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Scholar 2012

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An International Journal by the Honors Program
Advisors’ Note

The goal of the Lynn University Honors Program is to provide a challenging and rewarding academic program for exceptionally talented and motivated students, and to provide those students with opportunities to engage in substantive intellectual creativity. In order to promote these goals, we also work to provide our students with outlets through which to present their achievements in the area of academic research.

Scholar, the scholarly journal for the Honors Program, is our primary venue for showcasing the scholarly work of the students in the Honors Program, and a select few other exceptional Lynn students.

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1800 Election Adams vs. Jefferson and the Electoral College
Jonathan S. Guarneri

The United States Presidential election of 1800 was a “revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form; not effected indeed by the sword, as that, but by the rational and peaceable instrument of reform” (Shade 113). The Presidential election of 1800 really put our country to the test. This would be the first Presidential election to take place without the President George Washington, one of the Nations founding fathers. This was also the first Presidential election with two political parties: the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. Also two of the nations founding fathers, and long time friends, would be facing off against one another, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Finally, the 1800 Presidential election would put the Electoral College system to the test.

In 1789 General George Washington was unanimously elected by the Electoral College as the first President of the United States of America. Washington established the idea of what a president should be like. Washington was well-dressed, physically fit, and among one of the best horseback riders. While he was in office, he traveled to all the United States so people could see who their president was and what he was like. At dances, women would wait in long lines just for a chance to dance with him. Above all, General George Washington was a general. A skill he used to his advantage. He surrounded himself with some of the smartest people of the day like Jefferson, Adams, Knox, and Hamilton. Surrounding himself with such smart and trustworthy men, Washington was able to command this country very well. For example, when a tax was placed on whisky in 1794, and people began to claim “taxation without representation.” General George Washington, along with twelve thousand troops marched to Pennsylvania where this problem was occurring and said these taxes had been passed in Philadelphia and that’s the law of the land. Needless to say, the whisky rebellion no longer existed. One of Washington’s more noble acts was his willingness to step down in 1797 after only two terms. He wanted to make sure power would continue to be passed along in a democratic matter (McPherson).

In 1797, the next president to be elected was Washington’s fellow federalist and Vice President John Adams. Adams had the education and knowledge to be a great president. He was educated at Harvard, which made him very ambitious, and at times he even craved power. People concluded Adams was unlike General Washington because he acted more like a king. However, Adams did help build the American Navy and keep the United Sates out of war with France.

The next election to take place in 1800 was complex to say the least. For starters, this would be the first Presidential Election held without General George Washington alive. When Washington was elected “no party nominated him for president and he never campaigned for the office. Every elector cast one vote for him on both occasions and he tried to assemble a nonpartisan administration” (Larson 40). Once Washington died, it looked like the idea of democracy was going to die with him. Some suggested “the tumult and conflict arising from political parties destroying the fabric of American society, and many people feared?” (Dunn 129). The government now had two political parties, The Federalists who were represented by John Adams, and the Democratic-Republicans who Thomas Jefferson represented. Only time would tell if a Democratic government with two political parties would thrive or die.

For the Presidential Elections leading up to the election of 1800, only one political party existed, the Federalists. Without the guidance of General George Washington many were unsure of what was going to happen. Many began to wonder if democracy died with Washington’s death. Luckily, democracy did not die! Two of our founding fathers, Adams and Jefferson, figured out a way to save American democracy by establishing two political parties, one being the Federalists and the other being the Democratic-Republicans.

The way political parties acted towards one another during the 1800 Presidential Election was not much different than how political parties act towards one another in the 2012 Presidential Election. Now, there were a few obvious communication advances that the candidates of the 1800 election could not take advantage of such as: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, and pretty much anything that was computer based; however, in the 1800’s they did have the power of the press, “new forms of vivid typography—emphatic punctuation, woodcuts, boldface type—caught the attention of the readers and conveyed the vividness of oral speech in print” (Shadel 17). That might not seem like a lot to us now, but consider two things. First, newspapers were the
best form of entertainment back in the 1800’s for everyone who could read. Secondly, in the United States in 1800 “there were 178 weekly and 24 daily newspapers” (Shade 116).

What was being said about the candidates made this “one of the dirtiest elections in American history (Thomas Jefferson). Members of the Federalist Party were getting paper to print things suggesting voting for Jefferson would be like a vote against God because someone spread the rumor he was an atheist. Jefferson quickly responded by employing the services of a man named James Calendar. Jefferson wanted Calendar to do whatever he had to do to make the Federalist Party look bad, including leaking some of the scandals of Alexander Hamilton. The nasty headlines being written during the 1800 campaign do not differ much from what we are exposed to by the 2012 campaign. Another example from the 1800 election is one of many letters Hamilton wrote stating: “Burr loves nothing but himself; this of not but his own aggrandizement; and will content with nothing short of permanent power in his own hands” (Larson 253). Today all a person has to do is turn on a T.V. or watch a YouTube clip to see one candidate going after another candidate, and that can all be traced back to the presidential election of 1800.

Since two political parties were now established. The Federalist made their nomination for president and vice-president. For president they chose John Adams, and as his vice-President they nominated Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. The Democratic-Republican made their nomination for president and vice-president. For president they chose Thomas Jefferson, and as his vice President they nominated Aaron Burr. It is at this point in the election that things really started to heat up.

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson had been great friends prior to the Presidential election of 1800. Both men helped write and sign the Declaration of Independence. They were often sent overseas as ambassadors knowing they would fulfill their assignments regardless of whether or not some may have said it was not possible. Prior to the election of 1800 Adams and Jefferson would often time find themselves philosophizing about life, love, and even the best ways to run a government. These two men were truly great friends until Jefferson decided to run against Adams in the presidential election of 1800. Adams took Jefferson’s quest for power as a personal insult and the two men never spoke again. Such a long and developed relationship like theirs to come to a sudden end was truly difficult for both men whether or not they were willing to admit it. The good news to the story is that Adams and Jefferson as older men, no longer involved in politics were able to settle their differences and once again rekindle the relationship that existed once between them.

At this point it should be no surprise that The Electoral College nominated Thomas Jefferson over John Adams; however, there was a situation that had never been encountered before. The position of the President of the United States of America was a tie. The results are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1800 Candidate</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Electoral Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>Democratic-Republican</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Burr</td>
<td>Democratic-Republican</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Adams</td>
<td>Federalist</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Cotesworth Pinckney</td>
<td>Federalist</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Jay</td>
<td>Federalist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Shade 122)

A tie is something the creators of the constitution did not pay special attention to while framing the constitution. Being the pragmatic thinkers we are, we devised a solution. The House would settle the problem. The members of the House convened on February 11, 1801. Over the course of six days 36 ballots were cast containing the same vote, it was a dead lock.

With his reputation and political influence, Hamilton had a meeting with Harrison Gary Otis, a fellow Federalist. Hamilton said to him exactly this, “In a choice of Evils…Jefferson is in Every View Less Dangerous than Burr” (Sloan 53). The conversation between these two men completely changed the outcome of the election. The next time the ballots were cast, for some strange reason, someone decided to switch their vote, giving Jefferson the extra vote he needed to become the President of the United States.

The election of 1800 is important in so many ways and on some many different levels. The very first thing the 1800 election taught us was that Aaron Burr was one very unstable man who required serious medical attention. Once the slightest bit of power got to his head, it spiraled downward from there. After this election more and more people were given the opportunity to vote for the candidate whom they felt would best represent them. The 1800 election further solidified the instability of the Electoral College. However, since the election of 1800, several significant improvements have been made to the Electoral College, the voting process, and the enactment of several constitutional laws.

For example, in 1804 the Twelfth Amendment was added to the constitution to prevent similar events that occurred during the presidential election of 1800. The Twelfth Amendment stipulated that:

The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an
inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;--The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;--The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. [And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.] The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States. (Amendment XII 46-47)

Without the twelfth Amendment the chaos that occurred during the election of 1800 could have only continued for years and years to come. Luckily, our Government devised a plan to keep the mistake that occurred during the 1800’s from happening ever again (given the circumstances of the day).

The importance of Article. II Section 1. in the constitution is that it stipulates the requirements that are needed to perform the duty of the President of the United States. Without this article in place one could only imagine the type of people who would want to become the President of the United States. The requirements set forth in Article. II Section 1. make sure who want the job understand the responsibilities they are required to fulfill.

**Article. II Section 1.**

Clause 1: The Executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Clause 2: each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

Clause 3: The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person has a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner choose the
President. But in choosing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice-President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall choose from them by Ballot the Vice-President. *(See Note 8)*

Clause 4: The Congress may determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

Clause 5: No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

Clause 6: In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, *(See Note 9)* the Same shall devolve on the Vice-president, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

Clause 7: The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Clause 8: Before he enters on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." *(Article. II. Section. 1. 27-30)*

Article II. Section 1 also pays respect to the first President of the United States George Washington. He really felt that a man in his position should portray a certain image: one of excellence, knowledge, strength, and courage. Now, Article II Section 1 may not contain all the stipulations George Washington would have wanted it to contain; however, all things considered he would be rather happy with what is required of a man or woman who is to hold the Office of The President of the United States of America.

My feelings towards the legacy of the Presidential Election of 1800 is best summarized by the words of Bernard A. Weisberger “The winner in 1800 will be taking control of a country at the dawn of modernization. That, too, made the election unlike any other (23). The election of 1800 really put this country to the test. With the death of President General Washington the country’s first president, and father was gone. As a newly formed government we had two choices. We could leave the training wheels on the bike and take the safe course, or we could take those training wheels off and go at this idea of democracy full steam ahead. Under the guidance of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, as well as many other significant political members, a democratic government was at work in the United States. This is not to say everything was perfect; however, all things considered the idea of an American Democracy seemed to be a working form of government. That is until the election of 1800.

The result of the 1800 Presidential election would have an everlasting effect on how this country was both governed and ran. The first surprise brought out about by the 1800 election was the formation of two different political parties: the Federalist party and the Democratic-Republican party. To make things even more interesting the candidates chosen to represent these two political parties were none other than long time friends and signers of The Declaration of Independence, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

The Election of 1800 can really be seen as the grandfather for the way elections today are held. With two new political parties things were sure to get interesting. This was really the first election the media played a role in. It was also the first election that a transfer of power might have to be made if Jefferson were to win. Combine all of this and then add on top of it all that there is a tie between the two Democratic-Republican candidates. Aaron Burr and his ego had no intention of just handing the presidency over to Thomas Jefferson. To settle this dispute 36 ballots were cast all containing the same vote; it was a dead lock. A rather surprising figure put an end
to this whole deadlock, and that man was Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton talked to several of his close federalist buddies and said he was not a fan of Thomas Jefferson, but he absolutely found Aaron Burr distasteful. After Hamilton’s little speech, Thomas Jefferson became the President of the United States in 1800.

