, [he’s] interested only in [his] family” (145). Fix stands up against his inner aggressor, manifested in Luke Will, and chooses his family over revenge. He does not go riding to Marshall and claims he will go “to Bayonne at the law’s convenience” (147).

Fix displays his manhood by standing up for his family, thus standing up for what he believes is right. This concept of manhood is seen in Mathu as well, who is respected greatly by his peers. Mathu believes himself to be at least the equal of any man around him and does not stand for any disrespect. Mathu’s manhood is initially nonexistent in his son, Charlie Biggs, whose complacent ways prevent him from standing up to the abuse of his former employer, Beau Boutan. Mathu’s manhood influences Charlie’s, and under threat from his father, Charlie finally stands up for the respect he feels a fifty-year-old man deserves. The definition of manhood in A Gathering of Old Men rides heavily on standing up for what you believe is right and not backing down regardless of the consequences. Each of these three characters does stand up for his beliefs, and each can confidently proclaim his manhood.



Case Studies—Mexico & Peru:  
Revolutionary Movements & Peasant Societies in late 20<sup>th</sup> Century

By Raj Dasgupta

Prof. Garofalo

HIS 373: Latin American History

During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mexico and Peru witnessed violent armed movements involving peasants and indigenous population against the state. Despite certain similarities—including aspects of their origins and techniques—rebel movements in the two countries differed from each other in qualitative terms. Whereas in Mexico the Zapatistas' primary goal consisted of achieving land reform and autonomy for indigenous peasants, members of *Sendero Luminoso* regarded rural societies as *instruments* to effect the radical transformation of Peruvian social and political structures. Peasants, due to their distinct relationships with the ruling government in the two countries, also responded differently to the revolutionary groups. Thus, unlike peasants in Mexico who overwhelmingly supported the Zapatistas, Peruvian villagers finally organized themselves *against* the Senderistas. Most importantly, while the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico's Chiapas emerged as an *internal* movement in indigenous peasant communities, the Senderistas in Peru operated as an *external* force to instigate rebellion in rural areas. Consequently, despite certain similarities, the Zapatistas and the Senderistas emerged as unique revolutionary movements possessing distinctive relationships with the peasant communities in Mexico and Peru respectively.

In terms of their origins, *Sendero Luminoso* ("Shining Path") and the Zapatista movement shared certain characteristics. For instance, the ideologies of both groups originated in the leftist discourses of urban, intellectual circles. *Sendero Luminoso* derived its basic tenets from the principles propounded by intellectuals, such as Mariategui and Martinez, and depended mainly on university students for active support. Ivan Hinojasa writes that, "Shining Path was considered to be just one of many miniscule organizations, mainly based in universities with little influence among workers and peasants..." (Stern 63). The Zapatistas, too, emerged out of a similar radical intellectual tradition. Collier points out that, "Sub-Comandante Marcos himself

has hinted that the Zapatistas began ten years ago when a group of urban intellectuals arrived in Chiapas with the specific goal of fomenting revolution” (Collier 54). As the above evidence shows, the Senderista and the Zapatista movements emerged from comparable intellectual traditions.

The Senderistas and Zapatistas also adopted similar techniques and methods to appeal for support from peasant communities. The movements deliberately isolated themselves from both the government and moderate reformist Leftist or peasant organizations. The Senderistas, for instance, not only rejected the government but also “the sullyng effects of coalition politics with other leftist forces” (Stern 19). Similarly, the Zapatistas adopted an agenda separate from other reformist groups. As Collier writes,

The Zapatistas were not just fighting what they termed the corrupt government of President Salinas, they were placing themselves in opposition to tactics used by other peasant groups and fighting to be the voice of the oppressed.... The Zapatistas weren’t only making a statement to the Mexican government; they were proclaiming their rejection of the peaceful tactics endorsed by other peasant groups. (55)

*Sendero Luminoso* and Zapatista’s radical principles attracted several activists who had become disillusioned with the government and who wanted to dissociate themselves from the so-called Leftist groups and moderate peasant organizations, which had come to be identified with the regime<sup>20</sup>. Thus, in terms of origins, separatist ideological strategies and emergence as viable alternatives to other reformist groups, *Sendero Luminoso* and the Zapatista movement shared many important characteristics.

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<sup>20</sup> Collier writes, “ I think that the Zapatista rebellion builds upon deep disillusion with both the national state and the independent peasant organizations” (79).

Despite certain parallels, the Senderista and Zapatista rebellions also differed from each other in important respects. Both revolutionary movements recognized the importance of deriving support from peasant populations; however, they sought peasant support for distinct reasons. Senderistas, who adopted Maoism as their fundamental guiding principle, considered peasant participation as an integral component of the “popular war.” Their desire to involve peasants in the movement stemmed from “an expectation that the Chinese Path—the ‘protracted people’s war’ from the countryside to the city—provided a revolutionary model for Peru” (Stern 64). The Senderistas regarded peasants as important only in so far as they promoted the “popular” struggle. As Ponciano Del Pino points out, involving peasants in the movement also resulted in practical benefits for the revolutionaries:

