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Cover Image

On the cover, a protestor wearing nitrile gloves and holding his fist, 31 May 2020.
Credit: Sicheng Wang | Daily Nexus.

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Message From the Editors

With great pleasure, we welcome you to the newest issue of the University of California Santa Barbara's *Undergraduate Journal of History*. Even during these uncertain and challenging times because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, *The Journal* continues to provide an engaging platform for undergraduate researchers to record and create history. We are delighted to be a space for undergraduates to share their historical scholarship and foster intellectual debate, dialogue, and curiosity. Alongside the rest of the world, our editorial team has slowly been transitioning to a more normal life, away from the video chat boxes in which we created our first issue. Our Fall 2021 issue marks the first time we have been able to work together on the UC Santa Barbara campus on an issue in person!

In this issue of the *Undergraduate Journal of History*, our historians have considered various topics that cross temporal and spatial boundaries. Among the nine articles published here, several consider the roles of politics and policies that blur boundaries. We begin with Ariana Cuevas' account of events that led to the Spanish Armada during the sixteenth century. This paper provided insight into the economic and political parallels between Spain and England that nuances our understanding of Anglo-Spanish relations during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Our second article by Jaqueline Isero examines the contagionist and anti-contagionist debates that shaped the epidemic policy in the British Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that resulted in a quarantine policy that was dramatically different from the European standard. Isero argues that the politicization of quarantine policy and the growing disregard of public health interests was rooted in concern about the economic success of the empire.

Our third paper turns to the United States in the 1990s and early 2000s. In her contribution, Winnie Lam traces the rise of cable television as a fundamental component of the increasing polarization that came to typify the American political sphere in the early 2000s. Her riveting analysis sheds light on how Fox and MSNBC were simultaneously the product of political polarization as well as a tool that perpetuated this very phenomenon. Sara Marcus explores how the rebuilding of the British Parliament and the seat of imperial power ushered in a debate about the best style of architecture to capture and exhibit that authority at home and across the globe. In tracing a web of imperial architects and their designs, Marcus shows how the Neo-Gothic architectural form came to dominate the literal building of the empire over the nineteenth century.

Taylor McLeod's "The Pandemic in the Immigrant Home: Oral Histories of First-Generation Los Angeles" is an exceptional oral history project that explores the lives of immigrant families in present-day Los Angeles. McLeod offers us a captivating history of the present that meditates how access to food and the interaction between culture and food shaped experiences of immigrant households in the earliest months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kayla Ouerbacher examines the witchcraft treatises of early modern Europe in our sixth article. She addresses how cultural influences shaped the legal scholarship of various demonological authors, notably how this led to the increased persecution and prosecution of women for witchcraft. Megan Tien explores the political work of Scottish reformer John Knox. She skillfully follows his journey, both geographically and intellectually, and how this growth enabled him to successfully work with political figures to accomplish his lofty reforms.

Our final two articles examine the women's movement in China as a forgotten facet of the Culture Revolution and the changing nature of English country houses in the nineteenth

century. As Zhen Tian argues, women's history has often been lost within the larger-scale mass class struggles of the Cultural Revolution. Tian then highlights the unsuccessful efforts of women's liberation and equality, asserting that they served as catalysts to the PRC's shift away from Maoist socialism to contemporary socialism with Chinese characteristics. In his article, John Young explores how the change in English country houses from sites of political power to private homes that consolidated and displayed wealth was not only paralleled the rise of the "new" aristocracy over the first half of the nineteenth century. Young argues this was connected to broader political and cultural shifts in the British metropole.

We thank you for reading and encourage you to submit your work to the *Undergraduate Journal of History*. We now accept submissions on an ongoing or rolling basis, and you can see the complete list of submission topics and guidelines on our website. The editorial team extends our thanks to our talented authors, skillful peer-reviewers, and instructors who helped us make this issue a reality.

We look forward to many more to come. And, please, do enjoy Vol. 1, Issue 2 of the *Undergraduate Journal of History*.

~ The Editors

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Anglo-Spanish Relations in the Sixteenth Century: The Twisted Road to the Spanish Armada

Ariana Cuevas

The decline of Anglo-Spanish relations during the 16th century is based on several influences, the accumulation of which led to the Spanish Armada. This silent Anglo-Spanish war was waged for many years and originated from a long history of animosity. Both Elizabeth and Philip's courtiers played a critical role in their respective monarchs and ultimately led to the necessity of war with Spain. Predating Elizabeth's reign, the relationship with Spain and, most importantly, the Holy Roman Empire was highly complicated. Elizabeth's father, King Henry VIII, was overly cautious about solidifying relationships with any other country because he did not want to alienate any other country while doting on others. Cracks in the foundation of Anglo-Spanish relations would begin during Henry VIII's reign, most apparent in his split from Rome. Looking at the first part of Elizabeth's reign, the breaks in relation that Henry VIII caused did not affect relations early in her reign; instead, there was toleration for one another.¹ Tolerance would slowly end when neither ruler was unable to look the other way and address the issues that had been apparent for decades. Elizabeth's courtiers were influential in persuading Elizabeth in making decisions that mirrored their views, especially on religion. The outcome of the Spanish Armada was positive for England even though England did not garner any land or spoils of war. This did not end the many portrayals of Philip II as a villain² and as the ruler who was in the wrong. Arguably, neither England nor Spain emerged as a winner; it was merely an altercation that needed to happen to release decades of tension.

To understand the complexity of Anglo-Spanish relations during Elizabeth's reign, looking at Anglo-Imperial relations under her father, Henry VIII, is crucial. He ruled from 1509 to his death in 1547. Henry was married to a Spanish-born princess, Catherine of Aragon, and coincidentally, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, was her nephew. This made Henry uncle to the emperor, although they were only eight years apart. Henry's marriage acted as a catalyst for closeness between the two rulers, but it would not come to pass. Religious matters weighed too heavily in the Holy Roman Empire, and Charles had no choice but to defend the Catholic Church. In 1527, the King's Great Matter, Henry's need for a divorce³, would ramp up the religious, ideological deviance that was already engulfing Europe. Henry needed special papal dispensation to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Pope Clement VII would not give it since his political ties rested with Charles V because Charles was occupying Rome, who tried to protect his aunt from any insult at the time of the case. Thomas More was a personal friend to the King and one of his most trusted advisors; More forged a relationship with Henry in his early teens. This intimate relationship would parallel many of the advisors that Elizabeth held. Before becoming Queen, Elizabeth secretly⁴ developed relationships with many of her courtiers to keep their position for life. Like Elizabeth's courtiers, More had his plan that he tried to implement by influencing the King. More did not wish a war with the empire; instead, he wanted to join forces to defeat the Ottoman Turks.⁵ More encouraged Henry to root out the heresy in the East, but that would mean to forget about the divorce Henry so desperately wanted. Instead, Henry would not back down and to not provoke Charles, he assured him that he was not letting go of his marriage "but only for the discharge of his conscience, and for the quietness of his Realme."⁶ Growing impatient, Henry proceeded without dispensation and married Anne Boelyn in 1533. By ignoring a

possible bond with Charles and forging a division in religion in England, the rest of Henry's reign was littered with social and political turmoil that would continue to haunt Elizabeth during her reign. A 1532 letter written by Catherine of Aragon for her nephew, Charles V, perfectly states the fear she had for the future of England:

There are many signs of the evil meditated here; new books are being printed, full of lies, impurities, and blasphemies against our common Faith, shewing their staunch determination to bring the suit to an end in this kingdom, all of which, coupled with the contemplated interview of the two princes, and the infamy brought upon the whole kingdom by the lady companion the King takes with him, and the authority he bestows upon her, has, Your Majesty, may be certain, caused scandal and fear throughout this kingdom, and all dread that some great calamity is impending.⁷

Religion was still a significant division that kept England and Spain apart. In 1558, Elizabeth ascended the throne. There had been a substantial shift because of the sudden disappearance of Catholic fervor that intensified during her predecessor and sister, Mary I. Philip had briefly been King consort and offered Elizabeth a hand in marriage after Mary's death, which she refused. For the first part of Elizabeth's reign, this slight insult was the only thing keeping the monarchs apart in terms of dislike towards each other. However subtle this insult was to Philip, the most significant difference between the two monarchs was religion. Much of Elizabeth's first half of her reign was marked by who she would marry, the reform of the church, and strife in Ireland. Beginning in the late 1570s, issues emerged that threatened and provoked England and Spain. These issues "tended to exacerbate the ill feelings growing out of their religious differences."⁸ Philip was a devoted Catholic Prince and his five years as King Consort in England made him believe he was an expert on English affairs. Philip was overzealous in his faith, commenting to a courtier, "May God give you life and health because you are engaged in His service and in mine - which is the same."

As the leading Catholic prince, close ties with the papacy went hand in hand; instead, the papacy was cold to Philip, often accusing him of inaction. In 1570, Pope Pius V issued his papal bull and excommunicated Elizabeth. Instead of Philip commending the Pope, Philip wrote, "that I could give him better information and advice on that kingdom and its affairs and people, than anyone."⁹ Pope Sixtus V and Philip mutually despised each other¹⁰The Pope merely saw Philip as a land-hungry expansionist. In contrast, Philip did not like how Sixtus pressured Philip into action using religion as a ploy to get him to do something. "Philip II wanted the cooperation of the papacy for financial reasons and for moral support in his claim to dispose of the crown of England,"¹¹ It was a challenge for Philip to get the Pope to do what he needed. Sixtus believed that Elizabeth was still amenable and could steer England towards Catholicism. However, as time went on, Sixtus couldn't ignore the reality, "while he regretted the necessity of the Armada and deplored Spanish slowness, he gave it his financial as well as his moral support."¹²

All Philip was left with was the enormous pressure from the Pope to dispose of the pretender, Elizabeth. Instead of enacting a direct assault and invasion as the Pope wanted, Spain was not in the position to waste its precious resources. Philip acted as the ruler of the most powerful country at the time. He did not go out on a whim and begin the enterprise of England; he waited for the right time. Spain was basking in the glory of the discovery of the New World, garnering new foods and precious valuables. He did not want to throw away those achievements in a possible catastrophic war on England. It was a process; Philip would find himself trapped into the realization that England needed a strong Catholic ruler; only he could fulfill that position. But just as the Pope felt strongly anti-Elizabeth, he also saw the

necessity for it, especially for the preservation of Catholicism. 1571 is the most critical turning point because it is “an episode that provides a superb example of the direct and decisive impact of Philip's messianic outlook on his foreign policy.”¹³ 1571 is the year the Ridolfi Plot was implemented and the first real threat felt by Elizabeth. This year initiated Philip's long road to implementing plans for the Spanish Armada.

The two prominent advisors to Elizabeth were Sir Francis Walsingham and Lord Burghley. They were able to hold their positions from Elizabeth's accession to their respective deaths. Their advice to the Queen “thus provided a vital continuity in government during a period of profound instability – constitutional, economic, religious, national and international.”¹⁴ The Ridolfi Plot was a plot to gather Catholic support from Brussels, Rome, and Madrid under secrecy to replace Elizabeth with Mary, Queen of Scots. After the spymaster Walsingham uncovered the Ridolfi Plot, both Burghley and Walsingham urged Elizabeth to get rid of the constant potential threat that Mary, Queen of Scots, posed to Elizabeth's rule. Similar to Philip's Catholic fervor, Sir Francis Walsingham also possessed a strong desire to see England embrace Protestantism. A significant factor for diplomacy was religion, and he didn't put much faith into alliances with Catholic Princes.¹⁵ Walsingham wrote, “Above all things I wish God's glory and next to the Queen's safety.”¹⁶ As one of the most powerful men in England, he saw the interests of Protestantism and England as the same. A Spanish courtier at the English court observed his fervor and proclaimed, “of all heretics the worst.”¹⁷ Burghley was seen more as a conformist; he could begrudgingly conform to Catholicism and then happily rejoice in Protestantism under Elizabeth. Walsingham was adamant in supporting other Protestant countries. When the Dutch question became a significant part of Elizabeth's foreign policy, Walsingham fought diligently to assure English support for the Calvinist rebels in the Spanish Netherlands even if Burghley opposed him. Burghley was keenly aware of the might of the Spanish naval forces and, as Lord Treasurer, would protect trading ports and routes:

Be yt remembred that I William Lord Burghley Lord Treasurer of England have made covenante in grant to Sir Thomas Cotton knight for the furnishing of one ship of war for the conducting of wool of late of four ships from the port of London to the porte and town of Bruges in the lowe countreyes of Flanders [...]for the sum of five score pounds of lawfull English monie to be payed by the mayor constables and fellowship of the staples of England. W. Burghley.¹⁸

By 1581, Burghley saw the need to protect English merchant ships during the growing international tension felt with Spain. It was a costly investment but a necessary one.