Besides the enactment of the 12th amendment and Article II Section 1 of the Constitution of the United States of America, I feel the election of 1800 just exposes the incongruency of the entire Electoral College process. To begin with, a degree in Understanding the Electoral College process is truly needed to understand it. As a second-year college student, if you were to ask me 100 questions about the Electoral College I would be proud to answer more than 35 correctly. If a second-year college student who has been studying this ‘voting’ system does not fully understand how it works, how is the average American supposed to even have the slightest idea as to how the Electoral College operates. Nevertheless, the Electoral College is something this country will have to continue fighting on an ongoing basis.

To conclude, I must say the presidential election of 1800 is one of the most important presidential elections in this country’s history. It was the first presidential election without the father of this nation, President General George Washington. It was the first election that had the formation of two different political parties: and the Federalists and The Democratic-Republicans. Adding salt to an already open wound, the two candidates that would be running for President were once best friends and signers of The Declaration of Independence: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. This election would prove to ruin their once close friendship. Finally, the Electoral College proved its brilliance by tying who the winner of the election would be. Luckily, taking a pragmatic approach, Jefferson was eventually named President of the United States, and the 12th amendment was put into place to prevent something like this from ever happening again.

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The Whistle-stop Campaign and the Runaway Train: How Dewey Got Burned and Why the Kitchen Is Still Smoldering

Rachel Shaffer

Introduction - The Heat in the Kitchen

"I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me. I've got the most terribly responsible job a man ever had," declared the newly inducted President Harry S. Truman on April 13, 1945 (Roschwalb & Smith, 1995). It was one day after President Franklin D. Roosevelt had passed away, less than three months after Truman had been sworn in as Vice President. (Roschwalb & Smith, 1995). "The buck" had inadvertently been passed along to him during one of the most crucial periods in American history.

The climate of the country was intense in the spring of 1945 - World War II was still underway and the threat of communism loomed over both foreign and domestic interests. That May, shortly after President Roosevelt's passing, the Allies triumphed in Europe, and after Japan's refusal of the Potsdam Declaration in August, Truman authorized the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic weapons (Roschwalb & Smith, 1995) Japan surrendered on August 14th, marking the end of WWII.

The post-war era was unstable, with the return of veterans and an upsurge of labor-management conflicts, deficiencies in consumer goods and sufficient housing, and growing inflation. An explosion of labor strikes happened almost overnight, as the close of the war marked the end of the no-strike union pledge that most large unions had agreed upon during wartime (Donaldson, 1999). In part to avoid the labor upheaval of the 1930s, the federal government had supported unions and encouraged employers to avoid conflicts, which throughout the war had strengthened the unions. However, economic pressures began mounting on families that were impacted by massive industry shutdowns caused by strikes previous to the end of the war, in the coal, steel, railway and maritime transportation industries, which had begun to form an "image of allpowerful unions, disrespectful to the public interest." (Ryan & Schlup, 2006). As a result, during the National Railway Strike in the spring of 1946, Truman decided to intervene. After almost a month of a work cessation, and the failure of the workers and management to agree upon a settlement, President Truman took action to end the strike by declaring that if laborers were to continue interfering with an industry deemed vital to America's sustainability, he would draft "all workers who are on strike against their government." (Norton, Sheriff, Katzman, Blight, & Chudacoff, 2007).

Truman's refusal to give further support to labor in the National Railway Strike, and the growing frustration of both conservatives and Democrats with the state of the union, provided the opportunity for Republicans to secure a majority in both the Senate and the House in the 1946 Congressional midterm elections. (Donaldson, 1999). Despite consistent support on foreign issues, this new Republican controlled Congress proved to be a hindrance for Truman in virtually all domestic matters, especially in the area of labor relations. In June of 1947, Congress overrode Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act, which heavily curtailed the power of labor unions. Six months earlier, during his State of the Union Address, Truman had urged Congress not to address the labor conflicts with "punitive legislation," and reminded them that "management shares with labor the responsibility for failure to reach agreements which would have averted strikes... industrial peace cannot be achieved merely by laws directed against labor unions." Further, Truman outlined what programs might be more effective in solving these problems:

[The solution of labor-management difficulties is to be found not only in legislation dealing directly with labor relations, but also in a program designed to remove the causes of insecurity felt by many workers in our industrial society. In this connection, for example, the Congress should consider the extension and broadening of our social security system, better housing, a comprehensive national health program, and provision for a fair minimum wage. (Truman, 1947).]

But the Republican controlled Congress chose instead to pass The Taft-Hartley Act which expanded the rights of employers to restrict union activities and created a set of employee activities that were now prohibited. It amended the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, which previously had addressed only unfair employer related activities in collective bargaining. Taft-Hartley prohibited secondary boycotts, secondary strikes, sympathy strikes, secondary picketing and monetary donations by unions to federal political campaigns. (Ryan & Schlup, 2006). Further, it gave employers the right to speak out against unionization,
as long as they did not directly threaten their employees, and limited the liability of employers for the actions of their managers or any working group of supervisors. In vetoing the bill, Truman declared, “This bill is perhaps the most serious economic and social legislation of the past decade...I have concluded that the bill is a clear threat to the successful working of our democratic society...it would go far toward destroying our national unity.”(Truman, Harry S. Truman: Veto of the Taft-Hartley Labor Bill, 1947)

Labor unions called it the “slave labor bill” and their opposition to the new law ensured their renewed support of Truman in the next year’s election, bringing back the labor votes he and the Democrats had previously lost.(TIME Magazine, 1947).

Despite the conflicts between unions and employers, and a general uncertainty about the post war economy, there was in fact a growing stability within the working class. This was due in part to President Roosevelt’s signing of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the G.I. Bill, which provided benefits for WWII veterans in an attempt to prevent the economic instability following WWI that led to the Great Depression (United States Department of Veteran Affairs). These benefits provided payments for college tuition and vocational training, a year of unemployment compensation, low interest loans to start a business and low interest, zero down payment mortgages to buy a house (Norton, Sherriff, Katzman, Blight, & Chudacoff, 2007). FDR’s initial plan was to provide support for both veterans and the lower class at the end of the WWII, but the G.I. Bill, which was limited solely to returning G.I.’s, was the compromise made in Congress.(United States Department of Veteran Affairs). Truman sought to follow FDR’s lead, and shortly after Japan’s surrender, he proposed a twenty-one point program to further the progress and social welfare of FDR’s New Deal and increase economic stability.

However, while the federal supports provided by the G.I. Bill proved to be enormously successful in re-stabilizing the post war economy and creating an educated and skilled work force, at least among returning vets, the benefits of the Bill were not extended to other Americans.

While President Truman’s domestic policy ideas during this time may have fallen on deaf ears, his insistence on stability abroad was heeded by both Congress and the American public. At the beginning of the Cold War after WWII, Truman set forth a policy in 1947, known as the Truman Doctrine, to economically support Turkey and Greece in their efforts to fend off the influence of communism by the Soviet Union. (Watson, 2005). The Republican controlled Congress supported Truman’s strategy of containment to limit the expansion of communism and this commenced a series of bipartisan policies to address the economic restoration of Western Europe, with both the Marshall Plan and the creation of NATO following within the next two years.(Ryan & Schlup, 2006). In addressing the “red scare” spreading throughout the country, Truman also signed the National Security Act of 1947, which merged the different branches of the military into what is now known as the Department of Defense, and created the U.S. Air Force, CIA, and the National Security Council.(Ryan & Schlup, 2006).

Truman also vigorously supported The Marshall Plan, a program named after Secretary of State, and former WWII general, George Marshall, who led creation of the Joint Chief of Staff directive JCS 1779, which stated, “an orderly and prosperous Europe requires the economic contributions of a stable and productive Germany.” (Beschloss, 2002). The program was implemented in 1948, and sought to rebuild areas of Western Europe that had been ravaged by war, especially by rebuilding the transportation infrastructures whose destruction had left smaller villages economically segregated, and by exporting to Europe the consumer goods and natural resources which many countries no longer had. (Judt, 2005). Some historians credit this program with providing “the foundation of the European Community that prevails today.”(Rosenthal & Smith, 1995).

Heating up the Campaign Trail

One of President Truman’s favorite expressions was “if a man can’t stand the heat, he ought to stay out of the kitchen.”(Truman, Quotable Quotes). Coming into office in one of America’s most precarious decades in history, Truman had the resilient armor needed to take the heat. But with his approval rating sinking to 36% in the spring of the 1948 election year, the prospect of being elected to the presidency had begun to seem unlikely. (Burnes, 2003). However, several issues and events, and decisions made by Truman during the re-election campaign, eventually turned an almost certain loss in 1948 into a victory. Four in particular are worth noting: 1) Cold War policies and domestic civil rights issues, which caused a three way split within the Democratic Party, 2) the 80th United States Republican-led Congress and Truman’s “Turnip Day” speech, which addressed its failings, and 3) the “Whistle-stop” approach of Truman’s campaign contrasted with the distantly cautious campaign of Thomas E. Dewey, and, related to that, 4) how the media and polls influenced Dewey’s campaign.

The major political issues of 1948 revolved around Cold War policies, employment and the economy, and domestic civil rights. While Democrats and Republicans fought over these issues, there was also a war
waging within the Democratic Party. A new Progressive Party broke away from the Democrats, campaigning on an intensely liberal platform that demanded civil liberties for women and blacks, stronger government regulation and corporate control, and that heavily opposed the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. (Donaldson, 1999). The Progressive Party was led by former Vice President Henry Wallace, President Roosevelt’s second in command during the 1940-1944 term.

In 1944, as FDR’s health deteriorated, the Democratic National Committee leaders questioned Wallace’s viability as the possible next standing President, and his ability as a liberal to achieve a broad popular appeal. (McCullough, 1992) Then Senator Harry S. Truman had gained widespread attention by fighting gross mismanagement in the war effort through the U.S. Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, known as the Truman Committee. The committee investigated “the terms of defense contracts, how they were awarded, how contractors performed, the utilization of small businesses, and the effect of the defense program on labor” and is reported to have saved as much as $15 billion in its existence from 1941-1948. (Harry S. Truman Library and Museum).