The countryside offered the possibility of reproducing the cadres, by supplying food as well as additional young people who would come to form the “iron legions” of the Popular Guerrilla Army. Sendero would establish its first “support bases” (*bases de apoyo*), administered and governed by the party, in the countryside. (Stern 161)

For the Senderistas, peasants mattered only in so far as they contributed to the broader cause of popular social struggle. In contrast, the Zapatistas’ primary goal consisted of achieving redress of peasants’ grievances and promoting autonomy for indigenous peasants. Thus, the Zapatistas’ in their negotiations with the government in 1994 declared that “land is for the Indians and peasants who work it, not for the large landlords” (Collier 64). They also demanded that “copious lands in the hands of ranchers, foreign and national landlords, and other non-peasants be turned over to our [peasant] communities, which totally lack land...” (Collier 64). Thus, the Senderistas and Zapatistas held radically different ideas about, and displayed distinctive attitudes

towards, peasants in revolutionary struggle. Whereas *Sendero Luminoso* treated peasant involvement as a means to promote “popular war” and radical social upheaval, the Zapatista movement derived its agenda from and centered round agrarian grievances.

Important aspects of relationships between peasants and the revolutionary movements in Mexico and Peru are also evident from the distinctive rural attitudes and responses towards the insurgent groups. The Senderistas initially achieved acceptance within the peasant communities by promising to alleviate agrarian grievances<sup>21</sup>. However, the rebel group’s denial of local cultural values and its glorification of violent methods<sup>22</sup> to achieve social change, soon alienated the villagers and eventually resulted in peasant resistance to the Shining Path<sup>23</sup>. In contrast, the Zapatistas’ pro-agrarian reformist stance led to the growth of voluntary<sup>24</sup> rural recruits in the rebel army. Thus, according to Sub-Comandante Marcos, as far as the peasants were concerned, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) “arose as a self-defence group to defend against the ranchers’ hired gunmen, who try to take their land and maltreat them, limiting the social and political advancement of the Indians. So they [i.e. the Indian peasants] took up arms so as not to be defenseless” (Collier 87). As the evidence indicates, the differential responses of peasants to

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<sup>21</sup> For instance, Stern writes that, “early phases of Senderista action targeted abusers, whether gamonal-like targets such as landlords, hacienda administrators, and merchants and more subaltern abusers such as animal thieves and wife-beaters” (122).

<sup>22</sup> The destructive tendencies of the Senderista guerrillas and their disregard for peasant culture are reflected in Degregori’s *Tiempos de ira y amor*. He writes, “we [i.e. the senderistas] killed what cattle we could...they [i.e. the peasants] were asking us to stop, but we had already killed about a quarter of the cattle” (Degregori, Lima, DESCO 1990)

<sup>23</sup> Orin Starn writes that, “resistance to the Shining Path snowballed with startling speed in 1991 and 1992, most notably in Huanta and the Mantaro, where thousands of peasants across hundreds of mountainous miles organized into a strong network of patrols and resettlements in little more than a year” (Stern 239).

<sup>24</sup> Voluntary as opposed to the *forcible* recruitment of peasants by the Senderistas.

revolutionary movements arose as a consequence of the varying treatment the rebel groups meted out to them.

The nature and actions of the ruling government also influenced peasants' responses towards the insurgents. In the case of Peru, the government, perceiving the Senderistas as a threat to the status quo, entered into a position of alliance with the local peasant populations to resist the rebel movement. To strengthen the *ronderos* (peasant defense patrols) against the Senderistas, the Peruvian army "began the massive distribution to Andean peasants of more than 10,000 Winchester Model 1300 shotguns" (Stern 232). The government also used legislation in favor of the peasants to arm and empower them.<sup>25</sup> With the active support of the state, therefore, the peasant communities presented a formidable opposition to *Sendero Luminoso*. In contrast, the ruling Mexican government, by suppressing peasant discontent and practicing exclusionary politics, alienated the peasants.<sup>26</sup> The government's eventual concessions "came too little and too late to ease the hardships that economic restructuring<sup>27</sup> brought to the agrarian sector" (Collier 141). In fact, the Zapatista rebellion emerged as a direct result of government actions that brought land reform to a halt and deprived peasants of both the "possibility of improving their livelihoods" and "of their power as a constituency" (Collier 8). Just as the Peruvian

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<sup>25</sup> According to Orin Starn, "A national law in 1992 recognized the right of the *ronderos* to arms, codifying the reversal of the colonial withholding the technology of war from Andean peasants, and signaling the confidence of Fujimori and his generals in the strength of their unlikely alliance with the peasantry in the war against the Shining Path" (Stern 232)

<sup>26</sup> According to Collier, "exclusionary politics have lent a new divisive character to the political process in Chiapas' small Mayan towns.... Those whom the ruling party favors gain privileged access to resources that should be available to everyone. Those who protest are often locked out of the political process and, in some cases, expelled from their villages" (125).

<sup>27</sup> This economic restructuring occurred as a result of Salinas Gortari's government's drive for modernization and emphasis on the newly emerging industries e.g. production of oil, at the

government's deliberate support of the agrarian community transformed the peasantry into a militant group against the Senderistas, so also the Mexican political regime's oppressive and exclusionary policies led to the increase in rural participation in the Zapatista movement.