The next step in solidifying mistrust between the two rulers was the discovery of the Throckmorton Plot in 1583 by Sir Francis Walsingham. Similar to the Ridolfi Plot, Walsingham and Burghley wanted to execute those involved immediately. This plot was unique, for the Spanish were engaged in trying to overthrow Elizabeth. Bernardino De Mendoza was the Spanish Ambassador in England who constantly wrote to Philip to relay daily events at court. After discovering his involvement in the plot, he wrote to Philip II, “Her Majesty was much displeased with me on account of the efforts I had made to disturb her country.”¹⁹ Elizabeth, urged by Walsingham and Burghley, needed to show her displeasure. Parliament and her courtiers wanted to execute Mendoza. Elizabeth saw that it would cause too much turmoil with Spain, and despite the influence of her courtiers, expelled him from the country. Mendoza continued, “For these reasons, it was the Queen's will that I should leave the country, without fail, in fifteen days. I replied that I was surprised that the Queen had summoned them and me for so small a matter as this.”²⁰ In the same letter, Mendoza

expresses his displeasure at the dramatic behavior of the Queen; Mendoza viewed himself as innocent:

I said I laughed at the idea of the Queen punishing me and should be overjoyed to go away the moment she sent me [word]. I said that, as she was a lady there was nothing strange at her being the least thankful to those who desired to serve her, as I had done, but as I had apparently failed to please her as a minister of peace she would in future force me to try to satisfy her in war.²¹

Mendoza would continue to serve Philip II in France, with Mendoza's envoys traveling to England to relay court details. Mendoza also kept writing to Mary, Queen of Scots, trying to garner support for her in France. After his expulsion from England, Mendoza was a strong supporter of military action against England and wrote to Philip to encourage him.

Early preparations for the Armada were considered in 1581, and news of the Armada would reach England, and talk of it would spread all over Europe. Roger Bodenham²² wrote to Lord Burghley, "there is no cause much to fear any army that Spain can make from hence against England because of the uncertainty of a harbour and the strength of the queen's navy."²³ Philip was a fervently religious man, and he desired to see England return to Catholicism. Still, he did not view the Armada as a tool necessary to accomplish this because it was too costly. For years even as the preparations were beginning in 1581, he would try to pursue other means. "Like Elizabeth, he equated peace with prosperity, but neither monarch was a completely free agent, and the policies of each impinged on and in numerous ways impeded the other."²⁴ The role of the couriers and their influences on the two monarchs directed them towards war on each other despite the knowledge that war was extremely costly. Walsingham encouraged intervention in the Netherlands, directly threatening Philip's sovereignty and Philip's courtiers saw this action as the best justification for the continuation of plans for the Spanish Armada.

In 1576 Elizabeth received an offer from the Netherlands that would anger Philip and ultimately further his plans for the Armada. Elizabeth was offered the election as the countess of Holland.²⁵ She didn't outright refuse the offer, but she also didn't want the possible acceptance to ruin the relationship with Spain. Again in 1585, a Dutch embassy gathered in England to offer Elizabeth the United Provinces.²⁶ Both offers resulted from the crippling losses of the province's army and the impending Spanish offensives. In 1585 a three-part agreement known as the Treaty of Nonsuch was decided that Elizabeth would aid the Dutch rebels. "The main difference between the sovereignty and protectorate treaties was that the latter outlined the specific military assistance expected from Elizabeth, which would have been unnecessary if she were sovereign."²⁷ The negotiations headed by Burghley, Walsingham, and the Earl of Leicester were muddled in various interests and fear over Spain's retaliation. Burghley wrote in 1576 that he knew the fear early on, "suddenly into a war with the king of Spayne."²⁸ And because of that fear, Elizabeth only accepted to aid the Dutch with money and soldiers. Ideally, Elizabeth and her courtiers wanted a treaty that would give England functional ruling powers in the Dutch government. Since Elizabeth did not accept when she had the chance, she missed out on the opportunity. Mendoza wrote to Philip II, "the Queen would help them with 10,000 men and would send Lord Grey as Governor. She told them that, even if France would not aid them, she would do so, and in such a way as would prevent your Majesty from ever subduing them, and that henceforward she would do so undisguisedly."²⁹ Mendoza expressed that he saw this as an unashamed and direct action against the king. The purpose of Elizabeth waiting almost ten years from 1576 to finally aiding the Dutch in 1585 is in a sense a mystery; she was waiting for the right time to strike and was pressured by Walsingham to assist fellow Protestants.

The two previous plots threatening Elizabeth's reign in 1571 and 1583 have been rallying cry for England to begin to seriously consider military defense preparation that would help defend the realm. Gradually, Spain became more and more a constant symbol of anti-English interests and a symbol of fear. As a prominent figurehead of Catholic fervor, Philip himself is an obvious antithesis to the progression of Protestantism in England. The Babington Plot in 1587 demonstrated the heightened progression of religious differences. The war in the Netherlands with England on one side aiding Protestant rebels on the other side was Philip II demanding to retain the Catholic normalcy that his reign provided. The Babington Plot unleashed those religious differences paralleling the clash in the Netherlands. The conspirators in the Babington Plot were Anthony Babington, who would pass coded messages to Mary Queen of Scots, who was confined at Fotheringhay Castle.³⁰ Mary, Queen of Scots, was used by Philip II to spur momentum for Catholics in her home in Scotland and England. Many believed Elizabeth was a usurper because of her religion and thought Mary had to replace her. It was not only religion that propelled Mary's claim to the throne it was also the importance of her legitimacy. Elizabeth's claim to the throne was through her father Henry VIII, but her mother, Anne Boelyn, was heavily disliked, and the marriage between her parents, Henry and Anne, was annulled. Mary's claim rested on her legitimacy claim because she was a great-granddaughter of Henry VII³¹. Therefore, there was 'more' royal blood present in Mary, whereas Elizabeth's mother was a disgraced woman who was beheaded on the orders of Henry VIII. Mary used this popular notion to gain support from other Catholic believers. It was advantageous for her to garner support in England because Mary could not raise an army by herself.

The most prominent supporter that Mary, Queen of Scots, was able to solidify a relationship with was the strongest Catholic prince, Philip II. Their alliance was an obvious one because they shared a yearning for Catholic uniformity. Mary had been pursuing it relentlessly, writing to Anthony Babington, "the longer that they and wee delay to put a hand on the matter on this, the greater leaves have our said enemies to prevail and win advantage over the said princes."³² Once again, Philip II had meddled in English affairs by secretly showing his support for Mary. The support is corroborated by Mary writing in the same letter that urges Babington to "impart with all diligence to Barnardino de Mendoza, ambassador to the king of Spaine residing in France."³³ Mary goes on to write that Mendoza is faithful and trusting of the cause. Although not directly helping Mary by providing troops to dethrone Elizabeth, Philip advocated for her release by writing to the Pope and Elizabeth. After the writings from her co-conspirators, Walsingham found this was enough justification for Elizabeth's courtiers to demand Elizabeth execute her cousin and lawful monarch in her own right.

Philip used Mary as a ploy for his self-interests. Philip saw the opportunity for himself to advocate for a Catholic monarch to replace Elizabeth; it was a tool for Philip to force Elizabeth into action. The Babington Plot revealed that Philip wrote to Mary and offered support, but they were only words, and he was slow to provide any real aid. With the pressure mounting from Walsingham and Burghley, Elizabeth wrote to Mary on 12 October 1586, "therefore require, charge, and command you make answer for all I have been well informed of your arrogance."³⁴ This was the last straw for Elizabeth; she no longer tolerated the overtly treasonous behavior from Mary and sentenced her to death.³⁵ The Babington Plot had not been the first plot to threaten Elizabeth; the Ridolfi and Throckmorton plot directly threatened her rule. Elizabeth chose to ignore the plots and entrap Mary under house arrest for her safety. Although, under pressure from Sir Francis to get rid of Mary from the very beginning, Elizabeth understood the international backlash from killing an anointed queen. While alive,

Mary used her faith to garner support from other influential Catholics; as the most powerful Catholic prince, Philip also encouraged English Catholics to rebel. After Mary's death, she was transformed into a symbolic martyr, and Philip used her death to villainize Elizabeth as a monarch-killing tyrant.

Philip believed that there was a small window of opportunity after Mary's death to further twist the outcome to his self-interest. Under the 'Phantom Will,' he considered himself the heir to Mary, Queen of Scots. The Phantom Will is the small claim that Philip is the heir to the throne because he was once married to England's queen, and since she did not have an heir, the kingdom should become Philip's. This suggestion would not come to fruition because of the lack of evidence suggesting he was Mary's heir. His uneasiness in doing anything involving his military prompted him to proceed with caution. Philip did not have a keen interest in having a new state to govern.³⁶ It was, however, important enough for Philip to write to Count de Olivares, Spanish Ambassador to Rome, to see what type of support his cause can obtain, in a letter dated February 1587:

You will cautiously approach his Holiness, and in such terms, as you think fit endeavor to obtain from him a secret brief declaring that, failing the queen of Scotland, the right to the English crown falls to me. My claim, as you are aware, rests upon my descent from the House of Lancaster, and upon the will made by the queen of Scotland, and mentioned in a letter from her, of which the copy is enclosed herewith. You will impress upon his Holiness that I cannot undertake a war in England for the purpose merely of placing upon that throne a young heretic like the king of Scotland who, indeed, is by his heresy incapacitated to succeed. His Holiness must, however, be assured that I have no intention of adding England to my own dominions but to settle the crown upon my daughter, the Infanta.³⁷

Through this letter, Philip demonstrates yet another example of his intervening in internal English affairs. Philip advocated for his power to be strengthened by writing that he wants his Holiness to intervene on his behalf. Desires expressed in the letter did not come to pass. Yet plans for the Armada were still underway, and the death of Mary "gave it a new justification and urgency"³⁸ The Babington plot marked the end of complicity from both Elizabeth and Philip. Elizabeth was unable to ignore the interference from Philip; from the constant pressure from Burghley and Walsingham, she was instructed, by them, to start preparing for defense. Philip no longer focused on other events of his reign; abandoning the focus on the Netherlands and problems in Portugal, he focused all attention on preparing the Armada from pressure from the Duke of Alva.

The preparation for the Armada and its defenses looked different for both England and Spain. Both Burghley and Walsingham were keenly aware of Elizabeth's everlasting hope of a solution of peace with Spain, and Walsingham continued to be frustrated by Elizabeth's ignorance and inaction. Burghley wrote to Walsingham underlining the position England found it herself in:

As God would be best pleased with peace, so in nothing can her majesty content her realm better than in procuring of peace, which, if it cannot be had, yet is she excused before God and the world. In short, seek peace, but prepare for war.³⁹

This letter reveals that Burghley was trying to reassure Walsingham that Elizabeth extremely valued peace but that the time for peace was over and England needed to prepare for war. It was safer to be ready for battle as opposed to ignoring the signs that Spain was exhibiting.