Because of his national support in the war effort, Truman was seen as a safer choice than the liberal Wallace, who, on the ticket with FDR in 1944, won a landslide electoral victory against Governor Thomas E. Dewey and Governor John Bricker of Ohio (Donaldson, 1999). Because of his national support in the war effort, Truman was seen as a safer choice than the liberal Wallace, who, on the ticket with FDR in 1944, won a landslide electoral victory against Governor Thomas E. Dewey and Governor John Bricker of Ohio. (Donaldson, 1999). Despite the electoral divide, Governor Dewey had actually obtained 46% of the popular vote, making him the strongest opponent Roosevelt had ever faced (Smith, 1982).

Two years before the 1948 election, Truman had fired Wallace as the Secretary of Commerce after Wallace he publicly criticized Truman’s unyielding position on the Soviet Union. (Donaldson, 1999). Wallace’s opposition was intensified during the 1948 election and Truman used Wallace’s “soft line in time of a Cold War,” and possible ties with communist supporters, to attack the Progressive ticket. (Lader, 1976). It was this division within the Democratic Party, between two Vice Presidents of the much loved FDR, that had most politicians and experts at the time convinced that Dewey would have an easy victory. (Cherny, 2008).

The Berlin Airlift, which was authorized by Truman on June 25, 1948, and considered a turning point in the Cold War, may have been one of the biggest factors in pushing Truman to victory. In June 1948, the Soviet Union, which was controlling East Berlin, sought to overtake West Berlin, then controlled by the Allies, by cutting off transportation and supplies to and from the city. (Giangreco & Griffin, 1998). Truman’s bold response was to deliver by plane, food and other necessary supplies, despite the Allies and American being outnumbered “62 to 1 in Berlin and surrounding areas.” (Cherny, 2008). This “huge effort… resulted in ‘making Berlin a major test of U.S.-Soviet strength in the eyes of Germany and of Western and Eastern Europe, and reaffirming a direct U.S. responsibility for the safety of the German population of the western sectors of the city’ … [and] caught the imagination of Germans, Americans and all over the world,” explained Andrei Cherny, the author of The Candy Bombers: The Untold Story of the Berlin Airlift and America’s Finest Hour, to The New York Times in 2008. Cherny asserts that, “for a long period, more Democrats wanted Wallace than Truman to be the 1948 nominee,” but the Berlin Airlift played a major role in convincing the American public that Truman had the strongest policy to address the Cold War. Cherny further states that,

If Wallace had continued to receive the double digit support he was registering in the polls before the blockade — in fact, if he had received 70,000 more votes in the right states — Dewey would have won the election. His support crumbled mostly because of what was occurring in the skies over Berlin. (Cherny, 2008).

In his article “Truman, Berlin, and the 1948 Election,” Fred B. Misse, suggests that German Americans in some swing states may have abandoned their Republican vote to support President Truman’s Berlin decision and “provided [him] with his margin of victory” (Misse, 1982).

The third split within the Democratic Party was what became known as the “Dixiecrats,” a contingent of Southern Democrats that walked out of the National Convention when Truman declared that civil rights would be included in the 1948 party platform. Then Minneapolis Mayor, Hubert Humphrey urged the addition to the platform in his speech to the convention on July 15, 1948, when he said,

The time has come for the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states’ rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights. People – people – human beings – this is the issue of the twentieth century. (Solberg, 2003). Eleven days later, on July 26, 1948 President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, which created the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. It states, “[i]t is hereby declared to be the policy of the
President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.” (Harry S. Truman: Library and Museum).

Like the Progressives, the “Dixiecrats” nominated their own presidential candidate, in this case South Carolina’s Governor Strom Thurmond, who ran on a platform of “complete segregation of the races.” (Oshinsky, 2000). Zachary Karabell, author of The Last Campaign: How Harry Truman Won the 1948 Election, suggests that unlike the other southern politicians in his party, Thurmond was not actually a racist, but was against any attempts of Federal control over individual states and had angrily stated that he wouldn’t “sit idly by while a bunch of hack politicians whittles away your heritage and mine. As for me, I intend to fight!” (Oshinsky, 2000). The Dixiecrats knew the party did not have the support to win the election, but they successfully fought to have their ticket listed as the “official” Democratic Party on the ballots in individual states and had angrily stated that he wouldn’t “sit idly by while a bunch of hack politicians whittles away your heritage and mine. As for me, I intend to fight!” (Oshinsky, 2000). The Dixiecrats knew the party did not have the support to win the election, but they successfully fought to have their ticket listed as the “official” Democratic Party on the ballots in southern states and actually won Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Mississippi. The Dixiecrats had hoped that they would have enough electoral votes to force the election into the House of Representatives, but fell short. (Buchanan, 2002).

**Holding Dewey’s Feet to the Fire & the Upset of 1948**

Governor Thomas E. Dewey was the predicted winner of the 1948 election, and part of his legacy now derives from the famous Chicago Tribune headline, “Dewey Defeats Truman” that appeared the morning after the election. Despite the lack of further recognition Dewey brings to mind for younger generations, in the early and mid-1940s, Dewey was a national force to be reckoned with. He had been the Republican candidate to come closest to defeating FDR (during the 1944 election), and as Governor of New York had been re-elected in 1946 by one of the greatest margins in the state’s history (Smith, 1982).

Between Dewey’s popularity, Truman’s falling approval rating in the spring of 1948, and the divides within the Democratic Party, most Republicans, and most experts at the time thought, as Clare Boothe Luce said during the keynote address at National Republican Convention, that the President was a “gone goose.” (Hamby, 2008). Given his perceived large lead, Dewey was advised to campaign without confrontation and avoid attacking Truman. (Donaldson, 1999). In the 1944 election against FDR, Dewey had been heavily criticized for the attacks he had made on the beloved sitting President during a time of crisis, and he vowed to be more civil during this campaign. (Duke, 2000). The result was “an amazingly listless campaign filled with platitudes, triteness, and bromides.” (Donaldson, 1999). Dewey’s speeches missed the emotional mark of the people and came off as distant and snobbish, fitting the description Theodore Roosevelt’s daughter gave to him during the 1944 campaign as “the little man on the wedding cake.” (Smith, 1982).

In contrast, President Truman was brashly outspoken, with a quick wit, and an honesty that looked for no one’s approval. He took a grassroots approach, and went on what is now referred to as the “whistle-stop” campaign, as he traveled around the country making “whistle-stops” at different towns to give speeches from the back car of the train. Truman traveled more than 31,000 miles, through 30 states, and made 356 speeches, averaging 10 per day in some areas. (Goode, 1999). According to Paul Duke, despite the polls, “there were numerous signs that Truman was a more formidable candidate than believed” noting that at “a late campaign swing across New York State, some 10,000 turned out for a rainy day 7 a.m. rally in Dewey’s home territory of Albany.” (Duke, 2000).

The Republican Party National Committee Chairman, Hugh Scott, advised Dewey to lead a more vigilant campaign against Truman, but Dewey dismissed such advice seeing it as a tactic to appeal to “local party professionals” instead of being a “statesman,” (Donaldson, 1999). Dewey’s campaign trail traveled 16,000 miles, gave 175 speeches and lasted 26 days. (Bremback, 2009). With Truman almost doubling Dewey’s campaign distance and speeches, Dewey’s inability to counter the President’s attacks burned away his lead. This was greatly intensified by Truman’s constantly associating the failings of the 80th “do-nothing” Republican Congress with the Republican candidate, which became significant after Truman’s “Turnip Day” speech.

To prove that the Republican Party (and the Republican candidate) would not follow through with their promises to improve health care, education, housing, and other domestic issues, Truman used what Missouri farmers knew as “Turnip Day,” to give Congress an opportunity he knew they would fail to take. (Watson R., 2010). On July 25, 1948, President Truman “in a brilliant political move... relied on a little-used clause in the Constitution that permitted presidents to call Congress into a special session ‘on extraordinary circumstances.’” (Watson R., 2010). Truman called on Congress to spend two weeks passing everything they had promised to the country and he, in turn, promised his signature. When the indignant Congress refused to comply, supporting instead the leading voice on conservative domestic policy, Senator Robert Taft, Truman labeled them the infamous “Do Nothing Congress.” (Watson R., 2010). Despite the fact that Dewey was a moderate in comparison to Taft and the Republican Congress (Taft had planned a “stop-Dewey” movement at the Republican National Convention in trying to obtain the GOP nomination himself) and may have even had views more similar to
Truman than the conservatives, his attempts to stay bipartisan and avoid “mudslinging” proved to be his downfall. (Smith, 1982).

One of the biggest problems with Dewey’s campaign strategy was that it limited his ability to defend himself against Truman’s attacks. Although all polls predicted a Dewey victory, the three biggest polling organizations stopped polling before the last week of the election. In studying polling methods, Warren J. Mitofsky noted that despite the November 2nd election date, “Gallup stopped interviewing October 28, Crossley finished October 18, and Roper’s poll was finished early in September.” He further observed that,

Gallup and Crossley had Dewey winning by a 5 percentage point margin in a race Truman won by 4 points. This resulted in a 9-point error on the difference. Roper was farther off the mark. He had an error on the margin of 19 points (Mitofsky, 1998).

But Truman ran his whistle-stop campaign until October 30th, (Truman, 1948 Presidential Campaign Stops for Harry S. Truman’s WhistleStop campaign, 1948). Truman even joked about these polls during his tour on October 26th in Cleveland, Ohio, suggesting that the polling was being used to convince voters that they did not even need to vote because the election had already been won:

You know that the same doctor I told you about in Pittsburgh the other night—that Republican candidate—keeps handing out these sleeping polls, and a lot of people have been taking them. The doctor keeps telling the people: ‘Don’t worry. Take a poll and go to sleep.’ (Truman, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Illinios, 1948).

In a 2002 article about polling methods, Jeanne Curry and Susan R. Takata noted that the use of polling by telephone inevitably excludes those without one, which was especially significant in 1948 when fewer people had phones. (Curry & Takata, 2002). The polling margins of error may have been increased by the farmers’ votes (rural areas) that aided in Truman’s election.

Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen had advised Dewey to be cautious on agricultural issues so as to not upset the traditionally Republican farm vote, but farm prices were dropping and Truman used this to tie Dewey to the Republican Congress that “already stuck a pitchfork into the farmer’s back.”(Donaldson, 1999)(Goodman, 1988). In St. Louis, on October 30, 1948, Truman reminded farmers that Democrats were responsible for their improved fortunes since the Depression:

In 1932 the farmers in this great Nation were being foreclosed and were going broke at a terrific rate. I think in 1932, 123,000 farmers were evicted from their farms. The net farm income that year was $2.5 billion. The total income was $4.5 billion. In 1947 the gross income of the farmers was $30 billion and the net income was $18 billion. In 1947 there were less than 800 farm foreclosures. The Democratic Party is responsible for that result, and nothing else! (Truman, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Illinios, 1948).