The Senderista and the Zapatista revolts possessed qualitatively varying characteristics. *Sendero Luminoso* entered rural society as an *outside force* to instigate peasant participation in a 'popular struggle' against the repressive state. Consequently, the Senderistas lacked appreciation for local agrarian cultures and perceived the peasant population only as a useful support base to achieve the rebels' broader aims of social upheaval. Senderistas' disregard for agrarian culture alienated the peasants, who organized themselves in an unlikely alliance with the Peruvian government to resist *Sendero Luminoso*. Conversely, the Zapatista rebellion emerged as an *internal movement* within the oppressed peasant societies, championing an agrarian-specific agenda. Faced with a repressive regime that emphasized industrial and export growth rather than agrarian welfare, the peasants tended to form closer alliances with the Zapatistas in their struggle against the Mexican government. Although certain parallels existed between the two revolutionary groups, *Sendero Luminoso* and the EZLN remained vastly different movements in terms of ideology, practices, and relationships with the peasant population of Peru and Mexico, respectively, during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Performance Critique: Fall Dance Concert

By Bridget McNulty

Prof. Brooks

TDF 116: Beginning Modern Dance

*The assignment:* Performance Critique for TDF 116: *Grant St. Dance Co. concert*, or *Yellow Wallpaper* and *F&M Fall Dance Concert*. Write a review (2-3 pages, typed double-spaced) following this format:

1. Introduce your topic, including pertinent data about what you saw, when and where the performance took place, who danced, etc.
2. Choose two of the dances presented in the performance you viewed. Describe, to the best of your ability, what you saw: title of each dance, number of dancers, musical accompaniment, the performance space, costumes, progression of the dance, the style of movement used, and any other aspects of the work you consider important. If the dances have no separate title, try to identify the dance by the placement in the context of the entire production (this is for *Yellow Wallpaper*, primarily).
3. The crux of the paper: Compare and contrast techniques, concerns, and whatever you can identify about creative processes in the dances you viewed with material we have covered in class. Be sure to give specific examples, *in movement description*, to support this portion of the essay.
4. Evaluate the work as an expression of dance technique, as a communicative statement, and as a theatrical event.

*Professor Brooks's comments:* “Bridget's essay includes important data—who, what, where, when—but is far from a cold, dutiful report. She includes her enthusiasms and responses, her criticisms and substantiation of those evaluations. She also gave good and evocative movement description that supported her statements and brought images of the dance to life through her writing. She was able to link classroom learning with her viewing experience.”



Being a dancer-in-the-making, I was really excited to see the Fall Dance Concert performed by the F & M Dance Company. I went to the Saturday night performance at the Green Room Theatre and thoroughly enjoyed it.

The first dance of the evening was *Ayiende Yo [God is not Done With Me Yet]*, performed by 16 dancers with 4 musical accompanists playing various percussion instruments. This dance was choreographed by Sonya Mann-McFarlane and Ayana Mann-Pereira and performed using the whole of the Green Room stage. The costumes were simple but very effective—above-knee skirts in African fabric with small black tops adorned with seashells. Each dancer decorated their own top and I enjoyed the variations in pattern and style as well as the prevalent common theme. The dancers all had headbands in various bright colors and began the dance with *shakers* in various designs. The costume choice served to unify the group whilst also allowing for individuality. This theme was continued in the percussionists' attire of simple traditional African shirts that complemented the women's more ornate costumes.

The dance began with the whole troupe on stage shaking their *shakers* and doing a simple shuffling dance step. After the dancers left the stage, a single woman entered in a full African-style dress with a waistband of shells. She danced alone and then, after her departure, the whole troupe entered again. Right at the end of the dance, the single woman re-entered to join the group. The style of movement was reminiscent of West African dance and had many exuberant and joyful sequences (it is traditionally a dance performed to celebrate childbirth). There was a lot of group synchronization but also elements of solo dancers.

There were many recognizable techniques in this dance. I noticed an excellent use of hip movements with great rhythm, as well as some very well performed hip wriggles, and the dancers used contraction and release a lot. Most of the foot movements were articulated by the

heel, in particular flexed foot kicks, which were often further emphasized by throwing the arms forward at the same time as the kick. Any time the dancers stepped forward, it was with the heel first, and this served to emphasize the African nature of the dance (as opposed to the more Western ballet walk). The use of low levels was well choreographed and provided an interesting contrast in the change of levels. A particularly enjoyable movement was a forward step, back step sequence with the weight transferred on to the foot in front. It was performed in very effective unison. The synchronized movements were excellently performed in rhythm, especially when the dancers were in two groups moving backwards towards each other and when they were using clapping or some other form of body percussion. There was also a particularly impressive contraction jump that several of the dancers performed.

The main element of this dance that caused concern was that of characterization. Although the group was well synchronized and worked physically well as a large group of dancers, there was a unity missing from their performance. When 16 people are doing the same movements repeatedly, there must be a unity of expression for the sequence to be fully effective and striking. All the dancers must be performing with the same energy and concentration or the audience's attention will be drawn to the one dancer out of synch. Similarly if the whole troupe is facing forward and doing a movement, all the dancers must either have their heads up or down, not a scattering as was seen in this dance. I believe this is the fault of the choreographer, as it suggests a lack of coherent aim in the dance. If the dancers were one hundred percent certain of their motivation for the duration of the dance, this would not occur.