Both Burghley and Walsingham were adamant about preparing for the Armada. On October 9, Burghley drew up the first provisions of defense.⁴⁰ Burghley could not have provided suggested measures to the Privy Council if he did not have some sort of authorization from the queen. In the list, defensive measures were commandeering merchant ships as warships, mobilizing the standing navy, purchasing other vessels from the Low Countries, and the ramp-up of surveillance towards dangerous Catholics within the English population.⁴¹ For England, this was the first real attempt made to prepare defenses. These preparations also acknowledge the fact that the Spanish Armada preparations were not successful at all at secrecy. It gave England time England to create an atmosphere of fear, and the talk of the Armada was enough for Walsingham and Burghley to become worried. An important note was that royal warships were not placed under the conditions of being prepared for war. As historian Robert Hutchinson writes, “Elizabeth point-blank refused to implement this sensible precaution and the most her discouraged councilors could wring out of her exchequer was an additional two ships to join the small fleet stationed at the English Channel but for only six weeks of service.”⁴² England would continue to proceed with caution. The hesitation stemmed from the self-awareness both monarchs had of each other’s economies. Neither country had the right amount of funds to pursue any war with each other. Elizabeth instead focused on increasing the encouragement of exploration and allowed the provocation inflicted by her privateers. Spain would see it not as a threat to Spain itself but to the imperial legacy it was creating.

Philip had always found the idea of a great fleet appealing but pressing matters in the Netherlands, funding exploration, and unrest in Portugal took too much of his attention. He asked his prominent advisor, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, to draft out the costs of the hypothetical fleet. The plan asked for 556 ships and an army of 95,000 men.⁴³ The total estimate for the plan was 1.5 billion maradevis.⁴⁴ Philip saw the plan as extremely risky; his troops were tied up in the Netherlands, and he had gone bankrupt twice already.⁴⁵ As hesitation was the element driving Elizabeth to caution, Philip’s limitations stemmed from the monetary risk that the Armada posed. Philip didn’t see a way around the financial danger it posed, but his courtiers, Marquis of Santa Cruz and Bernardino de Mendoza, continued to press the necessity of the Armada. The extreme wealth that the empire possessed in the early 1570s soon became catastrophic as Spain's debts increased. At the time of preparations for the Armada, Spain was experiencing monetary difficulties. Spain was founded on the riches extracted from the New World that Philip encouraged his explorers to grab; since Elizabeth was threatening that wealth, Philip saw it as enough justification to finalize preparations for the Armada. Since Elizabeth had provided aid to rebels in the Netherlands, the biggest threat to Philip was about to come.

The provocation in the sea would be the final leg of back and forth between England and Spain. Spain relied on the wealth pouring in from the New World, and the so-called English Sea Dogs that pursued the Spanish ships heavily was seen as a threat; it enraged Philip that England was benefiting from Spanish ships. Elizabeth did not shy away from encouraging her privateers to entrap Spanish ships and make them give up their cargo. Sir Francis Drake was a privateer, sea captain, and explorer who successfully captured favor with Elizabeth. Barbara Fuchs describes the position England took, “England pursued a highly aggressive para-naval policy towards Spain; in the 1570s and 1580s, piracy became England’s belated answer to Spain’s imperial expansion.”⁴⁶ Elizabeth saw the opportunity simultaneously to help Sir Francis Drake pursue his exploration ambitions to profit her realm by attacking Spanish ships.

Attacks on Spain were closer to home when Sir Francis Drake attacked the Spanish port of Cadiz in 1587, and the Earl of Essex again attacked the same port in 1596. Such provocations would not go unnoticed, and Philip II felt he had no other choice than to command the Marquis of Santa Cruz to prepare the Armada. Jensen wrote that preparations were delayed because, “Yet the more Philip importuned the more Santa Cruz delayed; the ships were not ready, food supplies were still short, cannon and powder were inadequate”⁴⁷ Philip was in a highly compromising position because he needed to find the right window of opportunity while simultaneously trying to satisfy his two leading men, the Duke of Parma and the Marquis of Santa Cruz. The promise of a papal subsidy was not forthcoming, and Philip found himself unable to find a solution in financing the Armada. The most significant blow came when the Marquis of Santa Cruz died on 9 February 1588, and Philip appointed the Duke of Medina to replace him. This change of leadership caused the Armada to be delayed once again for about six months.

For England, the Armada was a long-awaited fear; talk of the Armada was not a secret around Europe, and England had been preparing its defenses. John Hawkins, the Treasurer of the Navy, expressed the feeling that the war was soon coming:

Best assurance is to seek our peace by a determined and resolute war, which in doubt would be both less charge, more assurance of safety and would best discern our friends from our foes... abroad and at home and satisfy the people generally throughout the whole realm.⁴⁸

For Hawkins, the impending conflict was necessary to bring the realm peace and satisfaction, finally getting to the forefront of the enemies of the realm.

The long venture of the Armada came to a dramatic end with the persistence of stormy weather and hastily rearranged Armada plans. The failure of the Spanish Armada would lead to the questioning of its purpose and the importance in the larger historical context of the relations between the Spanish and England. The long animosity that the two shared stemmed from the beginning of Henry VIII's reign and persisted generations to the reign of Elizabeth. Religious zeal and leadership from Philip II led to the creation of numerous plots that saw the involvement of many Spanish and Catholic leaders. Elizabeth's courtiers' pressure and persistence to establish Protestantism as the dominant religion in England led to provocation in the Netherlands and the New World. The slow deterioration of tolerance led to the growing sense that war was the only answer to the uneasy relations. The Spanish Armada was the climax of the conflict between the English and the Spanish because it directly resulted from all the past grievances that the other two caused each other.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada was an enormous personal victory for Queen Elizabeth and a substantial personal and financial blow for Philip II. In the aftermath of victory, the English commemorate the win with a medal. The words on the medal, “He (God) blew, and they scattered.”⁴⁹ signifying that the English believed God was on their side. Spain's defeat meant bankruptcy and questioning the leadership of Philip, for Elizabeth victory meant her legitimacy as a ruler and praise for her and her strong counsel. The famous *Armada Portrait* created in 1588⁵⁰ exemplifies the confidence and strength that Elizabeth can command and exude. Her image had changed from the beginning of her reign from a semi-legitimate queen to a legitimate confident, glorious, and virgin queen. Esra Melinkoglu writes about the portrait in the way it highlights the costume and the body politic. Melinkoglu explains that the portrait “displays patriotic self-confidence in the face of the defeat of the Spanish ships that were wrecked against the Scottish rocks constitutes an important example of paintings that reveal Elizabeth's traditional look: it is keeping with the feminine ideal of the time, but, on the other hand, every thread, pattern, and ornament exudes power.”⁵¹ Looking at the *Armada Portrait*,

Elizabeth is dressed extravagantly as a symbol of her power with ships over her shoulders denoting the defeat of the Armada, and her hand placed delicately on top of a globe indicating her imperial power. A big part of her image is Elizabeth's importance on the label of a 'virgin queen.' This image illustrates Elizabeth's legacy; the virgin queen who could transform herself into a masculine, powerful, and strong ruler. Elizabeth's image was transformed from an illegitimate queen to a powerful female monarch. "Her maidenly chastity was therefore interpreted not as a sign of political or social deficiency, but rather as a paradoxical symbol of the power of a woman who survived to govern despite illegitimization, subordination of female to male in the order of primogeniture, patriarchy, and masculine supremacy, and who remained unwed at a time when official sermons favored marriage and attacked the monastic vow of celibacy and veneration of the Virgin Mary."⁵²

The Spanish Armada's legacy is also felt throughout the reign of Elizabeth's successor James I. Because the relationship was heavily strained during Elizabeth's reign, James' policy towards Spain was one of mending. Historian Louis B. Wright writes, "all England rang with warnings of the disasters believed certain to follow in the wake of the King's stubborn and unpopular foreign policy, which sought, at any price, to conciliate Spain."⁵³ Years of religious conflicts plagued Elizabeth's reign, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada did not vanquish religious differences. The most prominent dissenters within James' court were the Protestant clergy which saw James' need to please Spain as a wedge in English affairs. The thought of the Spanish Armada was still felt after the death of Elizabeth in 1603, and James ascended to become an adamant advocate for peace with Spain.

Appendix



George Gower,
"Armada
Portrait" Oil
Painting, 1588,
Woburn Abbey.

¹ January 1559; Philip II proposed marriage to Elizabeth signaling a desire to make amends. Elizabeth became known to be elusive to her other numerous suitors. J.E. Neale. *Queen Elizabeth I: A Biography*. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957).

- ² *Elizabeth*, directed by Shekhar Kapur (1998; United Kingdom: PolyGram Filmed Entertainment, 1998)-received anti-Catholic accusations, Buffalo News reporting that, “every single Catholic in the film is dark, cruel and devious”.
- ³ Catherine of Aragon gave birth to three children; one stillborn, one son who died in infancy and one daughter who ultimately became Queen of England. Because no male heir was produced in the long marriage, Henry believed it was his duty and mission to produce an heir consequently he needed to erase his marriage to Catherine to produce a legitimate heir with another wife.
- ⁴ During the reign of Mary I; many wealthy protestants including Sir Francis Walsingham fled England in fear of prosecution. Elizabeth regularly kept correspondence with Sir Francis and after Mary’s death was appointed to become a member of Elizabeth’s first parliament.
- ⁵ Merino Eugenio, “Thomas More and Charles V Part II/III: A Good Servant of the Queen,” *Moreana* 50, no. 193/194 (2013): p. 191.
- ⁶ Henry VIII in a letter to Charles V in Edward Hall, *Hall’s Chronicle: Containing the History of England during the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (London: printed for J. Johnston et al., 1809) 768.
- ⁷ “Spain: September 1532, 16-30,” in *Calendar of State Papers, Spain, Volume 4 Part 2, 1531-1533*, ed. Pascual de Gayangos (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1882), 514-523. *British History Online*, accessed May 18, 2020.
- ⁸ De Lamar Jensen, “The Spanish Armada: The Worst Kept Secret in Europe,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19:4 (Winter 1988): p. 621.
- ⁹ Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, 1569-71, no. 1139
- ¹⁰ J. Lynch, “Philip II and the Papacy,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11 (1961): p. 36.
- ¹¹ J. Lynch, “Philip II and the Papacy.” p. 36.
- ¹² Text of the Treaty of 29 July 1587 in A. O. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*, Eng. trans. (London, 1916), pp. 520-23
- ¹³ M. J. Rodriguez-Salgado, ‘Paz ruidosa, guerra sorda: las relaciones de Felipe II e Inglaterra’, in *La monarquía de Felipe II a debate*, ed. L. Ribot Garcia (Madrid, 2000), p. 67.
- ¹⁴ Jayne Archer, “‘There is less danger in fearing too much than too little’: Sir Francis Walsingham and the Defence of the Elizabethan Realm,” *Intelligence and National Security* 28, no. 5 (2013): p. 749.
- ¹⁵ Conyers Read, Walsingham and Burghley in Queen Elizabeth’s Privy Council,” *The English Historical Society* 28:109 (January 1913): p. 36.
- ¹⁶ Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, 1569-71, no. 1139.
- ¹⁷ Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, Elizabeth, II, no. 482.
- ¹⁸ The National Archives, “Proclamation by Lord Burghley 2 March 1581” Letter Transcript.
- ¹⁹ Calendar of State Papers, Simancas, Mendoza, 26 Jan.
- ²⁰ Calendar of State Papers, Simancas, Mendoza, 26 Jan.
- ²¹ Calendar of State Papers, Simancas, Mendoza, 26 Jan.
- ²² Sir Roger Bodenham was a tenant of Lord Burghley, Burghley gave him small positions in local affairs, title of arbitrator, Lord Burghley wrote to him often
- ²³ Calendar of state of papers, Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth (London, 1927)
- ²⁴ DeLamar Jensen. “The Spanish Armada: The Worst Kept Secret in Europe,” p. 627.
- ²⁵ Adam Simon, “Elizabeth I and the Sovereignty of the Netherlands 1576-1585,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004): 309.
- ²⁶ Simon, “Elizabeth I and the Sovereignty of the Netherlands 1576-1585,” p. 309.
- ²⁷ Simon, “Elizabeth I and the Sovereignty of the Netherlands 1576-1585,” p. 318.
- ²⁸ The National Archives (Public Record Office), 70/137
- ²⁹ Calendar of State Papers, Simancas. Mendoza. 16 July.
- ³⁰ Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned for 18 years (previous imprisonments sites being Sheffield Castle and Sheffield Manor) because she was a threat to Elizabeth’s reign, Fotheringhay Castle was her last imprisonment site. In 1586 she was convicted of treason and soon executed.
- ³¹ Henry VII (1485-1509) was Henry VIII’s father
- ³² Babington, Anthony Mary, Queen of Scots et. al, “Queen Mary to Anthony Babington,” in *Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Plot*, ed. Pollen, John (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1922), 26.
- ³³ Babington., “Queen Mary to Anthony Babington,” p. 39.