Truman was careful to direct each speech to particular demographic groups and their concerns. For example, during a speech on Democratic Women’s Day, September 27, 1948, Truman spoke to women about how Democrats had positively affected their children’s education, and how much influence their votes could have:

The Democratic Party...fought for the appropriation of three hundred million dollars as a beginning of Federal aid to education. The Republican 80th Congress ignored my request...You the women of America have a million and a half more potential votes than men. I am confident that you will use this power to bring about a secure and good future for yourselves and your families. (Truman, Special Audiences, 1948).

Despite a significant recession in 1946-1947, the economy began recovering by 1948, and in a speech in Gary, Indiana on October 25, 1948, Truman pointed to the economy’s upward trend and credited the Democratic Party with the climb out of the depression:

We are today the most prosperous nation on earth. More than 61 million Americans have jobs. The average hourly rate of pay in industry is $1.33 an hour, instead of 45 cents as it was in 1932. Average weekly earnings are $52.96, instead of the mealy $17.05 that you got in 1932. (Truman, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Illinios, 1948).

These messages also echoed around the country by radio which may have added to Truman’s victory. Although both candidates used the radio extensively, Truman may have depended on radio use more than his opponent, since most of the major newspapers favored Dewey and radio was the only way to avoid partisan newspaper coverage. (Carroll, 1987). James Reston, a reporter for The New York Times later admitted, “We did a lousy job of reporting. We talked to each other. We talked to the political bosses. We didn’t talk to the
On November 3, 1948, Harry S. Truman awoke to find that he had been elected President with 303 electoral votes. Dewey had obtained 189, Thurmond 39, and Wallace received none. Despite his civil rights platform, Truman had won most of the southern states, his midwestern base, and had narrow victories in California, Ohio, and Illinois. (Donaldson, 1999). By popular vote he had only won by a 4.5 percent margin, with 24,179,259 votes to Dewey’s 21,991,291. (Donaldson, 1999).

The Heat Still Rising in the Kitchen

Whether it is through neglect or service, good or bad decisions, every President leaves a mark in history. In office before today’s repetitious venom of the political media was the norm, President Truman may have been the last President or Presidential candidate to speak completely honestly. He was known for his candid approach and for guarding his ethical principles without apology. Truman’s legacy was not only shaped by his character, but for maintaining that character through some of the toughest decisions that any American president was faced with. As Dr. Robert Watson writes in The National Security Legacy of Harry S. Truman:

If ever a new president was thrust into a challenge, that president was Harry Truman...[He] literally shaped history within the first few months of his presidency. The war in Europe was ending and important decisions had to be made about the postwar era and about the conduct of the conflict in the Pacific theater. (Watson R. P., 2005).

Truman’s legacy includes the critical decisions he was faced with shortly after FDR’s death: dropping the atomic bombs on Japan and preserving the role of the Emperor in their new democracy, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the National Security Act of 1947, the recognition of Israel as a nation, the Berlin Airlift, and the Executive Order 9981 to end segregation in the military. He was the first president to recommend universal health coverage, and during his time in office initiated the reconstruction of the interior shell of the White House which had been deteriorating. (Roschwalb & Smith, 1995)(McCullough, 1992).

However, the legacy of the 1948 election marks a different type of legacy, not only for Truman, but for the political climate of the time. It marks an end to bipartisanship in American history, and a beginning of a more vicious political era manipulated by fear and ideological judgments, encouraging ignorance and hysteria.

In 1953, conservative journalist Victor Lasky could read "a good editorial on the Hiss case" by liberal James Wechsler in the New York Post and send it to Congressman Nixon, suggesting that he commend its author. "But I’m afraid dem days are gone forever; ... men of good will, both liberal and conservative, are no longer able to get together for a good argument without shouting ‘McCarthyism’ or ‘anti-anti-Communism.” (Fried, 2010)

The 1948 election was the last election to have only intermittent polling and the last election that was untelevised. Mostly, the late 1940s mark the influx of ‘war on terror’ beliefs, and the exaggerated ideas of ‘patriotism,’ and ‘security.’ Truman, a Democrat, had to appear as a vigilant anti-Communist. Fried suggests that had Dewey, a Republican, won the election, he might have been better able to oppose the vicious attacks of McCarthy, attacks that ultimately undermined the State Department and ultimately made the country less able to properly assess conflicts like Vietnam. No one has a good crystal ball to look into the future, so the overall effect of the 1948 election is hard to know. However, we are still suffering the effects of a massive over-reaction to perceived external threats, proven successes of large scale Federal support like the G.I. Bill are often dismissed as economically naïve, and we still do not have universal health care, which now is standard in almost all other industrialized nations. A candidate like Truman, who can speak his mind in order to clearly articulate a vision, is something we could use today.
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Sex Offenders in Today's Society
Loise Pimentel

The justice system that exists today has been formed and reformed through the course of many years of deliberations and rulings in a variety of cases. These cases have mandated the laws that the United States currently upholds for its habitants. Laws can either protect the victims, restrict the offenders or both. However, this has been found not true for all cases presented in U.S. courts. Offenders are often released from their sentences prematurely and then pushed upon society.

Communities are caught off guard and unprepared for what these freshly released offenders might entail with their new found liberty. Laws covering the issue of sex offenders, specifically Megan’s Law, have raised awareness towards the subject and cast doubt upon the reliability of the justice system in the United States. This doubt stems from cases like Jaycee Lee Dugard’s, a victim of a sex offender.

To begin with, the struggle that Jaycee Lee Dugard faced against a sex offender is a clear example of how and why Megan’s Law is required in today’s justice system. Megan’s Law provides the public with certain information on the whereabouts of sex offenders so that members of communities may protect themselves and their children (Megan’s Law, 2009). In Dugard’s situation, her predator, Phillip Garrido, had already been convicted as a sex offender, served his sentence, registered as a sex offender and released by parole. Garrido kidnapped Dugard as an eleven year old, three years after being released. Furthermore, during the eighteen years of captivity in Garrido’s backyard, he fathered two children with Dugard (Jaycee Dugard Files Lawsuit Against Federal Government for Failure to Monitor Phillip Garrido, 2011). “Garrido was on lifetime parole and his arrest raises question about how closely parolees are monitored” (Police: California Girl Kidnapped 18 Years Ago Kept as Sex Slave in Couple’s Backyard, 2009). Megan’s Law was specifically created so that cases...
similar to Dugard’s could be prevented. In this situation, both the law and the community are at fault. Sex offender registries were originally created for the public so that, at their leisure, they could look up sex offenders in their community and take their own safety measures. Garrido was being monitored to an extent; this is where the law fails.

In essence, because both the community and law came short in fulfillment expectations of safety, it raises questions as to whether more should be done regarding sex offenders. “But the case of Phillip Garrido… is reigniting a debate about the usefulness of the government-managed lists and whether they might create a false sense of public safety” (Davey, 2009). Yes, they do create a sense of safety, for those who know about it. Today’s society is all about getting things done quickly. People do not often stop, or go out of their way for things that they do not necessarily have to worry about. In other words, if law enforcement officials already have the knowledge of the sex offenders’ whereabouts and had already had firsthand contact with them, people will automatically believe that they are safe.

Communities need to either bring more awareness towards the subject or the registration laws should be stricter; both of these can be done. One of the first things that should be done at a community level is reporting.

Because most sexual offenses go unreported, it is difficult to tell [whether sexual offending is increasing or not]. There is speculation among many in the field that the implementation of new laws related to the registration and community notification of convicted sex offenders may cause an even higher rate of underreporting… most victims know their assailants and many may not want to subject them to public scrutiny (Frequently Asked Questions, 2009).

Other things that should be improved on are getting informed about statistical rates of sexual assault in the community and finally, to speak out to others who do not have any knowledge on the subject. At a law enforcement level, providing mandatory programs for offenders being released into society is one of the first things to be carried out. These programs should consist of providing the offenders with therapy if needed. Also, these offenders should get psychologically evaluated on their recidivism tendencies before being released as a precautionary measure. And finally, a better monitoring system should be set up, so that other young girls like Jaycee Dugard will never have to suffer a lifetime in captivity.

In conclusion, Megan’s Law is effective to some extent in today’s society. Cases like that of Phillip Garrido, a sex offender, prove that law enforcement officials are lacking in providing a safe environment for their people. In my opinion, there is more to be worked on in the justice system regarding sex offenders’ release as well as in the communities to raise awareness regarding such individuals.
References


Mental Disorders in the Filming Industry

Loise Pimentel

Throughout centuries, people’s behaviors have been condemned as either normal or abnormal. In societal history, if a person was to show an out of the ordinary behavior, that person was said to be a deviant. Today, the field of psychology helps the public identify and name the different types of deviant and abnormal behaviors these people present. Furthermore, society has incorporated many, if not all of the day to day diagnosed mental disorders in the media. Novels, television shows, and even movies portray characters struggling with their own mind. The main character of the motion picture Fight Club, directed by David Fincher, is an excellent example of how the media has introduced characters dealing with mental disorders.

In Fight Club, Jack, the main character, mentions how he has suffered from insomnia for over six months and how he feels depressed and tired of the monotone lifestyle that he is living. Jack tries to seek medical help for his insomnia claiming that he is in pain but is turned down and told that if he wants to experience real pain, he should visit a testicular cancer self-help group. After attending his first meeting and being unable to sleep at night, he becomes addicted. Jack then starts going to these meetings regularly for the course of a year. In one of these groups, he meets Marla Singer, a woman who, like him, lies and fakes to be ill. Marla destroys Jack’s accomplishment of curing his insomnia and is bound to find another outlet: Tyler Durden. After several interactions, Jack and Tyler start fighting each other for fun. This fighting seems to help Jack sleep once again. From then on, their relationship binds deeply as they create Fight Club, which will later grow nationwide, and start doing unlawful and reckless business together. Ultimately, Fight...
Club evolves into an underground organization seeking to erase all debt by destroying all buildings of major credit card companies. Towards the end of the film, it is explained to the audience how Tyler Durden has been taking over Jack’s life as an alter personality. This implies his suffering from not only insomnia but also of a more destructive illness: dissociative identity disorder along with antisocial personality disorder.