This being said, I really enjoyed *Ayiende Yo*. I was overly critical of it due to it being an African dance and my being from South Africa. This is perhaps why I noticed the characterization so much, as I know how real Africans dance. I thought the technique was well

expressed and integrated and that the dance conveyed a clear message. I noticed this especially with the addition of the segment at the end of the dance with the solo woman entering with a baby and the whole group singing a lullaby. The music was very apt and excellently integrated by the dancers and the choreographer. The celebratory nature was well conveyed in the first part of the dance, and it was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, so it was successful as a theatrical event. It was a creative and colorfully exuberant dance.

The last dance on the evening's program was *A New Clear Morning*, choreographed by Bill Young. Seven dancers took part in this dance, and the music was by Brian Eno. It was performed on the Green Room Theatre stage in very simple costumes of dark gray loose pants with different colored tank tops in shimmery pinks and purples and blues. All the dancers were on stage throughout the dance and there was an exciting, although not entirely logical, progression.

I appreciated this dance so much more from doing a class with Bill Young, and there were many techniques I recognized from our class. These dancers integrated his concepts of movement contact with great alacrity and used a lot of skips, leaps, jumps and leg extensions throughout the dance. They worked very well as a cohesive unit and showed an excellent use of weight distribution and support of each other. They did lots of work in pairs, leaning back and being supported by their partner and, particularly impressively, becoming dead weights and being caught. I valued their trust in falling and the technique involved in the different types of falls they performed. There was also a very creative use of floor space and of the lower level. The dancers performed floor spins and rolled across the floor a lot and did a difficult floor contraction into a curl whilst rolling. They used counterweight a lot, with both partners leaning back at the same time, and there were definite elements of contraction and release, especially

when they were all in a row being pulled from side to side. One of the most impressive movements was definitely the body pyramid, which they performed with apparent ease and then collapsed onto each other with a minimum of pain, it seemed. At one point, the dancers seemed to be doing a version of the clay exercise that we did in class, and they grouped up to shape one dancer. It was most effective.

The dance was highly creative and exciting. The stage space was used extensively, and the movements and sequences were stimulating and not repetitive at all. There was an excellent sense of unity amongst the dancers, but, at the same time, they each had a sense of individuality. They were totally focused and absorbed in the dance, and this passion was conveyed to the audience (this is what was missing from the first dance). The use of speech in the middle of the dance was surprising and fascinating, and the later use of humming was really effective. It highlighted the body contractions because there was silence for the release. There were also elements of mime and acting that were really effectively performed, and the dancers characterized the different elements of the music well and with great sensitivity. I also enjoyed the dynamic created by using an uneven number of dancers, as one had to be left out when there were pairs, and this created interesting relationships between the dancers.

There was very little to criticize in this dance. My only concern would be that it was quite obscure and not readily understandable, but not only is this not a problem, but Bill Young advised the audience to “let the dance wash over them like music” in the program notes. The technique was well performed and interesting; the dancers were committed and talented, and it was a brilliant piece of dance that was enormously enjoyed by the audience. Bravo!

The Reflection in the Mirror: Seventies Fashion as an Expression of Gender

Equality

By Jamie Koprivnikar

Professor Steward

ENG 472: Literature and Culture of the '70's

A sea of professional men and women wearing suit jackets and tailored shirts, while clutching their briefcases, urges us to subscribe to the *Wall Street Journal*. Two elderly men, one sporting a brightly colored shirt, the other clad in a boring blue polo espouse opposing ideologies according to the words written above each of their heads. A smiling couple with both members in bell-bottom pants and collared shirts. He is carrying a loudly striped bag. She is smoking a cigarette. A tennis star lunging for the ball in a short white skirt. All of these seeming unrelated images are united by the fact that they are cultural artifacts from the seventies, fashion wise, one of the most distinctive and unusual decades of modern dress. The first three are advertisements that appeared in *Time* magazine during the seventies. The fourth is an actual photograph from a 1973-tennis match. What relevance do these images have if any? Can this random assortment of pictures tell us anything about the social and cultural environment of that memorable decade?

Patricia Cunningham and Susan Voso Lab, authors of "Understanding Dress and Popular Culture," would argue a resounding yes. An examination of seventies attire as material culture reveals the ways in which changing notions of gender were reflected in the attire of both men and women. Given Cunningham and Voso Lab's definition of "natural objects or artifacts that are consumed or produced by a culture," clothing is to be counted among the objects that are a part of a society's material culture (5). As such, clothing exhibits all of the characteristics and phenomena that objects of material culture are known to express. "Material objects, such as clothing, help to substantiate the manner in which we order our world of cultural categories such as class, status, gender, and age and express cultural principles, such as the values, beliefs, and ideas which we hold regarding our world" (Cunningham and Voso Lab 5). The study of material

culture is important as it may embody beliefs too “fundamental” or “universally understood” to be directly articulated (Cunningham and Voso Lab 6). As an object of material culture, clothing may be an intentional or unintentional expression of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of a society at a given time. Some critics would argue that clothing is one of the most important expressions of such ideas.