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- ³⁴ G. B. Harrison, *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth I*, (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), p. 179.
- ³⁵ Queen Elizabeth painstakingly took weeks to come to a decision in the end she could not ignore the plots and the threat to her throne.
- ³⁶ Jensen, "The Spanish Armada," p. 632.
- ³⁷ Simancas: February 1587', in *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*.
- ³⁸ Jensen, "The Spanish Armada," p. 632.
- ³⁹ Charles Dack, *The Trial, Execution, and Death of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Northampton: The Dryden press: Taylor & sons, 1889), p. 16.
- ⁴⁰ Robert Hutchinson, *Elizabeth's spymaster: Francis Walsingham and the secret war that saved England*, (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006), p. 226.
- ⁴¹ Sir Amias Paulet, ed. *The letter-books of Sir Amias Poulet: the keeper of Mary, Queen of Scots*, (London: Burns and Oats, 1874), p. 226.
- ⁴² Hutchinson, *Elizabeth's spymaster*, p. 226.
- ⁴³ Jay Williams. *The Spanish Armada*, (San Francisco: New World City Publishing, 2015).
- ⁴⁴ A Spanish copper coin and monetary unit
- ⁴⁵ Williams, *The Spanish Armada*.
- ⁴⁶ Barbara Fuchs. "Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renegadoes, and the English Nation." *ELH* 67:1 (Spring 2000): p. 45.
- ⁴⁷ DeLamar, "The Spanish Armada," p. 637.
- ⁴⁸ Hutchinson, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 41.
- ⁴⁹ "The Collection." *Medal Commemorating the Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588 - National Maritime Museum*, collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/37452.html.
- ⁵⁰ George Gower, "Armada Portrait" oil painting, 1588, Woburn Abbey.
- ⁵¹ Esra Melinkoglu, "The Armada Portrait: Costume and the Body Politic," *Litera* 16 (2014): p. 4 .
- ⁵² John King, "Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43:1 (1990): p. 31.
- ⁵³ Louis B. Wright, "Propaganda against James I's 'Appeasement' of Spain," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 6:2 (Feb., 1943), p. 1.

Quarantine in eighteenth and nineteenth Century England: Epidemics and Empires

Jacqueline Isero

Introduction

The sun never set on the British Empire, and, therefore, daylight was omnipresent. Unfortunately, so too was disease.¹ The colonization of foreign lands and the subjugation of alien peoples involved in empire-building produced many epidemic outbreaks of disease. Most nations responded with quarantine and sanitary measures—the British were no different. The British Empire, which accounted for nearly one quarter of the world’s landmass and more than one quarter of its inhabitants, reached its zenith at the end of the nineteenth century.² Towards the beginning of this century, England adopted the laissez-faire economic philosophy of economist Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* and slowly abandoned their formerly mercantilist preferences and policy.³ It was near the same time that anticontagionists called to question the efficacy of quarantine, which they saw as an unnecessary inconvenience that thwarted trade and inhibited economic growth.⁴ Laws mandating quarantine in England only lasted as long as they did because, without them, countries who believed strongly, and correctly, in the benefits of quarantine would have further harmed the British economy by indiscriminately quarantining British ships, whose laxity on sanitary measures they would have conceived as a threat.⁵ The debate surrounding quarantine law was multi-tiered: it was simultaneously a matter of economics, a source of international conflict that required diplomatic resolution, and an argument concerning the nature of disease propagation. The repeal of quarantine law and the birth of free-trade ideology are inextricably intertwined: the contagionist debate adapted to the political and economic climate of the nineteenth-century British Empire and the preservation of public health was subverted by the financial interests of influential men.

The evolution of English quarantine law closely paralleled the debate concerning the proper method of the propagation of plague and other diseases. Quarantine was favored when the contagionists were in fashion and disfavored when the anticontagionists reigned. As a result, contagionism became less favorable as the British Empire grew and amassed wealth through unfettered trade. The favorability and unfavorability of contagionism as a theory of disease propagation was affected by the political and economic context in which it was espoused. Venetians, the most frequent traders with the East during the Black Death, are often credited for creating the first complete quarantine code in 1448. The English word “quarantine” is said to have been derived from the Italian “quaranta”, which translates to forty and “giorni”, which means days.⁶ In “A Century of English Quarantine,” twentieth-century historian Charles F. Mullett records the inconsistencies and reversals that plagued English quarantine law. In his lectures on quarantine, Dr Collingridge outlines a similar history.⁷ Considering the long precedent of quarantine law that dates back before the Venetian’s 1448 code, Britain’s eventual repeal of quarantine laws in 1896 was extraordinarily backwards and antiquated.

Contagionism, Mercantilism, and the Quarantine Laws of 1710 and 1720

At the beginning of the eighteenth century in Britain, mercantilist economic philosophy continued to prevail.⁸ In her book *Harmony and Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought*, Andrea Finkelstein writes, “the salient characteristics of the

mercantile system were its definition of wealth as gold and silver, its concentration on a positive balance of trade to the exclusion of the domestic economy (because it saw that domestic economy as not bringing gold/silver into the economy), its reliance on monopoly to accomplish that positive balance, and its sacrifice of the desires and needs of the domestic consumer to the requirements of the export-producer. Thus, it was a set of government policies supported by the commercial exporter devolving from a false definition of wealth.”⁹ Mercantilist economists define wealth as gold and silver, which are natural resources that could not be made artificially, effectively determined wealth to be a finite entity. The increasing trade that accompanied mercantilist policies in Britain and the rush to obtain as much of the world’s finite wealth as possible was the perfect environment for the spread of disease. The speed at which disease spread would only get progressively worse as transportation from place to place became faster and more frequent.

The implementation and enforcement of quarantine mandates implicitly accepted the concept of contagionism—and it was this implication that anticontagionists rejected wholeheartedly. Contagionism refers to theories that espouse diseases that are communicable from person to person and are transferred via the infected or contagious matter of some sort. Without contagion theory, quarantine procedures would have no place. In his article entitled “Plague and Contagionism in Eighteenth-Century England: the Role of Richard Mead,” Arnold Zuckerman writes, “the concept of ‘contagion’ was known “in ancient times to medical professionals and laypersons, if not by that name, but ‘learned physicians’ had found it difficult to reconcile contagion with humoral and miasmatic theories of epidemic diseases.”¹⁰ The humoral theory dates back to Galen, Hippocrates, and classical Greek medicine, and it postulates that the body contains four bodily humors, which, if unbalanced, cause disease. Miasmatic theory, a type of atmospheric theory of disease, posits that disease is caused by “miasma,” or bad air, which the diseased person would have encountered before falling ill. Miasmatic and Humoral theories of disease are distinct from contagionism. They do not necessitate the diseased person to contact infected matter, and they often deny the transferability of diseases as a route of infection and disease propagation. The ordinary person, Zuckerman argues, was aware of the contagious nature of specific diseases—he could see the aftermath of interacting with a sick person, and he witnessed his neighbors and family members succumb to diseases that spread from family to family. However, the official medical discourse disregarded this and primarily stuck to humoral or atmospheric theories of diseases that kept their worldview and system of belief intact.¹¹

Contagionism was introduced into the official discourse in the early eighteenth century and was briefly popularized before being overrun once again by anticontagionist medical practitioners and political pundits. Contagionists did not put as much faith into coincidence and happenstance as did anticontagionists. They tended to discredit anecdotal accounts of epidemics unless they could find hard facts, such as reliably documented deaths from or government response to a disease, to back up the occurrence of the events described. One of the premiere contagionists responsible for the recommendations which led Parliament to enact the quarantine act of 1720 was Richard Mead.¹² Zuckerman writes that Mead’s ideology was “something of a compromise between the contagionist and miasmatic theories.”¹³ The miasma, in Mead’s thinking, was the source of the contagion in many instances. Mead, Zuckerman writes, believed that the plague was “propagated by diseased persons, by merchandise from infected places, and by the air.”¹⁴ Mead believed in the communication of disease from person to person and from country to country through contagious matter, a controversial stance.¹⁵ In his treatise “A Short Discourse on Pestilential Contagion, and the Methods to be Used to Prevent It,” Richard Mead implores that the reader uses the “utmost

Diligence” in “finding out means to keep our selves clear” from a plague. To this end, Mead recommends “obliging Ships, that come from *Infected* Places, to perform Quarantine” and continues to list quarantine rules he thinks it is necessary to follow in the case of an epidemic of disease, including the much-contested institution of lazarettos.¹⁶ Mead was a well-respected friend to Isaac Newton, vice president of the Royal Society, member of the College of Physicians, and the doctor to the “Princess of Wales.” His recommendations for quarantine were taken seriously by Parliament and implemented.¹⁷

The first two quarantine acts were reactionary in response to significant epidemics in foreign states. According to both Collingridge and Mullett, the first official quarantine act passed by Parliament was enacted in 1710 or “the ninth year of the reign of Queen Anne.”¹⁸ Mullett writes that this first quarantine act was “derived, as the commands make plain, from heavy mortality in the Baltic,”¹⁹ which was then suffering from a “raging”²⁰ plague. England bore witness to the devastation of the Baltic states. The adoption of quarantine in England was an effort to stave off a similar ruin. Mullett writes that the first quarantine act set the foundation for the next 115 years of quarantine law. It ordered that

no one should board these ships without a license, and after December 25, 1710, no master should go on shore or permit any passenger or member of his crew to do so without a license; otherwise, the ship was forfeited to the queen. Persons going on shore were to be returned to quarantine. Any boat on the ship might be seized during detention by the quarantine officer who would maintain watches to prevent any coming or going. After the tension the ship could be certified and proceed on its way; after quarantine also, the cargo would be opened and aired.²¹

The general idea was to prevent infected persons from leaving while protecting healthy persons from becoming infected. This general principle would carry through the next century of quarantine law. This purposeful restriction of free movement would also become an object of criticism by anticontagionists with economic agendas.

The second quarantine act was enacted in 1720—and went into effect in 1721—in response to an alarming outbreak of plague in Marseilles.²² Mullett argues that, in light of the Marseilles plague, the first quarantine act and the penalties it provided for were seen to be insufficient and not harsh enough. In the new act, penalties were increased, and power was conferred to the King, allowing him to mandate quarantine as he saw fit. The act allowed for better enforcement, but it also allowed greater license to be taken with preventative measures. The statute enacted by the second act was shortened and added to over time, with at least three intermediate acts which attempted to revise parts of the 1720 act, but there were no significant changes in the law until 1805. The quarantine act of 1720 and its intermediate acts bolstered quarantine as an accepted policy in Britain.