To begin with, the main character Jack, of the movie Fight Club, intelligently illustrated the use of dissociate identity disorder in the media. Through the course of the movie, Jack explains to the audience how he came to be in the position where he is currently. It seems as if the etiologies of his symptoms are related to his lack of sleep, and his depression and tiredness of his monotonous life. The reason for this is once he realized what his problem was—lack of sleep, he searched for a way to stimulate himself into sleeping: self-help groups. By doing this, he ended up being addicted to these groups. Then once Marla came, and he was no longer able to sleep, his alter-ego decided to create an entirely new personality for him. This new personality was portrayed under Tyler Durden. Tyler, when conversing with Jack says “You were looking for a way to change your life. You could not do this on your own. All the ways you wish you could be, that’s me... I am free in all the ways that you are not!” (Fincher 1999). Dissociative identity disorder states that “the individual...has at least two distinct identities or personality states, each with its own pattern on perceiving, thinking, and relating, as well as its own style of behavior, personal history, and self-image” (Halgin, R. P., & Whitbourne, S. K., 2010, p. 193). Not only did Jack create an alter personality, Tyler, but also introduced him as a person with different jobs, different clothing and body style, and different behaviors and thinking patterns. “Tyler Durden, Jack’s alter-ego creation, forces Jack to create binary oppositions...” (Rothe-Kushel 2002). Furthermore, Halgin and Whitbourne explain how a person with dissociative identity disorder can also experience amnesia or have gaps in their memory, usually the result of their alter taking over. This particular characteristic also applies to Jack since many times he woke up without really knowing how he got there in the first place.

Moreover, Jack beautifully exemplified the use of personality disorder, especially antisocial personality disorder, in the film industry. This was accomplished through his creation of Tyler who committed multiple deviant and out of the ordinary behaviors throughout the film. Some of the characteristics of antisocial personality disorder include “pervasive disregard for the rights of others as shown by such behaviors as unlawfulness, deceitfulness, and impulsivity”; people with this disorder “may behave impulsively, aggressively, and recklessly without showing signs of remorse” (Halgin, R. P., & Whitbourne, S. K., 2010, p. 311). One of Tyler’s jobs was making soap. To do this, he collected bags of fat from liposuction clinics and manually separated the components he needed for making soap. Not only was this behavior unlawful, but it also disregarded all dangers that it could cause to other human beings. Jack, when confronted by his manager at work about his obscure doings in fight club, he felt “Tyler’s words coming out of my mouth” (Fincher 1999) as he threatened shooting him and the entire workplace clearly not showing any remorse about the possible danger of others.

Finally, treatment for Jack is necessary counting all of the similarities in characteristic between him and the disorder’s criteria. Jack created Tyler as the person he preferred to be, except this person also had a mental disorder. Thus, if Jack is treated for his dissociative identity disorder there is a very good chance that Tyler and his antisocial personality disorder will die off together. It may be believed that Jack’s mental demise could have been caused by the social factors surrounding him. These social factors include his need to fight conforming to the rules at his job and the rules of society. Jack mentions in the beginning how he is tired of living a monotonous life; in other words, he is tired of living like a good person. For treatment, the first thing that should be done is possibly isolate him from these social factors for a period of time. During this time Jack would also be receiving therapy. In therapy, the clinician would assist Jack with the integration of his alter, Tyler, into a unified whole and to develop adequate coping strategies to deal with society (Halgin, R. P., & Whitbourne, S. K., 2010, p. 195). If this were to happen during the course of the movie, it might have
prevented him from shooting himself as an escape route to try get rid of his alter personality, Tyler.

In conclusion, with both Jack and Tyler, from the movie *Fight Club*, being the same person with two different mental disorders, it is safe to say that the film industry does make good use of abnormal psychology today. Jack presented to the public how an average male in his early thirties can easily get caught up in the world's day to day activities and problems, and end up mentally ill. However, today, these mental disorders are usually caught at the right time and cases like Jack's are successfully prevented.

References


Despite age, gender, race, class, location, time period and society everyone struggles with Yalom’s concept of meaninglessness. Plato, an anonymous author, William Wordsworth, Kazuo Ishiguro, Jamaica Kincaid, Kurt Cobain, Viktor Frankl, and myself all struggle to find meaning yet have had different outcomes in life. Yalom’s most important concept, meaninglessness, answers the why in life. Meaning gives the individual motivation, explanation, and an identity. Meaning in life can come from religion, work, or family. The important aspect of meaning is realizing that everyone will struggle to find it and keep it.

One of the first philosophers to prove he struggled existentially to find his meaning was ultimately put to death for it. Socrates was a man that stood for everything that Athens did not agree with. Unlike most of the Athenian citizens, Socrates believed in questioning everything and proving to others that many of the men in political positions were not the best suited. Socrates found meaning in teaching others and proving to the Athenian citizens to think for themselves rather than just following what the government expects. Socrates struggled to understand why others were just sheep. His struggle to find meaning led to his death, because Socrates was self actualized and believed that dying for one’s meaning will bring about change (Saccarelli).

Plato, one of Socrates disciples, followed the teachings of his mentor and struggled himself to find his meaning. Plato wrote, The Apology, as a way of finding his meaning once his mentor was sentenced to death. Due to the fact that Socrates never wrote down his teaching methods or beliefs, this was the ideal way to make sure his death proved a point and educated others. Plato found meaning in writing and continued to teach others how he was taught.

Written during the middle ages, The Thousand and One Nights, represents the struggle of the anonymous author to find meaning. Most authors take experiences and emotional struggles and use them as material for their writing. Although not much is known about the anonymous author, it is clear that just like Shahrazad, the author also struggled and found meaning in story telling. Shahrazad, told her tales for a thousand and one nights to keep from being murdered by the vengeful king Shahriyar. The anonymous author must have struggled with his or her society to fit in and find meaning. Consequently, their meaning became to write tales to be able to survive the daily struggles from society.

Likewise, William Wordsworth discloses his existential struggle in “The World Is Too Much With Us.” Wordsworth lived during a time much like ours where society was ruled by material objects. Unlike the people around him, Wordsworth saw the beauty in nature and being capable of making his own decisions. Existentially, William Wordsworth struggled with the concept of showing others the bigger picture in life. Consumed with purchasing the latest material object, individuals forgot that everything they bought would never give their life meaning. Without meaning life is “out of tune”(146) which is what the author expresses in his poem. Ultimately, Wordsworth struggled to find meaning in a materialistic society where he did not fit in, which led him in finding himself through nature and writing.

The Japanese author, Kazuo Ishiguro also relates his existential struggle to find meaning in “A Family Supper.” At a young age Ishiguro’s family moved to England so his father could work on oil development. This move brought forth the beginning of his struggle to find meaning in a new country. Ishiguro had to learn a new language and adjust to new customs. In his writings Ishiguro expresses the isolation he felt by being an outsider. Also, he comes to realize that with age comes new freedoms and responsibilities that do not always go hand in hand with his parents’ beliefs. Ultimately, his struggles always came back to questioning his meaning in life and why he was put on earth. Altogether the author realized that writing was his way of dealing with all of his struggles.

From a gender perspective, Jamaica Kincaid existentially struggled to find her meaning due to her sex. Society expects women to be able to do certain tasks and start a family; those ideals have kept women from having the freedom to find their meaning. A mother, who favored her son because of his sex, raised Kincaid. She first understood what society expected of her as soon as the boy was born. From that point on she began to struggle to find her meaning in life. Kincaid wrote “Girl” from the point of view of a daughter that remembers her mother’s advice over the years. Jamaica Kincaid was taught all of the same chores from the reading and more as a child. Kincaid was sent to the United States to become
an au pair and support her family. Because she did not agree with her family, Kincaid isolated herself and did not speak to her family for over a decade. Kincaid found comfort and meaning in writing, but due to the fact that her family would not agree with her writing, she began to write under a pen name. Through her existential struggle to find meaning in her life outside of the female role, she was capable to go to college and study. Her struggles growing up served as material for her writings.

The musician who had one of the greatest bands of all time, endless amount of fame, and a bright future ended up killing himself. Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of Nirvana, existentially struggled to find meaning all of his life. His parents divorced when he was very young, and from then on he never felt the comfort and support a child needs. In 1991, Cobain’s band Nirvana, became an overnight sensation (Ronson). Suddenly Cobain, had to deal with fame, constant attention from everyone, popularity, and part of society that did not understand his music. All of these factors and realizing that music no longer held meaning, he succumbed to drug use, mainly heroin (Ronson).

Cobain said, “The worst crime is faking it,” and this is exactly how he felt every time he went out on stage. His meaning in life was to make music and that changed to make music for money. In his suicidal note Cobain said, “Sometimes I feel as if I should have a punch- in time clock before I walk out on stage.” (Kurt Cobain’s Suicide note). Losing his meaning in life and the constant drug abuse left Cobain without a sense of hope. Cobain struggled from the beginning to the end, and it all had to do with meaning. Unfortunately, Cobain took his own life on April 5th, 1994. He left behind a wife, daughter, and many loving fans.

In some cases, existential struggles that are beyond one’s control will lead to finding meaning in life. Viktor Frankl, one of the most prominent figures in psychology, was taken away from everything and everyone he knew and put into a concentration camp. Like many, he was separated from his family and taken to Auschwitz where he was stripped of his belongings, his name, and even his hair (Frankl 14). One of the main goals of the concentration camps was to take away everything that made the prisoners individuals. What they could not take away was “Spiritual freedom- that makes life meaningful and purposeful” (66-67). Frankl endured starvation, abuse, hard work, near death experiences, and became emotionally numb to survive the amount of death he saw daily. Personally, I cannot even relate to what Frankl went through much less his mental state. Being treated like nothing and not knowing if his family and friends were even alive absolutely changes a person. Frankl channeled his daily struggles and was able to find meaning when he helped other prisoners suffering from typhus and those who were just hopeless. Frankl said, “everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way” (65-66).

Frankl survived through his attitude, knowing that he hoped for a life outside the concentration camp, hoped that he would live, hoped that one day he would be able to see the love of his life. “Set me like a seal upon thy heart, love is as strong as death” (57). The love Frankl had for his wife was so strong that not even all of the horrible ordeals that the concentration camps brought forth could ever change it. When the troops finally liberated the concentration camps, Frankl went from the isolation of the concentration camps to dealing with a society that did not understand what he had gone through and ultimately isolated him even more. Being as strong as Frankl was enabled him to change his attitude and adjust to his new life. His existential struggle ultimately resulted in finding his new meaning in life, to educate others about what the concentration camp prisoners went through.

Alfried Llingle, discusses the four fundamental aspects of existence. He refers back to his friend Viktor Frankl, the father of logotherapy. This article is important because the author writes about the idea of people creating their meaning rather than finding it. Yes, it is important to search for one’s meaning, but creating it is as hopeless as not having a meaning.