Cunningham and Voso Lab point out Schwan’s belief that “more than any other material product, clothing plays a symbolic role mediating the relationship between nature, people, and their sociocultural environment” (6). Clothing captures the cultural dynamic and transfers it to the person who chooses to purchase it. Clothing designers—as well as fashion journalists, social observers, and market researchers—initiate this process. Advertising and the fashion industry help to convey this message to the consumer (Cunningham and Voso Lab 13). It is in this way that political and social values and attitudes impact styles and fashion as a whole, making fashion “an important force in maintaining and preserving the values of culture, and in reflecting changes in society as well” (Cunningham and Voso Lab 12).

The political and cultural movements of the seventies not only brought greater rights and privileges for women, but also raised awareness of the inadequacy of the all too sharply drawn lines of gender definition. In doing so, greater equality was achieved and the beginnings of a common ground were reached for men and women. While this cultural phenomenon manifested itself in many ways throughout the decade of the seventies, one of the most interesting mediums through which it gained expression is that of clothing. Many of the hallmarks of seventies fashion can be interpreted as conveying the deconstruction of strict gendered definitions and the resultant new breed of equality.

That the seventies ushered in the modern women's movement as a "broad cultural force" is of no question (Schulman 161). The tennis match between the top female player, Billy Jean King and Wimbledon champion, Bobby Riggs, which became known as the "Battle of the Sexes," is not only symbolic of the tone, flavor, and accomplishments of the seventies as a whole, but also had a tremendous cultural impact in and of itself. Famous ABC sportscaster Howard Cosell's exclamation of "Equality for women!" as Billy Jean King won her third straight set against Riggs proved prophetic. According to Barbara Schreier, "only war has rivaled sports as the proving ground for masculine behavior" (92). That a woman was even engaged in such a contest with a man was revolutionary itself. A closer look at the scenario, however, reveals that gender relations still had a long way to go from that fated day in 1973. Perhaps the most telling visual reminder of the wide gulf that still existed between the perceptions of men and women was the way in which Riggs and King were clothed. The appearance of Riggs in shorts and King in a skirt (as shown in Figure 4) "was based on the traditions of fashionable dress and reinforced male/female stratifications" meant to provide "visual reassurance that the sexes still adhered to the nineteenth-century codes of propriety even when engaged in sporting events" (Schreier 94). The skirt worn by King acted as a signal that she should not win. The constraints that it placed on her and the traits that it symbolized both pointed her out as vulnerable and, therefore, weak and able to be defeated. Her costuming added to the shock and poignancy of her victory. This profound image led in large part to the drastic change that the ensuing decade saw in such notions of propriety regarding gender codes due. The influence that the "Battle of the Sexes" had on the world of women's athletics was to echo throughout all nearly all aspects of culture as the decade progressed.



In 1971, females composed only 7 percent of high school athletes. By 1978, this number had jumped to 32 percent, with college athletics following suit (Schulman 161). Title IX of the 1972 Education Act amendments, which “prohibited sex discrimination in any educational program receiving federal aid, threatening to withdraw federal funding from institutions that failed to devote resources to women's athletics” spurred this documented increase of women’s participation in athletics (Schulman 161). The “Battle of the Sexes” smoothed out the roadblocks to the actualization and acceptance of this law. King’s victory played a major role in destroying the claims of lack of athletic desire and ability with which many institutions planned to challenge the Title IX legislation. Additionally, King’s victory inspired women to physical fitness not, according to Susan Douglas, “because it made [them] beautiful, but because it would make [them] strong and healthy” (qtd in Schulman 161). Similar undercurrents of utilitarian rather than aesthetic service became visible in women’s fashion. For example, women began to wear pants more often as they are “easier to move in, warmer in cold weather, and offer greater protection against the eyes of men on the street” (Schulman 162).

Extending beyond the sports world, King’s victory made a more utilitarian use of clothing available to women. The seventies were the first decade in which the majority of American women worked outside the home, a trend which necessitated the emergence of a new fashion genre, the “dress-for-success” school (Schulman 161). The proportion of women with small children who held paying jobs jumped from thirty percent in 1970 to over fifty percent by 1985. Along with the numbers, the nature of women’s work was also changing. Women branched out from the traditionally female fields to careers in law, architecture, and academia (Schulman 162). In these new careers, women chose “Ms.” as it was a form of address for a

woman “who wanted[ed] to be recognized as an individual, rather than being identified by [her] relationship with a man” (Schulman 162).

An advertisement for the *Wall Street Journal* taken from a 1977 issue of *Time* magazine reflects the changing numbers and roles of women in the workforce (see Figure 1). The visual image presented is of rows and rows of suit-clad businessmen intent on the ascension of the corporate ladder. While of great significance, the several women pictured in the advertisement make but little visual contrast to the sea of men in which they are positioned. The similarity that allows for the uniformity of the photograph is the women’s style of dress. Clad in blazers and tailored shirts, clutching briefcases, many of the women are attired in a way that differs from the male style of dress by only a skirt. If viewed twenty years earlier, however, the women most certainly would have made a sensational contrast to the men despite their conformist fashions. While demonstrating a fashion genre unique to the seventies, the dress-for-success school, the advertisement also speaks volumes about the advances that women made in the workplace in the decade of the seventies. That the first two rows of the picture, which represent the top-most tiers of management, are devoid of female presence illustrates the relative novelty of the concept of women as real power players rather than as secretaries or lesser office help. While a modern-day ad version would likely replace the man standing in the President’s box with a female figure to show its trendy politically correct flair, such move was apparently too rash and too risky for a decade that was still experimenting with the societally acceptable definitions and views of gender.