Data was often manipulated in the contagionist versus anticontagionist debate. Dr Charles Maclean, a medical doctor and well-known opponent of contagionism, concurs with Milroy in his “Obligations of Governments to Abolish the Laws of Quarantine.”²³ Maclean includes data tables in his article and uses the data to conclude that the mortality from disease during epidemics with quarantine laws was higher than in the epidemics without quarantine laws or during which quarantine laws were not followed.²⁴ Maclean writes: “The excess of mortality, in those pestilences, in which the Quarantine Laws were applied, over that in which they were not applied, was, in 1603, 11,408; in 1625, 25, 872; in 1665, 71, 420; forming a total of 108, 700 deaths, attributable, my conclusions being correct, principally to the operation of Quarantine Laws, in these three pestilences.” Maclean also focuses on case studies in which

non-adherence to quarantine regulations brought about the end of the plague epidemic. Maclean recounts that in Marseilles in 1720,

it was when the mortality was at the height, when all precautions were abandoned in despair, when the shops were opened for the supply of the public, and when religious processions were resorted to, by which the people were brought together in masses, that the pestilence began immediately to abate, continuing regularly to decrease until its final cessation.²⁵

Maclean claims that the resumption of everyday life and behavior halted the plague and that it is the break from routine quarantine that makes people sicker. Anticontagionists often contradicted themselves by proclaiming the arrival of a diseased person in port and the subsequent spread of the same disease was a coincidence while also placing direct blame on quarantine regulations for increased mortality.

Anti-contagionists, Free Trade Ideology, and the 1825 Relaxation of Quarantine Laws

Anti-contagionists recognized that quarantine was built on contagionism and was, therefore, fundamentally flawed. Why would they accept quarantine laws when the laws were designed to protect against a phenomenon they did not believe to exist? One of the foremost opponents of quarantine in nineteenth-century England, Dr Gavin Milroy, comments on contagionism: “upon this most absurd belief, the machinery of quarantine regulations has been mainly planned.”²⁶ Milroy argues that regulations that are built within a contagionist frame of mind must be inherently erroneous. Milroy uses case exemplars to further his argument. He claims that “small islands present, of course, the most favorable opportunities for inquiry” and uses Malta, Gozo, and the Ionian islands towards this end. Milroy uses the existence of quarantine protocols and sanitary measures in these case studies to argue that quarantine is ineffective: “these countries profess to place the greatest reliance on quarantine measures and certainly carry them out with the greatest rigor, the experience of the recent epidemic has again shown their inefficacy against its invasion.”²⁷ Milroy shows that these islands had strict quarantine procedures in place and were still suffering outbreaks of plague, so, therefore, quarantine must not have been working. Of course, even the most stringent quarantine protocols can be bypassed by individuals or organisms and rendered defective; the protocols’ presence alone does not prove or disprove their efficacy, a point which contagionists would later harp on.

The transition from contagionism back to anti-contagionism was economically motivated and as political as it was ideological. Mid-nineteenth century contagionists recognized their decline into disfavor. However, they still quarreled with those in favor of repealing quarantine laws because they saw them as burdensome to the nation and based on fallacious reasoning. T. Spencer Wells, Surgeon to the Samaritan Hospital and contemporary of Milroy and Maclean, offers a rebuttal to Milroy’s “Operation and Results of Quarantine in British Ships Since the Beginning of the Present Century.”²⁸ In his article, “On the Practical Results of Quarantine,” Wells claims he can trace every outbreak of disease in European ports back to the arrival of diseased persons, and he mocks proponents of miasma or atmospheric theories of disease: “the old reply would of course be offered, that these were mere coincidences, and that the arrival of a plague patient in a healthy sea-port had nothing whatever to do with the disease which followed his arrival, but that this was owing to some open drain or open sewer, which had certainly been in existence for years and years before and since without producing plague, but which, just at the time of arrival of the infected person, had become endowed with some unusual virulence, in consequence of some assumed change in the condition of the atmosphere.”²⁹ Wells finds the anti-contagionists’ logic to be far-fetched

and implausible. He recognizes the mental gymnastics anticontagionists must perform to conform disease epidemics with their Hippocratic, atmospheric, or miasmatic theories of disease. The contagionist theory of disease, Wells believed, was more straightforward and less problematic. Wells directly responds to Milroy's claims that quarantine was either ineffective or harmful with his case studies. He reframes stories of the spread of disease as told by Milroy, draws on his personal experience abroad studying disease and working in lazarettos (of which Milroy had none), and generally details instances in which quarantine was effective. In the end, Wells appeals to common sense and the popular view, which was mainly accepting of contagion theory: "let us suppose ourselves in a sea port or an island, and that a ship arrived with plague on board, I would ask, is the population of that place likely to be more alarmed by hearing that the crew are at liberty to wander through the town or island, or that the sick have been confined in one part of a lazaretto, and the healthy in another; that the ship has been cleansed, and that all persons engaged about her have been kept under observation until all danger of spreading the disease has ceased? Common sense can give but one answer to this."³⁰ Wells knows that the citizenry would prefer to have the people from the diseased ship separated from them, despite doctors' official opinion that disease is not contagious—and for this reason, he thinks quarantine is the wisest course of action. He sees what the established medical profession does not: that quarantine helps maintain society's tranquillity and security by avoiding mass hysteria about freely wandering agents of disease. Regardless of the soundness of Wells' logic, however, anticontagionist theory prevailed in the nineteenth century.

The quarantine act of 1805, unlike the 1710 and 1720 acts, was a deliberate and calculated reaction to the country's economic condition as opposed to an emotional expression of fear. Mullett writes that, from the passing of the 1805 act forward, "attacks on quarantine, its principles and its cost, steadily mounted, but official opinion, in medical and political circles alike, adhered to the doctrine of contagion for another twenty years, and even then, was willing to make only mild concessions."³¹ The first indications of leniency, however, sparked a revolutionary debate between political and scientific factions.

In 1825, exactly twenty years later, an act which "repealed the several laws relating to quarantine and made other provisions in lieu thereof" was passed.³² Mullett clarifies that the most significant change the act wrought was abolishing the death penalty for quarantine offenses, which considerably relaxed quarantine law.³³ Mullett writes, "it was this relaxation that most aroused the defenders of contagion and quarantine."³⁴ Contagionists recognized the significant blow they had been dealt via this act and worked to alleviate their status. Earlier quarantine acts had stirred little debate. In 1819, however, Charles Maclean was responsible for motioning for a Select Committee to investigate "the Validity of the Doctrine of Contagion in the Plague."³⁵ Anticontagionists, against protests from the contagionists, argued in Parliament for further relaxation and repeal of quarantine law.³⁶ In an 1849 "Report on Quarantine" presented to both houses of Parliament, the General Board of Health wrote, "when quarantine was first established, the spread of epidemic diseases exclusively or chiefly by contagion was a doctrine universally received; but during the last century a change has gradually taken place in professional opinion." The Report continues to explain that a result there was a "gradual relaxation of the stringency of quarantine regulations" and a "growing doubt" as to whether quarantine was effective or not.³⁷ The General Board of Health discusses potential atmospheric causes of recent epidemics and explains why sanitary measures would be superior to quarantine.³⁸ The *Report on Quarantine* reveals that Britain had almost completely reversed its stance on quarantine by the mid-nineteenth century in favor of less restrictive regulations.

British Imperialism, Free Trade, and the 1896 Repeal of Quarantine Laws

The height of the British Empire occurred in the nineteenth century, and this dominance coincides with its abandonment of mercantilism and adoption of free trade ideology.³⁹ The success of British Imperialism and trade also coincided with the repeal and relaxation of quarantine law. In their article entitled “Free Trade, British hegemony and the international economic order in the nineteenth century,” Patrick O’Brien and Geoffrey Pigman write, “at the core of mercantilist thought and political action resided an assumption of a finite (or at least slowly expanding) volume of international trade in commodities and services and its corollary that national shares could only be enlarged by investment in military force and astute diplomacy.”⁴⁰ O’Brien and Pigman’s assessment of mercantilism concurs with Finkelstein’s definition of Britain’s eighteenth-century mercantile system. O’Brien and Pigman differentiate eighteenth-century mercantilism with nineteenth-century free trade ideology by analyzing British tariff law that suggests an infinite international order and economy.⁴¹ Changes in worldview and international order are possibly attributed to changes in quarantine law.

One of the most frequently used arguments by opponents of quarantine, other than disagreement about the contagious nature of the disease, was economic: quarantine infrastructure came at high cost and inconvenience to the nation that employed it. Anticontagionists like Dr Maclean, Dr Collingridge, and Milroy argued that the disruption caused by quarantine was unwarranted and unlawful. Mullett summarizes Maclean’s grievances with the quarantine laws: “the laws increased sickness, mortality and fear, impeded science, produced immorality, obstructed travel, commerce, navigation, and manufactures, destroyed expeditions and armaments, injured the general consumer and the public revenue, and were capable of being, as they already had in Europe, “rendered subservient to the purposes of despotism.”⁴² Quarantine, as Maclean discusses, affects a vast array of operational areas; and a common fear was that quarantine could be employed arbitrarily as a means of government control. In addition, monetary losses were recounted by Collingridge, who claimed that “quarantine charges in many cases amounted to 35 percent of the value of the cargo, and one instance is given in which they exceeded 90 percent, although there had been no sickness on board the vessel.”⁴³ These quarantine laws greatly diminished the profit margin of trade. Similarly, Milroy marvels at the minimal mention of quarantine in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* when “it has been estimated that a loss of little short of a million sterling is thereby annually inflicted on our shipping.”⁴⁴ Anticontagionists argued that the expense and nuisance produced by quarantine was a detriment to English society as a whole and not conducive to the maintenance of the world’s greatest Empire.

In 1896, quarantine in England was repealed. Collingridge, writing in 1897, concludes his lecture by commenting: “thus for England quarantine has been formally abolished, and our protection henceforth against the importation of disease will be medical inspection, without any vexatious detention of a healthy vessel merely because she has arrived from an infected port.”⁴⁵ Medical inspection is an alternative sanitary measure to quarantine and relies on close observation of potential disease threats. Merchants and those in business preferred medical inspection because it was less invasive and more practical. Collingridge finishes by urging his reader to “demonstrate to other countries the value of our system to induce them to accept the same conclusions.”⁴⁶ Collingridge thought the English way was the best and expected that, in time, the supposed superiority of the British Empire would be submitted to as it had been the case regularly in the past; quarantine, however, remained the norm in other European countries, despite the British Empire’s objection to it.

Contagionists agreed that quarantine was an annoyance, but they thought it was justified and necessary to preserve public health. Wells refutes the call for quarantine repeal:

I claim, therefore, for these regulations an enormous saving of human life, infinitely overbalancing any pecuniary mischief caused by impediments to commerce, or any personal inconvenience to which travelers have been subjected. I fully admit that great loss and very unnecessary inconvenience has resulted from improper regulations, but I say that the true friend of humanity would seek to reform what was improper, not to abolish an entire system which had done incalculable service.⁴⁷

Wells essentially labels anticontagionists as enemies of humanity and commends quarantine for its life-saving history. This point of view shows that he values public health more than the potential for economic gain and believes healthy citizens are more productive as members of society. In his speech before Parliament, Dr John Bowring implores his colleagues: “but, to benefit a few interested individuals, would the Government continue a system which was most inconvenient to commerce and most unprofitable to the country?”⁴⁸

Bowring frames the debate as a question as to whether the government should cater to the interests of the few at the expense of the many—to which his answer is a resounding no. On the other hand, anticontagionists would argue that catering to the interests of the few is conducive to economic growth and success. In *Contagion and the State in Europe, 1830-1930*, Peter Baldwin writes:

Preventive strategies against contagious disease go to the heart of the social contract, requiring a determination of where the line runs between the interests of the individual and those of the community. The continental approach tended to treat the public weal as preeminent, while the concerns of affected individuals (whether travelers in quarantine, the sequestered infected, vaccinees or prostitutes) ceded priority. The British generally reversed these priorities.⁴⁹

Foreign states recognized the English Empire’s blatant disregard for public health. For that reason, quarantine was a source of international conflict that necessitated the employment of diplomacy between foreign nations. Collingridge summarizes this phenomenon:

the enormously-increased importance of our foreign trade and the obvious futility of the strict enforcement of quarantine had excited the attention of thinking men. But quarantine was not yet got rid of. Originally established to prevent the importation of disease, when this object was shown to be futile the system was still retained in order to prevent interruption to trade. It was clear that while other countries kept up the practice any official abandonment would only lead to an indiscriminate quarantining of British vessels. That this was no imaginary danger has been shown on many occasions.⁵⁰

British negligence could be deadly for the nations that engage in trade with them; for this reason, many countries threatened to embargo British goods or force them to quarantine to protect their citizens. Mullett comments that because of this perceived threat, “any benefits to the import trade by relaxation would be cancelled by damage to the export trade, especially in those countries which already considered England an infected country.”⁵¹ Mullett continues to explain that “the mere rumor that Britain was going off quarantine had already damaged trade, and he had been at some pains to assure Mediterranean countries that a change in administration did not mean a change in fundamental policy.”⁵² Even discussion of a repeal caused problems between Britain and other countries, and the English, to promote ease of mind and relation, had to assure their trading partners that they were simply discussing

potential reforms. International conferences attempted to rectify conflict between nations in France in 1851, Vienna in 1874, and Dresden in 1893. One of only three countries to do so, England remained a staunch opponent of quarantine. It admitted that they had retained quarantine only “in consequence the position of other European Powers.”²⁵³ In other words, the only reason England kept their quarantine laws was because they feared retaliation from pro-quarantine countries if they were to repeal quarantine entirely.