Llingle believes that meaning is a correlation between “the demand of the situation and one’s understanding of one’s self.” Moreover, the author stresses the fact that meaning is a “complex achievement of the human spirit.” Collectively, everyone struggles to find their meaning and everyone’s meaning will be different. Discovering one’s meaning, which is not an easy task, will give fulfillment to the spirit. Finding meaning in our existence, according to Llingle, means making a change for the better. If we all took the time to better ourselves since we all struggle to have a purpose, then the world would be a place full of people attempting to be the best they could be in all aspects of their lives.

After taking a semester long class on existentialism, reading
about all of these extraordinary and writing a research paper on meaning, it makes it more evident that even I struggle to find meaning. I have always questioned the reason for existence and until I decided what I wanted as my major, I was never really sure. Yes, we all go through kindergarten, elementary, middle and high school, but no one asks why.

The reason why my parents sent me to school and why I decided to go to Lynn University was because this was the one school that combined Advertising and Public Relations as a major. Attending any other college would not give me the amount of knowledge and hands on experience that I would need to become successful. I want to take all of the possible classes that would teach the most about Advertising and PR because I want to be the best in that field. The more I know, the higher I can raise the bar, and the better chance I will have of getting a great job that I love to do.

This class has made me realize that I’m not the only person struggling not only to find meaning, but also the ability to accomplish everything needed to reach that goal. Socrates and Cobain died due to their meaning of life, which demonstrates how important it is. Over time I believe everyone’s meaning changes as we go through different stages. For now my meaning in life is to get good grades, learn as much as possible, do as many internships, and experience as much of life as I can. Once I get married and have a family, my meaning will be to work hard, so I can support my children and be there for them. Everyone struggles to find his or her meaning, but the actual task is to find one that makes you stop questioning the rest.

Work Cited


Irving's Romanticism in *Rip Van Winkle*

Wynton Grant

The second-half of the 18th century saw the rise of the Romantic era in Europe and America. Previously, the Age of Enlightenment had seen scientists, mathematicians, and philosophers attempting to rationalize life and its events using reason and logic. Directly revolting against these attempts, the intellectuals of the Romantic era endeavored to seek out the answers to life's questions through alternative methods. Romanticists chose, instead, to look to nature and other places to find out the “truths” of life. Born in 1783, Washington Irving lived through the rise and height of the Romantic era. In his famed story *Rip Van Winkle*, Irving epitomizes the ideals of romanticism by demonstrating ways of attempting to achieve the “truth” through other means than logic and reason. Throughout the story, Irving makes great use of the formal elements of writing to accomplish this end. Irving’s romanticism is present through the tone he sets, right from the very beginning of the story. He opens by saying that, “The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker…” (953). Irving then goes on to expand upon how Diedrich Knickerbocker was a known and respected writer of “unquestionable authority” (953). At the end of the tale, Irving even further continues by saying that Knickerbocker included a note at the end of his story confirming his belief that the tale was true. Knickerbocker says, “The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless, I give it my full belief” (964). Literary critic Robert Ferguson states that this use of Knickerbocker “…operates as one of the first exercises in ambiguity of American fiction” (1). And so, while authors during the Age of Enlightenment may have chosen to set their stories in logical circumstances, Irving instead chooses to do the opposite. By starting off the story claiming that the events related actually happened, and by then closing the story with yet another attestation to the tale’s veracity, Irving actually achieves the opposite effect. While the events in the story might seem highly fantastical, the repeated claims of truth instil doubt into the reader’s mind. As a result, the entire fictional story is given a cloud of plausibility. Thus, in true romantic style, Irving uses ambiguity to show that the truth is often hard to see, and there aren’t always clear answers.

Another one of the formal elements Irving utilizes romantically is setting. Although Irving’s story is based on a German folktale, Peter Klaus, he chooses to set his story in a small Dutch village town at the base of the Kaatskill mountains in New York. Irving’s romanticism is evident in his descriptions of the mountains. He begins the story by mentioning their “magical hues and shapes.” Amongst the local housewives, they are “regarded… as perfect barometers,” and at the correct time of the day, they will “light up like a crown of glory” (954). That the local housewives are able to use the mountains as accurate weather predictors is a subtle suggestion by Irving that there are other ways besides science and reason to come to various truths about the world. Furthermore, using words like *magical*, *perfect*, and *crown of glory*, Irving’s word-choice and setting allow the mountains to become so much more than simple landscape features. Philip Beidler, in his critical essay *America’s Fairy Tale*, agrees and expands upon this. He compares Irving’s setting choice and descriptions to the works of Hudson River School painters. Beidler remarks:

The charms of the landscape, painstakingly brushed in, the picturesque shadings of color, of light and dark, the details of forest, clearing, and mountain. The lordly Hudson strung with drowsy colonial backwaters, repositories of local custom and lore, are the charms of the American Sublime, the Hudson River School of painting perfected by such contemporaries as Thomas Cole and Asher Durand.

Just as the painters were romantic in their visual depictions of the world they were surrounded by, Irving brings this world to life through his words and setting descriptions. Beidler even further continues by saying that because he chose to set the story in a small Dutch village, “the ‘sketch’ here in *The Sketch­Book* is precisely that of...the commonplace, workaday world of the early colonial era” (21). Rather than setting the events of his story in New York or some other bustling, industrial city, Irving
chooses to place his romantic truth-seeking characters and story out amongst the farmers and rustic townspeople, the common man. Through his choice of setting, he romantically shows that truths can be realized anywhere, and often in unexpected places.

Irving’s character creation and selection is similarly unexpected, but also very fitting romantically. Beidler calls Rip the “great American boy-man” (22). As opposed to the “busy industrious, progressive Anglo-Americans,” Rip is a member of the “easygoing, somewhat slovenly, tradition-bound Dutch” (Beidler 23). Here is where Irving’s character creation is unusual. Instead of exhibiting stereotypical heroic traits, Rip is lazy and self-absorbed to the point where he doesn’t even take care of his own family. According to Beidler, Rip is like the common man who, when in trouble, “with one’s dog as the companion of choice...makes off for the tavern, the fishing stream, the hunting woods” (23). And, yet, for all these lackadaisical tendencies, Irving’s leading man is ultimately the person who comes to realize the truths of the world.

Irving’s character of Rip’s wife is also romantic. If the more natural side of man is represented in Rip, then society and its restrictiveness is represented in “the ineffectual dominatrix Dame Van Winkle” (Wyman 217). Although she has no speaking lines, it can be presumed that “Rip’s humiliation is limited to interminable tongue-lashings” (Catalano). As such, Rip’s wife is a terrifying force in his life. And, indeed the main reason why Rip leaves for the mountains is to escape his wife’s incessant mouth. When looked at metaphorically, Rip needed to break free from the restraint of society (his wife) in order to be fully free to realize the truth, out in nature. By escaping to nature and leaving civilization and all its responsibilities behind, Rip is able to overcome all his problems. Rip, as a natural man, is capable of seeing the truth. His wife, as a restricted member of society, is not. Clearly favoring the natural man, Irving further evidences his romanticism. Although they are seemingly lesser characters, Rip’s dog and the children in the village also serve to express Irving’s romanticism. Irving closely relates Rip and his dog, calling them “companions in idleness” (956). And, later, when they escape to the woods, Irving describes Rip’s dog as a “fellow sufferer in persecution” (957). The fact that Rip and his dog get along so well, much better than Rip and his wife, only serves as further evidence to Rip’s more natural state. Rip also gets along incredibly well with the children of the village, who “would shout with joy whenever he approached” (955). The children, who had not yet become enchainled by society, are also representative of Rip’s close relationship to a more natural way of existing. Once again, Irving’s romanticism heavily favors unrefined living as opposed to staying within the confines of society.

Although every story requires a plot to move the action to the denouement, Irving’s plot in Rip Van Winkle is thoroughly romantic. Rip’s decision to flee to the mountains is a response to the shackles imposed upon him by society’s domestication of his natural self. Only in the mountains, away from society, is he free to live life the way he desires. Upon his return, however, things have changed. This is where in Irving’s plot-romanticism is most evident. When Rip returns to his town, everything is different. There are new faces, new places, and the world as he had known it has been completely altered. Because the death of his wife occurred while he was asleep, Rip returns to find that he “...is no longer a henpecked loafer but an emancipated widower and ultimately, the village patriarch” (Catalano). He encounters his own daughter and finds that she has grown into a woman. His son, following in his footsteps, looks “apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged” as when Rip himself initially went up the mountain, twenty years before (962). All these events tie into romanticism in that, when things are left to happen naturally, they can turn out for the better. And, while this might not always be true, ultimately, life goes on, regardless. For Rip, a scientific or reasoned explanation is unnecessary. As a natural man, he simply accepts what has happened and is content with his life. By not going out of his way to seek the truth, he remains perfectly satisfied with life. This is romanticism at its finest.

Rip Van Winkle is littered with romantic characteristics, and through his writing, it is evident that Irving was very much a product of his times. Using all of the formal elements of writing, Irving makes a strong case for romanticism. Rip Van Winkle can be readily interpreted as being representative of Irving’s ideas that the truths of this world aren’t always available in the most obvious places. He shows that science, mathematics, and reasoning all fall by the wayside when placed next to the answers of nature. It is only through his escape to nature that Rip is truly able to live, and as a romantic writer, Irving suggests that truths in life can be ambiguous. As a result, they must be realized in alternative ways.
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From Beneath the Fence Post

Amanda Davidson

What is a fence if not a manmade attempt to control that which should not be controlled? It is a barrier that symbolizes the possession of nature over which man believes he has reign. In addition to property lines, a fence can be used to contain animals. Said animals live within these limited parameters never realizing what lies beyond. The world inside the wires and posts is all that the cattle know, and so they desire nothing else. Unlike sheep and cows, humans have an intellect that breeds ambition. If restrained, people should crave freedom – that is their nature. Yet, social practices have served for centuries as an invisible fence, erected by economic, political, and religious institution. In the monotony of everyday life, the gradual sucking of the soul, humor can help us forget that there is a fence. When we return to reality after a satisfying chuckle, we may experience residual positivity that can evolve into action. While the characters in *The Restraint of Beasts* do not escape their social confinement, they spur their onlookers toward self-examination. At times, one laughs out loud at their antics and characterizations but intellectually, the gaps between the fictional personalities and themselves are brought together. The comedy occurs in the exposure of truth in a deadpan fashion. Surely, this is at ground level a relatable story for anyone who has felt claustrophobia in their work and personal lives. Magnus Mills takes an innovative approach to comedy, exhausting its darkest uses in order to reach the reader on a social analytic level.