From its outset, the decade of the seventies marked the first time “the women's liberation movement commanded the attention of the nation” (Schulman 163). Features covering the women’s movement were run by almost every major news provider during the first months of

1970 (Schulman 163). While the politics of the 1960's failed women miserably with its Presidential Commission of the Status of Women that issued a report "affirming that women's roles should remain primarily maternal," the seventies would tell a different story (Schulman 165). Although considerable political attention was given to blacks, the poor, and rural Americans during the sixties, the first effective women's policy board was not established until 1971 (Schulman 166). With leaders like Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem, the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) proved much more effective than its predecessor, the Presidential Commission of the Status of Women (Schulman 166).

The NWPC provided the impetus for the increasingly important role of women in politics as well as the power that came with it. The financial support provided to women candidates who shared the feminist vision was largely responsible for the inroads of women in both the Democratic and Republican parties. With only thirteen percent of its seats occupied by women in 1968, the Democratic Convention underwent radical changes during the early seventies with a representation that was forty percent female and led by a female chair, Jean Westwood (Schulman 166). Similarly, the representation of women in the Republican Convention nearly doubled in this time period, going from seventeen percent in 1968 to thirty percent in 1972 (Schulman 166). Additionally, the number of women holding local political offices and the number of female state legislators doubled. The seventies also saw the election of the first female governor, Ella Grasso of Connecticut, and major gains for women in big city politics, with women winning the mayoralty in Chicago and Houston (Schulman 166).

Not surprisingly, these political inroads led to major policy changes during the seventies (Schulman 167). Less controversial legislation included laws prohibiting "sex discrimination in the armed services and educational institutions, . . . employment discrimination against women,"

and laws promoting equal educational opportunities for women (Schulman 167). Although requiring greater political struggle, reform of rape laws was also achieved. The landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion across the nation alone is compelling evidence of the acceptance of feminism into the political and social body of the United States during the seventies.

According to the Caterpillar advertisement pictured (see Figure 2), “responsible forest management” was another political issue that plagued the decade. This vindication of those who operate Caterpillar machinery also works to depict the cultural and ensuing material cultural masculine reaction to the women’s movement. The man on the right’s attire is unaffected by the trends of the day. The older more boring style makes the man appear dated and passé. He is portrayed as being traditionally masculine; his attitude is insensitive and severe. Like his mode of dress, the man’s hard-line sentiment of more wood at any cost is also out of vogue. The figure on the left represents the new view of masculinity that arose in the seventies as a response to the new femininity as well as other cultural changes. The “modern-day” man is more sensitive to the need to preserve the forests. This hip point-of-view is reflected in his dress. The loud colorful print is much more in line with the current fashion trends. It lends a youthful and progressive cast to the man and therefore his opinions. Such a portrayal stems directly from the work of the men’s movement.

With notions of masculinity defined essentially as “not feminine,” it was inevitable that women’s redefinition of themselves would affect the way in which men understood and characterized themselves as well. Before the seventies, men were primarily defined through negations; “manliness meant not to be womanly and not to be homosexual” (Schulman 179). “By challenging ideas about femininity and women’s nature, feminist thinkers also made it clear

that conceptions of masculinity were up for grabs. Americans' most basic notions of manhood needed to be worked out; they could no longer be assumed" (Schulman 177). Perhaps the newfound respect and power that women were gaining in the world made men more willing to appropriate the traits that traditionally belonged to them.

The pre-feminist society encouraged men to live up to the ideal of an emotionless, reserved and withdrawn man whose only form of expression was violence (Schulman 177). Early sociological studies had labeled traits such as awareness of feelings of others, gentleness, being talkative and interest in one's own appearance as being stereotypically feminine (Schulman 178). These were exactly the characteristics that the "traditional" man shunned in his own personality. Limited in their role as the breadwinner, previous notions of how a man should express his masculinity were very one-dimensional.

During the seventies a new paradigm of masculinity appeared on the scene. This mode of being male allowed a man to be a successful professional, while at the same time considering the emotional and personal aspects of his life (Schulman 178). While the traditional image of a man would not have allowed for sacrifices in his career for the good of his family or emotional well-being, the new ideal embraced this more sensitive role. Combining traits both stereotypically masculine and feminine, this male archetype allowed men to express themselves more fully by conveying the multi-faceted elements of their personality.

The true breakthrough for gender equality and definition came as men and society as a whole began to realize the benefits of the women's movement vis-a-vis the definition (or redefinition) of the male image. The health risks incurred by the behaviors of the traditional male model were one of the first publicized drawbacks to archaic notions of masculinity. The 1974 best seller, *Type A Behavior and Your Heart*, demonstrated that the traditionally masculine

“aggressive competitive behavior and reserved, repressed emotions” that made up the Type A personality were predictors of coronary heart disease and early death (Schulman 178). Other books such as *The Male Machine*, *The Liberated Man*, and *The Hazards of Being Male* exposed the mental unhealthiness and its resultant physical manifestations that come from the inability to express one’s emotions (Schulman 178).