Conclusion

England’s quarantine policy was politically influenced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the Empire’s economic welfare often took precedence over public health and safety. Many means were used to justify the repealing of quarantine law, including arguments against contagionism, claims regarding the inefficacy of quarantine, and concerns regarding the economic harm and inconvenience incurred by quarantine protocol. Ultimately, the debate over whether or not to repeal quarantine in England was highly politicized, making it difficult for opponents or proponents to take a neutral position.

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³ ["British Empire,"](#) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

⁴ Gavin Milroy, ["Operation and Results of Quarantine in British Ports since the Beginning of the Present Century,"](#) *Association Medical Journal* 1:27 (July 8, 1853).

⁵ William Collingridge, "The Milroy Lectures on Quarantine," *The British Medical Journal* 1 (March 13, 1897), p. 647.

⁶ Collingridge, "The Milroy," (1897), p. 646.

⁷ Collingridge, "The Milroy" (1897).

⁸ Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-century English Economic Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 247-8.

⁹ Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*, (2003), pp. 247-8.

¹⁰ Arnold Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism in Eighteenth-Century England: The Role of Richard Mead,"](#) *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 78: 2 (2004) p. 278.

¹¹ Brad Bouley, "Black Plague" (lecture, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA, August 24, 2020).

¹² Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism,"](#) (2004), p. 273.

¹³ Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism,"](#) (2004), p. 286.

¹⁴ Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism,"](#) (2004), p. 286.

¹⁵ Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism,"](#) (2004).

¹⁶ Richard Mead, ["A short discourse concerning pestilential contagion, and the methods to be used to prevent it ; Discourse concerning pestilential contagion, and the methods to be used to prevent it"](#) (London, England: Printed for Sam. Buckley, and Ralph Smith, 1720), p. 21.

¹⁷ Zuckerman, ["Plague and Contagionism,"](#) (2004), p. 275.

¹⁸ Collingridge, "The Milroy," (1897), p. 647.

¹⁹ Mullett, ["The Bubonic,"](#) (1946), p. 528.

²⁰ Collingridge, "The Milroy," (1897), p. 647.

²¹ Mullett, ["The Bubonic,"](#) (1946), p. 529.

²² Collingridge, "The Milroy," (1897), p. 647.

²³ Charles Maclean, ["Obligations of governments to abolish the laws of quarantine,"](#) *Hume Tracts*, (1830).

²⁴ Maclean, ["Obligations of governments,"](#) (1830).

²⁵ Maclean, ["Obligations of governments,"](#) (1830), p. 4.

²⁶ Milroy, ["Operation and Results,"](#) (1830), p. 582.

²⁷ Milroy, ["Operation and Results,"](#) (1830), p. 639.

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- 32 Mullett, "[The Bubonic,](#)" p. 537.
- 33 Mullett, "[The Bubonic,](#)" p. 538.
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- 43 Collingridge, "The Milroy," (1897,) p. 647.
- 44 Milroy, "Operation and Results," (1897), p. 579.
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Breaking News: Fox News and MSNBC in a Divided America

Winnie Lam

Introduction

Consider the plethora of available news sources that provide us with day-to-day information. Now imagine having only three: ABC, CBS, and NBC. Although that sounds absurd, the ‘Big Three’ networks dominated American television until the emergence of cable news stations in the late twentieth century.¹ These new channels challenged the status quo of traditional networks by taking advantage of narrowcasting and deregulation to compete with the ‘Big Three.’ The weakening of ABC, CBS, and NBC by the new competition paved the way for the age of cable news networks. Cable news stations like Fox News and MSNBC gained popularity in the late twentieth century because of an increasingly divisive political atmosphere. These political divisions fueled the demand for partisan news, while those news stations’ polarising content simultaneously widened the ideological gap between Americans. The result was an endless cycle of political polarization.

The partisan slant on cable news and the consumer demand for political commentary simultaneously reinforced the ideological divisions between political partisans, causing Democrats to become more liberal and Republicans more conservative. The factors which contributed to the emergence and explosive success of cable news channels like CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC from the 1990s to the 2000s entrenched this cycle of polarization. The pervasive role of cable news is such that just a decade after the rise of Fox and MSNBC, over half of Americans confessed that the first thing that came to mind when they thought about news organizations was cable news, as opposed to network news, local news, newspapers, and the Internet.²

Fox News and MSNBC surpassed CNN in ratings after embracing conservative and liberal slants, respectively. They exemplified cable news channels on the opposite ends of the ideological spectrum as Fox brought on conservative pundits and MSNBC the opposite. The development of partisan punditry is closely tied to the pivotal events they were commenting on in the early twenty-first century. Content analysis of the tone of news coverage on Fox and MSNBC reveals that negative, politically charged news commentary made up most of the channels’ content during this period. Upon close analysis of cable news audiences, Fox and MSNBC became successful with their partisan slants because of the public’s desire to stay within their ideological echo chambers. With these factors in mind, cable news and partisan American audiences exacerbated an endless cycle of political polarization. These developments are not without consequences, and the negative impacts of increased political polarization since the 1990s has affected partisan antipathy and Congress. In contrast to historian Alan Abramowitz’s argument that polarization benefits society, this paper will argue that political divisiveness resulted in grave consequences that we should try to amend.³

Bad News for the “Big Three”

ABC, CBS, and NBC monopolized the television industry until the deregulation of cable news in the late twentieth century. Most of the television stations in the country were affiliated with one of the “Big Three” by the mid-twentieth century. Suddenly, a few decades later, the broadcast networks were disadvantaged because of the Fairness Doctrine, which required

contrasting viewpoints on important issues. The Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 catalyzed the rapid growth of cable television systems across the nation. The act aimed to deregulate cable networks, as demonstrated by one portion prohibiting cable operators from exercising editorial control over cable network content.⁴ Since operators could not regulate the cable television content as strictly as they could broadcast television, cable networks had the freedom to show unedited content at all hours of the day with no commercial breaks.⁵ Because of these new liberties, companies began to invest in commercial satellites and circulated cable nationwide. This surge of new cable networks on television led to highly successful channels, like CNN, HBO, and ESPN.

Narrowcasting also played a significant role in explaining the popularity of cable networks. Targeting information to niche audiences allowed the networks to connect with a loyal viewer base. Unlike the broadcast networks, which had to appeal to a broader audience to succeed, cable channels had the advantage of gearing their programming to groups with a particular ideological point of view.⁶ Audiences were more likely to keep watching programs that advanced their biases, making viewers more inclined to keep tuning into cable channels rather than broadcast network channels, which only provided a neutral outlook.

The redefining of journalistic standards solidified the cable networks' success in the television industry. According to a 1998 study from the Pew Research Center, the percentage of "straight news" in the media, news stories that simply described the events that occurred, dropped from 51.4% in 1977 to a mere 34.3% in 1997. On the other hand, news stories that featured scandals skyrocketed from 0.5% to 15.1% and the percentage of stories categorized as "bizarre" from 0.5% to 6.2%.⁷ The decline in "straight news" and the rise in sensational "infotainment" reflected the shift in newsworthiness. The general upward trend in infotainment suggested that cable networks became increasingly popular because they could air risqué programming absent from the broadcast networks.⁸

Economic and content deregulation, narrowcasting, and the rise of infotainment contributed to the emergence and success of cable network channels, which ultimately led to larger corporations' acquisition of each of the Big Three. By the end of the decade, nearly 53 million households subscribed to cable, and cable program networks increased from 28 in 1980 to 79 by 1989. Weakened by the new competition, the Big Three networks became victims of the merger mania of the 1980s, and all had new owners by the end of the decade. After being taken over by big corporations, the broadcast networks lost many viewers and faced budgetary cutbacks.⁹

CNN's 24-Hour News Cycle: Are Views More Important than News?

The lack of funding for the 'Big Three' paved the way for cable news networks to take their first steps towards success. The Cable News Network (CNN) emerged in 1980 and dedicated itself to solely being a news network.¹⁰ Ted Turner created the nation's first 24-hour news channel with the vision of changing how America saw the news. To achieve his goal, Turner and his associates adopted a news-as-entertainment philosophy, otherwise known as infotainment.¹¹ CNN aired breaking news, special reports headlines, and news features for twenty-one hours a day. In the early evening, the channel televised sports reports for an hour. Afterwards, CNN dedicated two hours of prime time to a full in-depth news roundup. CNN aired its most entertaining stories in the early evening and during prime time between 8 P.M. and 10 P.M. as a way of integrating itself as a form of entertainment into the dinnertime routine of its viewers.¹²

In addition to strategically timing its programming, the network also relied on infotainment to engage its audience. As CNN producer Bob Furnad argued, "We live in an

environment where people are watching a channel for three minutes and then pressing that clicker. We've got to get them watching and keep them watching."¹³ To get audiences watching and keep them watching, CNN offered constant news updates. When a newsworthy event occurred, CNN interrupted its current programming to feature that event immediately and run with it. CNN coined this tactic as "news in process." This phrase indicated the importance of broadcasting exciting events immediately instead of saving them for a news roundup later that day.¹⁴ The network also employed dramatic visuals for its "oomph value" rather than their importance in explaining the news story.¹⁵ Ultimately, CNN set a new standard for the immediacy of news and sensationalized news stories.

CNN did not have strong political biases when it first launched. Political partisanship did not define the network nearly as much as its focus on entertainment-as-news ethic did. However, during the 2007 presidential election, the network faced allegations of liberal bias. Research conducted at Harvard University found that "CNN programming studied tended to cast a negative light on Republican candidates—by a margin of three-to-one."¹⁶ Its reputation as a liberal channel continued in its coverage of the 2016 presidential election and into the network's critical reporting of the Trump Administration. Before the 2000s, however, strong partisan bias was not prevalent in the network. Despite its initial success, CNN became less popular after the rise of the Fox News Channel and MSNBC. Frustrated by CNN's reliance on infotainment, the creators of Fox News and MSNBC strived to launch cable news channels that televised unbiased news stories. However, the two new channels rose to popularity because the networks relied on their partisan slant that appealed to either liberal or conservative audiences.