By dissecting the title and imbedded allusions to it, it becomes clear that Mills injects his working class commentary with shadowy satire. The ‘beasts’ in the novel are arguably the three main characters—
the anonymous foreman, Tam, and Richie. Therese is comic iron in the fact that these men build fences for an occupation while living in a metaphorical fence themselves. Reference to the title happens early on, when the men’s employer, Donald, rebukes Tam and Richie for building a fence that goes slack. “Without this the restraint of beasts was impossible” (Mills 10). Donald’s lecture is deeper than it appears. He may be referring to an actual job that went awry, by the message is that men in power must rule with an iron fist in order to control the masses. In terms of running a company, there is no room for error as far as Donald is concerned. Later on, the workers arrive for a job at the Hall brothers’ factory. “Take them to the pens, will you, David? That’s the best place for them!” (188). The snide remark reduces the men to a second rate position. They are laborers and are therefore on the lowest rung of the social ladder, meant to be dominated by their superiors. The effect of this condescension is apparent especially in Tam and Richie. At one point, Tam forgets his hammer and regresses into animalistic problem solving. “Eventually, I walked back to see what was going on, and found him knocking the staples in with a large stone. I observed this primitive scene for a moment, and then asked where his hammer was” (114). Tam has set back the evolutionary clock in response to being herded by his supervisors. Menial work has become the men’s only stimulation, and in the process of their jobs they seem to be losing contact with what makes them human – their civilized minds: There is no joke so true and deep in actual life, as when some pure idealist goes up and down among the institutions of society, attended by a man who knows the world... and sympathizes with the confusion and indignation of the detected skulking institutions. His perception of disparity, his eye wandering perpetually from the rule to the crooked, lying, thieving fact, makes the eyes rung over with laughter. (Emerson 3).

Building upon the three main characters being likened to “beasts,” there is the fact that Tam and Richie have been stripped of their own personal identities. The first piece of evidence for this is their inability to survive by themselves. “I had made the cardinal error of separating Tam and Richie. It was only for a short while, but I could see Tam wouldn’t be able to function normally until Richie got back (Mills 60). Tam and Richie together form one person; apart, they are rendered useless – halves of a whole. It can only be assumed that the nature of their work has had self-deteriorating effect. One believes that these one-dimensional characters were once more complex; however, evidence of a life beyond fencing and pub-hopping is hard to uncover. “His constant complaint against the world was that his hair had slowed down growing as soon as he stopped having it cut. He wanted his hair to be even longer to go with the electric guitar he couldn’t play yet” (77). Richie attempts at an extracurricular interest but has no time or means to adequately pursue it. As a result of Donald telling Richie’s mother that he will not be coming home, the guitar installments gets neglected. The one hope that Richie had of forming an identity is reclaimed. It can be said, then, that the laborer’s curse not only restricts creativity but it squashes the first signs of ambition. Richie builds his self image around playing the guitar; however, he cannot play the guitar, and this is at once an ironic source for comedy and underlying melancholy. This recognition breeds sympathy. After all, the concept of sacrificing dreams, exchanging them for the necessity of money, is all too relatable in a capitalistic society. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay The Comic, regards empathy as a potential form of comedy: “The perception of the comic is a tie of sympathy with other men, a pledge of sanity, and a protection from those perverse tendencies and gloomy insanities in which fine intellects sometimes lose themselves” (Emerson 4). The situations of the novel may be parody, but they certainly have their parallels in reality. This makes them relevant and, by extension, liberatingly funny.

Comedy also exists in the monotony of the workers’ lives: the repeated ritual of fence building by day and drinking by night. At all costs, the foreman, Tam, and Richie must make it to the bar; it is the only redeeming part of their long days. Their relentlessness often crosses into the realm of hilarity. “It was half past ten! ‘Fuck sake, the pub!’ cried Tam, and next thing we were all screaming round in the caravan looking for our boots and rushing out in to the night” (Mills 72-3). Never mind the fact that the bar closes at eleven o’clock. These tired laborers are adamant about setting foot in a bar everyday if only for a few moments. The concept of time appears in this quote to highlight the running out of it. Drinking is the only activity these men are allotted, being restrained by not only their job by its resultant limits on free time. One could be turned to annoyance at the workers’ enthusiasm for drinking when they lack zeal in more productive areas. However, it has already been established that the men are controlled by the routine of work life, unable to chase outside stimulation with such a hectic schedule. Once again, another familiar human condition is addressed: that in today’s world
there is hardly enough time to enjoy life. The bar, then, is a simple means of escape. Echoing Emerson’s sentiment, Aristotle submits that “Art is mimetic: it imitates our reality” (Aristotle). Mills’ audience will laugh at the main characters’ unyielding efforts to make it to a pub because on a deeper level the reader understands their thirst for it.

“Comedy blends pain with pleasure” (Plato). The most hilarious situation in Mills’ novel happen to also be the grimmest. The deaths due to work-related accidents are dealt with nonchalantly. This may send the reader into a state of shock; soon, however, this apprehension shifts to a highly liberating spurt of laughter. “Comedy resides not in events but in the view take of them” (Elder Olson). The workers’ reaction to each death is so informal that it becomes ludicrous. After Tam fatally impales Mr. McCrindle, they decide rather calmly what to do: “‘Well,’ I replied. ‘I suppose we’d better bury him.’ This was my first major decision as a foreman” (Mills 33). The reason for this casualness is that, for the men, the value of human life has been severely reduced. A look at their repetitious lives has proven this. What is so important about living when all it consists of is work and weak beer? Mills suggests that this has become the working man’s philosophy. It is no surprise that each murdered proprietor is buried beneath the fence. “‘We could put him under one of the new gateposts by the hill.’ (Strictly speaking, we weren’t quite ready to hang any gates yet, but under the circumstances it was probably worth bringing the work forward)” (Mills 119). The fence symbolizes the containment of beasts, and the word ‘beast’ refers to the human spirit. Burying each employer beneath this metaphor serves to reinforce the theme of detrimental repression. Richie, Tam, and the foreman have all died figurative deaths. Their needs and desires accompany the people they entomb under the fence posts. There is no patience for mourning because there is nothing to mourn. This learned tendency of cheapening human existence will perhaps be realized by the reader so that it may be corrected. And indeed, while Mills offers no alternative to this social predicament, he does a service by undressing it.

What has happened over time can be described as the chipping away of human essence. There is a constant downsizing of the fenced-in space chosen for the blue-collar community. Unfortunately, members of the working class have forgotten themselves in the uninspired routine demanded by their employers. They have come more closely to resemble cattle than anything human. And, while this direction we are headed in may seem particularly morbid, there can be relief. The medicinal powers of laughter in the blackest of circumstances can rescue a person. In his novel, Magnus Mills reaches for humor to make interesting the most uninteresting job. He does this to provoke an inventory of self in his readers. The subject matter seems hopeless, but it is through hyperbole and satire that Mills implants a sense of optimism. Past the fence that society has built is an alternative. As this wall grows less and less transparent, it becomes imperative that we not become too comfortable in our routines – that is, allowing for the restraint of beasts. If the fire in humanity is extinguished not even laughter will be able to reignite our spirits.
The Anti-Miss America Project
Second Wave Feminism in 1968

Jaynie Hernandez

One of the first and largest protest demonstrations of the Second Wave Feminism was in 1968 during the Miss America Pageant. On September 7th, about 150 women gathered from six different states in America to protest in Atlantic City, New Jersey where the pageant was held (Duffett). These women had a plan in mind that left an imprint upon the history of women activism.

The leaders of the protest were mostly American white women such as Carol Hanisch, Alix Kates Shulman, and Kathie Sarachild. They created a small group called the New York Radical Women in the sixties. This small group was an essential part of the movement at the time. They brought women together and sought change in society.

The tactic used by the women in the movement is labeling. There is symbolism in every sign and action done in protest during the pageant. There was also ridicule involved in their protest involving farm animals as well.

As the most watched show on television in the sixties, little girls who viewed this program believed that the pageant was innocent and hadn’t realized how negative the image of Miss America was for the youth. Carol Hanisch believed pageants worked against women. She felt that it was important to fight against “the false ways women had to dress and act” (Hanisch, “America”).

The Feminist movement was clearly one that contained several different small groups in different states who came together to fight against the image of a perfect woman. This was the idea that all women, including those who were participating in the pageant, are oppressed by what were believed to be false beauty standards. The movement wanted to change the roles women were forced to play as females. In the sixties, being a beauty queen wasn’t a role that women were forced into, but it did portray women...
The Miss America titleholder of 1968 considered it to be a scholarship contest, not a beauty competition. Many women entered simply to earn money that they used to pay for college. These women did not realize in the sixties that this was a beauty competition and that the money was simply an incentive to participate. The feminist movement encouraged the contestants to join the women’s liberation movement. Although unsuccessful, this was another goal that the movement strived for. The contestants were seen as the enemy, until they decided to leave the “Pageant Farce” and join the movement. The Feminists were also instructed by Hanisch to refuse interviews by male reporters, only to allow female reporters to interview them; they were also to avoid all male chauvinist-reactionaries and male liberals (Hanisch, “America”). This was all written in the press release Hanisch sent out.

The idea all started one night when the New York Radical Women were watching a feminist movie together that had flashes of the Miss America contestants in it. The pageant brought back strong emotions and memories of having watched the show all throughout their lives with their families “We discovered that many of us who had always put down the contest still watched it. Others, like myself, had consciously identified with it, and had cried with the winner” (Hanisch Personal).

This then provoked the idea to use the pageant as their target for the first protest to introduce the Women’s Liberation movement. From our communal thinking came concrete plans for action. We all agreed that our main point for the demonstration would be that all women were hurt by beauty competitions: Miss America as well as ourselves. We opposed the pageant in our own self interest, [i.e.] the self interest of all women. The best slogan for the action came out a month after, when Roz Baxandall came out on the David Susskind show with “Every day in a woman’s life is a walking Miss America Contest” (A Critique of the Miss America Protest).

This was the idea behind why women of every part of the country should get involved in the protest. These women had the belief that every woman felt oppressed by the idea that they had to follow the image of a perfect pageant queen.

A series of Feminist papers about the protest were written and published by Hanisch in 1968; one of which included a press release inviting women from many walks of life to join the protest. “Women’s liberation groups, black women, high school and college women, women’s peace groups, women’s welfare and social work groups, women’s job equality groups, pro-birth control and pro-abortion groups -women of all political persuasion”(Hanisch, “America”) were all invited to protest in New Jersey to change the ideals of the perfect woman. Women were not discriminated against because of their race or ethnicity; rather they were accepted because of their beliefs and willingness to be a part of a massive boycott.

The foundation and the ideas behind why Hanisch was set on rebelling against the pageant can all be found in her writings. “The Personal is Political” introduces the protests, but Hanisch has two other articles that explain the protests and the reasoning behind them in detail. These two include “A Critique of the Miss America Protest” and “No More Miss America.” Both show exactly how and why the pageant system ridiculed women in the sixties.