*The Liberated Man* by Warren Farrell, published in 1974, critiqued the traditional masculine ideals for their detrimental effects on both men and women (Schulman 181). His book illustrates the direct impact of the feminist movement on the men’s movement and their attempt to avoid the pigeonholing of men into the traditional male stereotype by identifying ways in which men could benefit from the feminist movement. His ideas included that fewer responsibilities as the sole provider for the family would give men more free time. The extra time would allow them to pursue enjoyable activities while financial freedom would offer the opportunity to pursue more fulfilling, although potentially less financially rewarding, work. He also believed that if women were empowered in their own lives and destinies that they would feel less of a need to control those of their husbands. Men would also have more freedom and less guilt in ending a relationship because the liberated woman would not rely on him financially and would not sacrifice her own life and career for his well-being. Finally, Farrell pointed out the male benefit to the looser divorce laws and waning sexual taboos that were the products of feminism (Schulman 180).

Concurrent with the impact of the women’s movement on men’s willingness to express archetypically female traits in their personas was a shift in the perception of homosexual culture. Previously, gay men were seen as being effeminate as opposed to exuding masculinity. Many men associated male expression of traditionally feminine traits with homosexuality and as such

avoided such displays of womanliness. The creation of the gay power movement in 1969 brought about a new “sexually assertive, muscle-building, leather-wearing, almost hypermacho element” to the gay community (Schulman 180). This changed America's perception of homosexuality and of masculinity, “allowing straight men to 'soften' themselves without fearing they might be labeled effeminate or latent homosexuals” (Schulman 181).

The impact of the gay power movement, women's movement, and the men's movement on the attitudes and ideals of the young men of the seventies is evident in the way their lives differed from generations before them. Because this generation delayed life decisions, *Esquire* magazine dubbed them the “Postponing Generation” (Schulman 182). Gail Sheehy, a pop sociologist, provided an explanation for this development. She claimed that men in this generation “don't want to work hard. They demand more time for ‘personal growth.’ They are obsessed by what they call ‘trade-offs’ in life” (Schulman 182). A survey conducted by *Esquire* magazine showed that men ranked “being loving” as the most important personal quality to them, whereas traits such as “being ambitious” and “being able to lead effectively” were at the bottom of the list—a phenomenon very different from that that would have been witnessed a generation before. This softening of the masculine image was reflected in the attire of the seventies, and this decade became the “only time masculine costume was feminized in the history of androgynous fashion” (Davis 36).

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, men and women's dress have acquired distinctly different styles and motifs. While many might perceive the paths taken by each sex's dress as mere chance, Fred Davis, author of *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, would argue to the contrary. According to Davis, the distinct male and female styles together “comprise a coherent sign system, which seeks to ratify and legitimate at the deepest, most taken-for-granted levels of

everyday life the culturally endorsed gender division of labor in society” (40). This is not surprising as the same use of visual signals as the basis for discrimination are visible in racial and ethnic tensions. The male mode of dress displays the easy accessibility of the gender to economic and political power, while female attire suggests a gender that is to be taken much less seriously in the eyes of society. In order to illustrate his point, Davis relates a story in which an officer of the Federal Reserve Bank is asked how much money it would take for him to wear his wife’s hat to the office. His answer is fifty thousand dollars. He reasons that this is as much money as he could expect to earn during the rest of his life, and if he wore his wife’s hat, he would certainly never be allowed a position of financial responsibility again. Ultimately, however, he concludes that no price would be sufficient to compensate for his loss of reputation. Given the gender-biased origin of male and female fashion, it would seem that clothing styles of the seventies, a decade in the mist of rapidly changing gender constructions, would be especially telling.

The “dress-for-success” school is a specific development in seventies fashion that speaks to Davis’ observations of dress and gender. At its extreme, this trend, which applied only to women, took the look of a man’s suit and replaced the pants with a skirt and the tie with a bow. The degree to which female business attire conformed to the male mode of dress is emphasized in the advertisement for the *Wall Street Journal* (Figure 1). Not surprisingly, the women of the dress-for-success school were those embarking on professional fields. This mode of dress remained very distinct from the more frilly and fluffy “girly” look worn by secretaries, suggesting Davis’ thesis that the manner of one’s dress is similar to a qualification needed for admission to an exclusive club. Since it was the “boy’s club” to which women were seeking admission, it is not surprising that women were forced to conform to their standards of



appearance. The attire that emulated the dress of their male counterparts was meant to demonstrate that “women are in fact men’s equals when it comes to such valued on-the-job attributes as ambition, determination, skill mastery, [and] level-headedness” (Davis 52). Additionally, it underscores Davis' notion of the symbolic importance of dress.