This Just In: Fox News Ratings Rise Above and Beyond

CNN had already begun to change the landscape of television news, and the emergence of Fox News Channel in 1996 further transformed the way the American public received the news. When Rupert Murdoch, founder of Fox News, hired Republican political consultant Roger Ailes to become the CEO of his new 24-hour news channel, other cable networks, like CNN, had already been up and running for years.¹⁷ Ailes met with cable chiefs and offered to pay them approximately \$10 per subscriber to carry Fox News to compete with bigger news stations. Fox News entered into a carriage agreement with networks across the country, which meant that Fox would pay the network for the right to carry the signal and televise their program. Ailes was successful because he offered an exceedingly high amount for carriage, as cable stations usually only invested \$1.25 per subscriber.¹⁸ This high carriage investment allowed Fox News to get its foot in the door, but without a breaking news story, it was just another channel that viewers clicked past while flipping through the television remote.

In the early stages of the news channel, Murdoch and Ailes agreed that their goal was to create a channel that produced unbiased news and wanted the commentators and anchors to distinguish clearly between analysis and opinion.¹⁹ In an interview with print and television reporter Douglas Kennedy, Ailes recalled telling his staff, "when you walk into this newsroom, recognize your position or your bias and be fair to people who don't share that position."²⁰ The network's slogan, "fair and balanced," represented Murdoch's and Ailes' original vision for the network.²¹

Two years later, Fox News got its big break during the Monica Lewinsky scandal and President Bill Clinton's impeachment trial and gave their viewers a taste of how the network's editorial bent differed from its competitors. Fox News became the epicenter of the scandal, as it renewed the rumors of other women involved with President Clinton and provided the inside scoop on the cigar and blue dress.²² The network raced to bring on the man who broke

the story online, Matt Drudge, and even created a special segment where he updated viewers on new developments in the scandal. Soon after the story broke on Fox News, other news stations followed suit. Their production of commentary about the scandal solidified Fox News' status as an emerging leader in television news.²³

The network's partisan slant became even more prevalent with the divisive 2004 election. Fox News lent its support to presidential candidate George W. Bush and produced negative coverage of the Democratic candidates. In particular, Swift Boat ads overwhelmed most of Fox News' coverage of the election.²⁴ The ads on the channel claimed that Democratic candidate John Kerry lied about his actions in Vietnam that earned him his medals. The ads were highly detrimental to Kerry's campaign, as the general public became skeptical about his record as an American veteran. Since then, Fox News continued to appeal to a conservative audience through the 2000s.

By January 2002, Fox News beat CNN in the ratings and took its spot as the No. 1 cable news channel. Fox News gained a loyal conservative viewership base by narrowcasting their content to audiences already critical of the Clinton Administration and supportive of George Bush. A former Fox News employee compared the loyalty of the network's audience to that of a sports team fan base:²⁵ "In the case of Fox News, the viewers are completely convinced that it is the one thing that stands between our tenuous grip on democracy and total chaos and dictatorship on the left." However, many accused Fox News of acting as a political operation disguising itself as a news organization.

Bill O'Reilly, Fox News' most popular prime-time host, and other Republicans quickly defended the network by denying that it possessed any conservative biases. On "The O'Reilly Factor," O'Reilly and the show's producers hoped to convince viewers that O'Reilly's tough interviews and blunt commentary cut through politicians' biases to reveal the truth. O'Reilly's show introduction, "Caution! You are about to enter, *the no-spin zone*. 'The Factor' begins *right now*," portrayed the show as a place where politicians could not spin their arguments.²⁶ Fox News also argued that the network only *appeared* ideologically conservative, citing the alleged liberal bias in other channels. Thus, Fox News believed it served as a neutral alternative to counteract the mainstream media, demonstrated by the channel's tagline, "Fair and Balanced."²⁷

Although the O'Reilly Factor was successful in that it became the country's most-watched cable news programs in 2001, the public still recognized Fox News' conservative bias. Americans viewed Fox News as the most ideologically partisan than other news networks, and this sentiment continued throughout the early 2000s. A 2009 study conducted by the Pew Research Center found that 47% of the public believed that Fox News was "mostly conservative."²⁸

Due to Fox News' conservative coverage, the channel received criticism from other media outlets. The media portrayed Fox News negatively in the early 2000s, and this portrayal grew even worse over time. Critics accused the channel of being an extension of the Republican Party in the *Chicago Sun-Times* in 2007.²⁹ The pessimistic coverage of Fox News worsened when a Republican columnist himself wrote in a *Los Angeles Times* article that Fox had become a right-leaning network that was akin to a tabloid-like network.³⁰ Social media also played a role in the unfavorable portrayal of the channel. In the 2010s, online news sites like *Vox* published various videos condemning Fox News' coverage. *Vox* accused the channel of breaking its own rules of unbiased coverage, going as far as to turn a blind eye when its television news personalities like Sean Hannity publicly endorsed Donald Trump in his presidential campaign.³¹ The accusations of Fox News' conservative-leaning content persevered throughout the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, the success of Fox News

established the network as a reliable cable news source for the right. Simultaneously, MSNBC emerged as a critical news channel for left-leaning audiences.

Is MSNBC Bias-free?

MSNBC began broadcasting just a few months before Fox News and resulted from a collaboration between the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and Microsoft. One of the most prominent figures involved in the creation of MSNBC was media executive Tom Rogers. Before launching MSNBC, Rogers had already been a part of the news media industry. He served as senior counsel in the U.S. House of Representatives Telecommunications, Consumer Protection and Finance Subcommittee, where he drafted media policy, such as the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984.³² Rogers became the first president of NBC Cable, where he eventually helped forge the NBC and Microsoft partnership as a business venture between the two companies.

Like Fox News, MSNBC aspired to become a 24-hour news channel that presented unbiased news to its audience.³³ The network's focus on technology set MSNBC apart from other cable news networks. MSNBC encouraged viewers to keep tuning in to the television and directed them to its website, which featured new interactive methods of content delivery.³⁴ As demonstrated by its use of technology and its first slogan, "It's Time to Get Connected," MSNBC targeted young, tech-savvy audiences. However, the network's efforts yielded disappointing results. Due to low ratings, it had to lay off 20% of its employees within a year and canceled one of its first programs.³⁵

Even after these setbacks, MSNBC still clung to its goal of delivering neutral news and continued to stay away from partisan-leaning content. The channel featured several people who went on to fame in conservative *and* liberal media.³⁶ It was not until its ratings lagged behind Fox News and CNN in 2003 when it finally established its place as a liberal-leaning network in the cable news landscape with its hiring of Keith Olbermann. "Countdown with Keith Olbermann" proved highly successful when it premiered in 2003.³⁷ Initially, MSNBC executives discouraged Olbermann from continuing his rants about President Bush, arguing that the channel should not present opinionated commentary. However, the sentiment of these network executives changed when the show's ratings started to rise precisely at the time Olbermann began criticizing the Bush Administration. As a result, the network gained the popularity it needed to compete with other cable channels.³⁸

As the show's new host, Olbermann quickly gained recognition for his witty, fast-paced rhetoric that appealed to young viewers. Many regarded Olbermann as "the future of journalism" and praised him for his ability to interweave personal commentary and reports together cleverly. The show focused on the controversies behind U.S. intervention in Iraq, which attracted a left-leaning audience.³⁹ Olbermann criticized the Bush Administration and even directly called the President out. "I accuse you, Mr Bush, of leading this country into war," he said in 2003. "I accuse you of fabricating in the minds of your own people a false implied link between Saddam Hussein and 9/11."⁴⁰

"Countdown" quickly became MSNBC's most popular program. In March 2008, the show averaged 1,080,000 viewers, surpassing CNN's "Campbell Brown," which averaged 995,000 total viewers that month.⁴¹ The show and its partisan commentary contributed to MSNBC's success, and the network delivered its largest share of the cable news prime-time audience since August 2001. From mid-2007 to mid-2008, the channel's prime time viewing increased by 61 percent.⁴² Their success and decision to evolve into a liberal news channel were ultimately derived from their desperation to boost its ratings. Since Olbermann's liberal biases helped MSNBC gain more viewers, the channel pushed on with its partisan slant.

Because of its liberal branding, many regarded MSNBC as the antithesis of Fox News. The tension between the hosts on the two channels reflected this sentiment. Olbermann often referred to the conservative channel as "Fixed News," "Fox Noise," "Faux News," and "Fixed Noise." The feud between Olbermann and O'Reilly was also very publicized. Like the *Los Angeles Times*, other news outlets talked about the hosts as if they were direct rivals, claiming that their crossfire remarks created the "fiercest media feud of the decade."⁴³ The tensions between Olbermann and O'Reilly escalated until top executives from both channels met at an off-the-record summit in 2009 to arrange a cease-fire. Fox News and MSNBC acknowledged the toxic culture between the networks and promised to alleviate tensions, even though the feud increased views for both programs.⁴⁴

Shortly after, in 2010, MSNBC accepted its liberal-leaning reputation. Its tagline, "Lean Forward," fully embraced its progressive identity. MSNBC relied on ideologically left-leaning content for upward mobility and planned to take on Fox News after surpassing CNN. However, the network soon encountered criticism for being *too* partisan. It faced accusations of being biased towards Barack Obama during the 2008 election and because it failed to include a single conservative candidate in its panel on the night of the 2010 midterm election.⁴⁵ MSNBC's shows also received attacks, as the *LA Times* pointed out that "at least O'Reilly invites dissenters to his lair (if only to disembowel them), whereas 'Countdown' is more or less an echo chamber in which Olbermann and like-minded bobbleheads nod at each other."⁴⁶

MSNBC's Rachel Maddow, who hosted one of the most successful shows in the channel's history, "The Rachel Maddow Show," also met allegations of biased news coverage.⁴⁷ Maddow began as a substitute host on the channel and then landed her show that debuted in 2008. Maddow's program doubled the audience for MSNBC's 9 P.M. slot and received praise from the liberal media. However, as the show's initial success wore off, Maddow, like Olbermann, faced allegations of being too partisan, especially concerning her criticism of the Trump Administration. In the time of growing anxiety on the left in the Trump Administration, MSNBC depended even more heavily on stark partisan commentary that is nostalgic of Olbermann's, focusing on the President's ties to Russia and the possibility of impeachment. Critics accused Maddow of feeding the left's paranoia and diverting the American public from the truth.⁴⁸ They also accused her of pushing her liberal commentary solely for the ratings, as the network surged to the No.1 spot in prime-time television thanks to her monologues.⁴⁹ As a result, MSNBC surpassed its rivals for prime-time views on weeknights in the 25-to-54 age demographic, a 118% increase from 2016.⁵⁰

Despite its liberal stance, MSNBC defended their programming as fair and accurate coverage. Maddow justified MSNBC's journalistic practices in 2010 when she advocated, "I know everybody likes to say, 'Oh, that's cable news. It's all the same. Fox News and MSNBC mirror images of each other.' Let this lay that to rest forever...we are not a political operation. Fox is. We are a news operation."⁵¹ However, Maddow's defense of the channel as an unbiased news source seemed lackluster because of the allegations from other news outlets that MSNBC executives endorsed Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign.⁵² So despite Maddow's statement and other MSNBC employees' defense of their biased content, the channel's liberal slant did not go unnoticed, especially by other media outlets.

The media outlets that criticized MSNBC primarily focused on becoming more liberal and more biased in favor of the Democratic Party. In 2007, *The New York Times* published an article that acknowledged how MSNBC leaned farther left as their ratings signaled that liberal content increased viewers.⁵³ Later, in 2011, *Salon*, an online newspaper, commented that progressive politics overran MSNBC's prime-time lineup, and *Politico* also recognized the

channel's left-leaning commentary.⁵⁴ The negative media portrayal of MSNBC hit a high point in 2019 when other news sources ridiculed the channel for its coverage of the 2020 presidential election. In its list of 2020 Democratic presidential candidates, MSNBC left out candidate Andrew Yang. It received backlash from *The Inquisitr*, *Politico*, and many other new sites for being biased to some candidates over others.⁵⁵ Thus, as the partisanship of MSNBC increased, the media portrayal of the channel became more pessimistic.