The protests that took place on the day of the actual pageant were a parade of demonstrations that were successful in getting the women’s voices heard. One of which was the Miss America Cattle Auction. This was done to compare livestock to women who were being judged in the pageant. It was rather bizarre, but it did get the point across.

The most memorable demonstration gave Feminists the infamous “Bra-Burners” nickname. This was because they used a garbage can to start chaos in front of the venue of the Miss America site. Whether or not they actually burned the famous piece of lingerie that women use daily was questionable depending on who is asked. It still remains unclear whether or not these women threw bras into a trash can in Atlantic City. A radio interview of the New York Radical Women and the former Miss America of 1967 was held to expose the truth behind the rumors.

The majority of the women also had several different picket signs that had subliminal messages behind them. The main one being “No More Miss America” which was the main issue at hand. Other signs included “Up Against the Wall, Miss America,” “Miss America Sells It,” and “Miss America Is a Big Falsie” which made the contestants their enemy. Even though a few women who didn’t follow, created the New York Radical Women’s rejection of anti-women signs were the ones who carried them, Hanisch regrets not stopping them. These signs targeted the contestants instead of the men and bosses whom she felt were responsible for imposing false beauty standards on women.

Also, Leaflets were handed out during these protests entitled “No More Miss America.” Inside, Hanisch explained how the feminists viewed the pageant and elaborated in detail why they were against the pageant and exactly what oppressed women in an era where every little girl in the United States wanted to be the next Miss America. Ten points were listed, depicting each event that took place on the day of the protests. It made everything much more understandable for the average woman. The movement wasn’t
that popular at the time, these leaflets along with the riots also encouraged women to join the movement and brought attention to issues that were currently hidden. The movement was very effective in promoting their ideals; however, the pageant still exists today and isn’t going anywhere. In fact, there are more pageant systems today, but they haven’t been a target for Feminists.

The Miss America Pageant was an event that was televised nationwide and became an American staple. It attracted millions of viewers each year, making it the perfect target for the first public protest of the Second Wave Feminist Movement. The protest started during rehearsals as the women threw items of oppression into a garbage can that was called the “freedom trash can.” “Women threw bras, mops, girdles, pots and pans, and Playboy magazines — items they called ‘instruments of female torture’ — into a big garbage can” (Hanisch “America”).

These instruments of torture also originally included bras, which lead to the famous “bra burning myth.” Despite the fact that the demonstrations weren’t shown on television, newspapers photographed and covered the event and said that the lingerie items were burned. However, according to an interview with Hanisch, this wasn’t completely true, “we had intended to burn it, but the police department, since we were on the boardwalk, wouldn’t let us do the burning” (Greenfieldboyce). Other items that were thrown included false eyelashes, wigs, curlers, and several different issues of women’s magazines. These items were also seen as items of torture that oppressed women. In protest, the women also refused to talk to male reporters and only spoke to women reporters. The decision to go braless also provoked comments from head officials, “Senator Jennings Randolph characterized feminists as braless bubbleheads” (Dow). It also caused suspicion as so whether this was done for political or personal reasons.

In defense of the “Freedom trash can,” this could refer back to the Rhetoric of the Women’s Liberation Movement, “women’s liberation rhetoric is characterized by the use of confrontative, non-adjustive strategies designed to ‘violate the reality structure.’ These strategies not only attack the psycho-social reality of the culture, but violate the norms of decorum, morality, and ‘femininity’ of the women addressed. (Campbell).

Another demonstration on the pageant was the Miss America Cattle Auction, where livestock was brought in and compared to the contestants participating in the pageant. Sheep were used to degrade and compare them to women, “crowning a live sheep Miss America sort of said that beautiful women are sheep” (Dow). It brought attention to the way Miss America contestants were seen in a very different light, “The parade down the runway blares the metaphor of the 4-H Club county fair, where the nervous animals are judged for teeth, fleece, etc., and where the best ‘Specimen’ gets the blue ribbon” (Hanisch).

The women carried around a giant Miss America puppet, marched with signs and handed out fliers. These were in fact the “No More Miss America” brochures. The brochures explained ten points that were demonstrated in the protests that September afternoon. The first was the Degrading Mindless Boob Girl Symbol, which was a life-sized puppet that was made to mock the beauty queens during the protest. It epitomizes women’s gender roles in their everyday lives. It also depicted how they are viewed as mindless sex objects. Women are forced to compete for men’s approval and are enslaved by beauty standards that women are conditioned to take seriously.

The second is Racism with Roses; this states that since the beginning of Miss America in 1921, there had not been one finalist of black, Puerto Rican, Alaskan, Hawaiian, American Indian, or Mexican-American descent. Women of color were not shown on-stage at the Miss America pageant, unless, they were slaves. “The first African Americans to appear in Miss America pageant came onstage as ‘slaves’ for a musical number in 1923” (People & Events: Breaking the Color Line at the Pageant).

Women also weren’t allowed to compete because of Lenora Slaughter’s notorious rule number seven, which out ruled women of color to compete.

This was all because of a rule, “Instituted under the directorship of Lenora Slaughter, rule number seven stated ‘contestants must be of good health and of the white race’” (People & Events). Black women were not allowed to compete in Miss America until these protests successfully brought attention to the matter. This was evident because it wasn’t until 1970 that a black woman, Cheryl Brown, was allowed to make it to the Atlantic City pageant as a delegate. This pageant system refused to allow women outside of the white race to participate, causing the movement to target them. In fact, in Atlantic City an organized pageant was done in protest on the same day as Miss America in 1968 called Miss Black America.

Until 1940, contestants were required to fill out a questionnaire tracing back their ancestry. African-American women didn’t compete until 1970, two years after the protests. The first black Miss America was Vanessa Williams in 1984 who resigned due to nude photos from her past that had surfaced. The photos were later exposed in an issue of Penthouse magazine without the consent of Williams.

The next points stated in the pamphlet are: Miss American as Military Death Mascot, the Consumer Con-Game, Competition Rigged and Unrigged, the Woman
as Pop Culture Obsolescent Theme, the Unbeatable Madonna-Whore Combination, the Irrelevant Crown on the Throne of Mediocrity, Miss America as Big Sister watching You, and Miss America as Dream Equivalent to-? All of these points explain how the pageant creates a false reality that women are brainwashed to believe. In the Madonna-Whore Combination, women are depicted as having to be sexy and wholesome or else they won’t find a partner. The “consumer Con-Game” is the view on the basis for the pageant, “the whole gimmick of the million-dollar pageant corporation is one commercial shill game to sell the sponsor’s products” (Dow).

The pageant isn’t just a competition to judge a woman based on her looks but also to choose who will represent the sponsors. According to Hanisch, “Wind her up and she plugs your product on promotion tours and TV-all in an ‘honest, objective’ endorsement” (Hanisch, “America”).

Another problem with the pageant is the “Woman as Pop Culture Obsolescent Theme,” which brings the issue of aging. It views aging women as discarded and no longer wanted according to society. “This only reflects the gospel of our Society, according to Saint Male: women must be young, juicy, age malleable-hence discrimination and the cult of youth” (Hanisch, “America”). This brings the question as to why must there always be a new Miss America when there is nothing wrong with the winner from the previous year?

One of the duties for the winner and the highlight of her reign are to give an encouraging pep talk to the men and women in the military before they go to war; this caused the Miss America to become Military Death Mascot. According to Hanisch, “she personifies the ‘unstained patriotic American womanhood our boys are fighting for’” (Hanisch, “America”). Since the women are viewed as a cheerleader for the men and women dying in the war, she is seen as a mascot for murder.

The last point in the pamphlets “Miss America as Big Sister Watching You” is perhaps one of the most crucial statements. It claims that the pageant controls our thoughts and creates an image in our minds, “to enslave us all the more in high-heeled, low status roles, to inculcate false values in young girls” (No more Miss America). This is looking after the future generation that sees these images of beauty standards and grows up following them.

According to the pamphlet, men create unrealistic beauty standards that women must blindly follow, being everything Miss America stands for:

Miss America represents what women are supposed to be: inoffensive, bland, apolitical. If you are tall, short, over or under what weight The Man prescribes you should be, forget it. Personality, articulateness, intelligence, and commitment-unwise.

Conformity is the key to the crown- and, by extension, to success in our Society” (Hanisch, “America”).

The night of the Miss America Pageant, Alix Kates Shulman purchased tickets for the show with her husband’s joint account causing what happened next, “Toward the end of the show, when Snodgrass (former Miss America) began to give her farewell speech, the protesters moved to the balcony and hung up a banner. It was a bed sheet that said ‘Women’s Liberation’” (Hanisch, “America”). The protesters and audience members shouted out “Women’s Liberation” and “No More Miss America” during the show. They released stink bombs containing Toni Home Permanent Solution. Their purpose in using the solution is because Toni Home is one of the pageant’s sponsors. However, the cameras did not capture any of this.

The point in this act of protest against the pageant was not against any of the contestants, but against the principles that the Miss America system was based on. Their goals were to rid the pageant of racism and sexism and to boycott its sponsors. The protests successfully withdrew Coca-Cola as one of the sponsors. The sponsor was scared of becoming a target for future protests.

The protest was to prove that women are oppressed by beauty standards. Not just the contestants of the pageant, but all women. This includes the women who watch the pageant and are affected by the standards forced upon women by men who try to control them. This goes back to the foundation of the women’s liberation movement.

The rhetorical problem may be summarized as follows: women are divided from one another by almost all the usual sources of identification—age, education, income, ethnic origin, even geography. In addition, counter-persuasive forces are pervasive and potent nearly all spend their lives in close proximity to and under the control of males—fathers, husbands, employers, etc. Women also have very negative self-concepts, so negative, in fact, that it is difficult to view them as an audience i.e. persons who view themselves as potential agents of change... Is a persuasive campaign directed to this audience is to be effective, it must transcend alienation to create ‘sisterhood,’ modify self-concepts to create a sense of autonomy (Campbell).

The goals are also to follow those of the foundation, which was to come together as a sisterhood and show that they all suffer from the same problems and have the same ideas. From the beginning, Hanisch sent out
pamphlets inviting women from all walks of life and created this protest as “an ideal way to unite women by taking on those issues that spoke to the oppression we all experience in our daily lives” (Dow). This also brings back the idea that all women are oppressed and suffer from the Miss America idea: The goal is to make the personal political: to create awareness (through shared experiences) that what were thought to be personal deficiencies and individual problems are common and shared, a result of their position as women. The participants seek to understand and interpret their lives as women (Campbell).

Works Cited

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