While the dress-for-success school represents a standard that women professionals were forced to conform to in their journey to equality, other fads in seventies dress have a rule that is more expressive than operative in the burgeoning gender equality. Many of the seventies styles of dress communicate gender equality by their unisex or androgynous appeal. Davis points out that while androgynously-toned fashions have always played a role in the history of Western fashion, they reached the height of their predominance and popularity in the seventies. Additionally, the seventies were the only time in the history of androgynous fashion that masculine costume was feminized. In his description of the sexless look, Davis is careful to point out the differences between stylish and true modes of androgyny. True unisex dress would force one to identify gender using solely biological sex characteristics such as facial hair or large breasts. This manner of dress would offer no commentary on the matter of gender or sexual role. Western designers have never intended to reach this extreme likely because “the symbolic aim of [their] fashions is to dramatize the cross-gender tensions,” not to suggest that there is a resolution to them (Davis 36).

The image of a man clutching a handbag in the Belair cigarette advertisement taken from a 1975 issue of *Time* certainly does just that (Figure 3). While the similarity in the style of the man’s and the woman’s dress—both are wearing bell-bottom pants and collared shirts—speaks to the burgeoning equality between the sexes, there seems to be an uncomfortable element to the scene. Perhaps it is just the weight of the flirtatious exchange between the man and the woman,

although with the greater sexual freedom that women gained during the seventies, this is also a cultural artifact. A more obvious source of the embarrassment exhibited in the self-conscious, downcast glance of the man would be the traditionally feminine responsibility of the bag that he shoulders. Just as the bulk of the domestic duties may shift from the woman to the man, so may the duty of toting the brightly striped picnic bag. The presence of this feminine symbol in the ad illustrates the tension inherent in the couple's choice of how much of the cultural changes will be expressed through the roles that each plays within the relationship.

This is only one of the ways in which clothing functions as a “culturally revealing” object through its use of symbolism (Cunningham and Voso Lab 12). Anne-Lise Francois, author of “‘These Boots Were Made for Walkin,’ Fashion as ‘Compulsive Artifice,’” suggests that the flares, wide collars, and platforms that were so predominant in seventies fashion are “feminizations of the vertical phallic male body” (159). This is quite an accomplishment for gender equality in symbolic terms as Freud termed one of his developmental stages the “phallic” stage rather than the genital stage. This naming was due to his belief that “only the male organ is recognized at this point” and “the little girl had to be *content* with the clitoris” (Eagleton 133, emphasis mine). Other predominant images in seventies fashion, such as wide ties and elongated sideburns emphasize masculinity, doing it “twice over” (Francois 171). Francois suggests that this image can be read in one of two ways. Her first interpretation pits it as an “overassertion of power” (170). This seems a likely response to the surging rate at which women were obtaining power that was once the sole province of the man. Francois' second interpretation of such excessiveness paints it as a “double betrayal of insecurity” (170). This analysis fits with the changing image of masculinity as a product of the men’s movement that resulted in many men rethinking, and therefore questioning, their identities.

One of the most direct expressions of the equality or middle ground reached by the changes effected by the men's and the women's movements is the commonality which became available in the realm of fashion. As a part of this commonality, both men and women shared a mutual, more unisex version of dress. According to Elizabeth Ewing, author of *History of Twentieth Century Fashion*, jeans are a mode of dress that is "irrespective of sex" (238). The jean, a common element of modern dress, first gained such widespread popularity and acceptance during the seventies. Jeans and a T-shirt took on the status of a near uniform for both men and women during this decade (Ewing 238). This change is a direct reflection of the ways in which traditionally masculine positions were open to women, while traditionally feminine traits became available to men for the first time during the seventies.

A second example of men's greater acceptance of stereotypically feminine emotions and roles is the change made to the business suit during the seventies. The suit look in the seventies has pants that are flared (Francois 158). This is the only time in the history of modern male dress that the suit has embraced a trend to any notable end, showing the extent to which the unisex fad of bell-bottomed pants pervaded the culture of the seventies. The same unisex trend is exhibited by the appearance of leisure suits as a fashion for both men and women (Francois 169). This trend in male and female costume is evident in the Belair ad (Figure 3). The same ad done ten or twenty years before would have undoubtedly cast the woman in a skirt, emphasizing her femininity or otherness. Instead, this is an instance of the woman's dress matching that of the man's, just as the views and roles of men and women begin to mesh for the first time.

Following the new commonality that was made available to men and women by the gendered movements of the seventies was a step away from emphasis on the primary sexual characteristics, which traditionally defined the difference between men and women. According

to Francois, the presence of flares in the fashion of the seventies “distract[s] attention from the genital zone,” thus removing emphasis from the differences between men and women that are often used to pigeonhole them into actions and roles that distinctly belong to one sex or the other (163). Additionally, bell-bottom pants allowed women to achieve “the same refinement and complexity of shaping commonly reserved for women’s skirts and dresses” without the need to wear such specifically feminine attire (Francois 165-166). This freed women from the constraints of action and movement that come with dresses and skirts, granting them a physical equality.

The similarity of men and women’s dress in the seventies brings the material culture of clothing full circle. The divergence of men and women’s dress as a means of male empowerment in economic and social forays reverses itself in the seventies, representing the newly gained cultural acceptance of women’s entrance into these areas from which they were once barred. This is expressed on both a literal and symbolic area as illustrated by the “dress-for-success” school and flared pants respectively. The close examination of dress and culture as a reflection of gender equality of the seventies is not only important in its own right, but is significant in the instruction that it gives us in interpreting pop culture fads and phenomena in our own modern-day world.

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