Partisanship on Demand: News Consumer Preferences

The existing polarization and consumer demand for political commentary drove the increasing partisanship of Fox News and MSNBC throughout the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century. As the ideological gap between Republicans and Democrats widened, these news channels invested in partisan content to attract views, which exacerbated the cycle of political polarization. To understand why the partisan slants on cable television became so successful, we must examine Americans' news preferences that might have caused a surge in demand for politically charged news commentary.

One possible explanation for the increased demand for partisan news was the changing "nature of the times," as Pew Research Center's Michael J. Robinson stated.⁵⁶ Compared to the 90s, the 2000s sparked more news interest in Americans because of pivotal events in American history. In 2007, Robinson synthesized 165 national surveys about Americans' preference for news topics. Although there were no dramatic changes in news tastes, the study indicated that the overall interest in news increased from the 1990s to the 2000s. From 1990 to 1999, 23% of adult Americans reported that they followed the news "very closely", while in the years 2000 to 2006, 30% of Americans followed the news closely.⁵⁷ In political scientist Alan Abramowitz's research, he acknowledged the relationship between political engagement and partisan-ideological polarization.⁵⁸ Citizens who were more engaged politically tended to possess more partisan views.

Robinson explained that the increase in news interest could have stemmed from the 90s era of relative peace and economic stability under the Clinton Administration. Even the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal failed to engage news consumers, as Americans were unmoved by the prospect of Clinton's and Lewinsky's grand jury testimony.⁵⁹ By 1998, the public was generally forgiving towards the president. The percentage of Americans following the scandal very closely dropped by ten percent in the eight months after the scandal broke out.⁶⁰ By contrast, the 2000s saw significant shocking events, including 9/11 and the Iraq War, which sparked partisan debate throughout the Bush Administration. The news category that attracted the most attention were stories involving U.S. linked war and terrorism. 43% of all Americans followed the topic "very closely" in the early 2000s, compared to the 36% in the 90s.⁶¹ The Iraq War sparked partisan controversy, polarizing Americans more than in previous major U.S. conflicts.⁶² This was likely due to the increase in party loyalty in the early twenty-first century, combined with echoes of the failed Vietnam War. As a result, Americans likely turned to partisan news to keep themselves updated on the information and affirm their biases.

A survey of news consumers with respect to party identification in 2006, when the Iraq War garnered some of its most heavy criticisms, revealed that partisans were more likely to prefer news that shared their point of view than Independents.⁶³ 34% of Conservative Republicans and 24% of Liberal Democrats preferred getting news aligned with their perspectives. In contrast, only 16% of Independents said the same. Because of the partisan attention on pivotal events in the 2000s, cable news channels sought to appeal to viewers on either side of the ideological spectrum when providing commentary on polarizing topics such as the Iraq War.⁶⁴ Due to the increased demand for politically charged news by partisans,

appealing to partisan audiences benefited cable news channels because they could tailor their reporting to a narrow range of Americans who they knew would keep tuning in.

If It Bleeds, It Leads: News Becomes More Negative

A content analysis demonstrated that Fox News and MSNBC's news coverage was generally partisan and pessimistic. A 2011 paper published by Rebecca Chalif at Georgetown University revealed that cable news content was typically more politically charged than neutral, and its tone was more negative than positive.⁶⁵ Chalif analyzed the content on both of the channels' popular shows. She examined 'The O'Reilly Factor' and 'The Sean Hannity Show' for Fox News, and on MSNBC, she analyzed 'Hardball with Chris Matthews' and 'The Rachel Maddow Show.'

In her analysis of the content's tone, Chalif found that the overall tone of Fox News was 92% negative, 8% neutral, and 0% positive. Similarly, the tone on MSNBC was 90% negative, 5% neutral, and 5% positive.⁶⁶ The channels' overwhelming negativity could be explained by the claim that viewers gravitate more towards negative commentary than positive commentary. This caused cable news channels to report a majority of their stories in a negative tone. They exaggerated the dramatic details, which contributed to the sensationalism of news reporting.⁶⁷ Negative information alerted viewers and made them afraid and angry. As a result, the channels' viewer base kept watching because it wanted to learn more, thus increasing its ratings.

Both Fox News and MSNBC strayed far from their original intentions of presenting unbiased news. Both networks relied on partisan reporting by inviting politically biased pundits who offered partisan commentary to keep their viewers from changing the channel instead of inviting experts who testified to the facts. Chalif found that 77% of the guests featured on Fox News and 90% on MSNBC advocated politically partisan perspectives.⁶⁸ These pundits used the cable news channels to preach to their choir, which turned Fox News and MSNBC into platforms for politicians to push their views instead of presenting factual news. This partisanship attracted more viewers because the general public wanted to watch guests who gave heavily opinionated remarks.

In addition to bringing political pundits onto their network, Fox and MSNBC also presented partisan tones throughout their general reporting. According to Chalif, there was an apparent pro-Republican slant on Fox News and a pro-Democratic slant on MSNBC. Since Fox News and MSNBC shifted towards the right and left, respectively, we would expect the former to favor Republicans and the latter to favor Democrats. Fox News spent 37.5% of its time portraying Republicans positively, and MSNBC transmitted positive reports about Democrats 69% of the time.⁶⁹ Shockingly, Fox News and MSNBC spent *more* time describing the opposition party negatively than reporting positively on the party they supported. Fox News reported 81% negative towards Democrats, and MSNBC broadcasted 85% negative towards Republicans.⁷⁰ So not only were these two channels' content mainly composed of negative news stories but these stories and commentaries specifically targeted the opposing political party by exaggerating their negative aspects. Fox News and MSNBC attacked their political opponents more frequently than they supported their political allies, leaving viewers with the notion that individuals who belonged to a party other than theirs should be feared and ultimately defeated. Based on the data gathered from this study, Fox News and MSNBC did not seem very reliable in reporting the straight facts, so who was still watching?

Warning: Viewer Discretion is Advised

Cable news has heavily integrated itself into American culture since the late twentieth century. In 2011, the Pew Research Center found that for 63% of Americans, the first thing that came to mind when thinking about news organizations was cable news, instead of network news, local news, newspapers, and online news.⁷¹ The study also found that Americans trusted the press more than they trusted the government and businesses. Although local news was rated 10% more trustworthy than national news networks, this data revealed how heavily the public relied on national news organizations, like cable news, to get information. Ironically, although Americans trusted news organizations, public perception of the press grew more negative throughout the years. From 1985 to 2011, the percentage of Americans that believed that news stories were often inaccurate, tended to favor one side and were influenced by powerful people and organizations rose by approximately 25%.⁷²

Analyzing the audience of Fox News and MSNBC provided insight into those watching cable news and why they kept watching. A study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2010 demonstrated that there was a linear trend of higher exposure to cable news among older Americans (51-70), those who earned higher incomes (150k or more), and individuals who had a higher level of education (post-graduate degrees).⁷³ Not only did these demographic groups watch the most cable news, but they also had the highest voter turnout, meaning that cable news significantly influenced the most politically active Americans.⁷⁴

When asked what type of political news source they preferred, 72% of the survey participants indicated that they wanted to get news from sources that did not have a particular political point of view, with 28% admitting that they liked to get their news from sources that shared their political perspectives.⁷⁵ The majority of the general public said it wanted neutral news. Yet, the survey also revealed that most Americans turned to Fox News and MSNBC, partisan news channels, as their primary source of the latest news and headlines. The data exposed the widespread confusion about partisan slants that existed in Fox News and MSNBC. Only 47% of the respondents perceived Fox News as ‘mostly conservative,’ while 53% could not identify its ideological bias. Just 36% of respondents recognized that MSNBC was ‘mostly liberal,’ while 64% of Americans did not notice its partisan slant.⁷⁶ These striking results explained why the general public still relied on those cable news channels for ‘neutral news’ despite the channels’ apparent biases. The misconception that Fox News and MSNBC televised unbiased news led to their popularity because viewers on either side of the ideological gap kept watching news channels that supported their political points of view while mistakenly believing that they were consuming unbiased news. The public, in general, trapped themselves in ideological echo chambers because of this confusion. In a 2011 survey, the Pew Research Center found that the American public offered better evaluations of the news sources they used. They said that news organizations, in general, were inaccurate and tended to favor one side, while the news sources they used themselves were accurate and dealt fairly with all sides of the story.⁷⁷

Mind the Gap!

The demand for partisan news and the cable channels’ consistent appeal towards partisans reinforced the deep divisiveness between the two major political parties. According to a 2017 Pew Research Center study, the ideological gap between median, or average, Democrats and Republicans widened dramatically between 1994 and 2017. In 1994, before the launch of Fox News and MSNBC, 64% of Republicans identified themselves as more consistently conservative than the median Democrat, but that percentage skyrocketed to 95% in 2017.⁷⁸ Likewise, 70% of Democrats classified themselves as more consistently liberal than median

Republicans in 1994, compared to 97% in 2017.⁷⁹ Democrats and Republicans grew more ideologically divided than in the past as the former became more liberal; the latter, more conservative. Political divisiveness did not only occur in the Democrat and Republican parties. The percentage of Americans with a mix of liberal and conservative political views decreased by 10% from 1994 to 2014 despite the growing number of Americans who self-identified as Independents. This disparity could be explained by the increased fragmentation within Independents, as the number of Democratic-leading independents and Republican-leaning independents has risen steadily since 2000.⁸⁰

Partisanship in cable news media explained the growing gap between Democrats and Republicans. The correlation between one's exposure to Fox News and MSNBC and their party identification demonstrated the widening ideological gap between the members of the nation's two largest political parties. Participants were asked to rate how frequently they watch either news channel by choosing between 'never,' 'hardly ever,' 'sometimes,' and 'regularly.' Significantly, results of the survey demonstrated that 63.2% of Democrats never or hardly ever watched Fox News. In comparison, 50% of them watched MSNBC sometimes or regularly.⁸¹ On the other hand, 71.4% of Republicans watched Fox News sometimes or regularly, and 70.4% never watched MSNBC.⁸² As Democrats and Republicans reinforced their own biases and ignored opposing viewpoints, they became more polarized.

Polarization ultimately resulted in strong partisan antipathy, thus damaging the relationship between Americans with differing political views. The Pew Research Center found that very conservative or very liberal Americans remained more likely to have close friends who shared their political perspectives. Consistent conservatives and liberals also discussed government and politics more frequently than those with mixed ideologies, thus reinforcing their political biases with close social circles. 57% of Republicans reported that most of their close friends belonged to the same party as they did, and 55% of them had just a few or no friends in the opposing party. Likewise, 67% of Democrats remained friends with other Democrats, and 65% of them had just a few or no Republican friends.⁸³ Democrats and Republicans also said that they felt strong antipathy towards members of the opposing party. They wanted to surround themselves with individuals who shared their political views and avoid those who did not.⁸⁴ The increasingly partisan content from Fox News and MSNBC pushed partisans against each other.

As their exposure to cable news increased, partisan Americans created ideological echo chambers in which they ignored people or ideas that did not align with theirs. By choosing to tune into politically biased cable news networks like FOX News and MSNBC, consumers used media as a tool to reaffirm their own political biases, thus pushing them farther left or right. Political polarization caused the media to present more partisan commentary because Americans used it as a tool to reaffirm their beliefs and stay in their ideological echo chambers. Because consumers regularly tuned into partisan news channels that emphasized their ideologies and further alienated others who did not share similar views, cable news channels gained popularity. Since these cable news networks wanted to boost viewership, they continued to air polarizing commentary, thus facilitating a dangerous cycle of political media selectivity.

Bad News Travels Fast

Political bias on cable news channels did not only polarize the American public. The effects of partisan slants also trickled into Congress starting in the late 1990s with the spread of Fox News Channel across congressional districts. After the launch of Fox News in 1996, congressional members in districts with access to Fox News became slightly more opposed to

President Clinton than representatives who belonged to districts without the news channel. Between 1998 and 2000, Clinton's approval ratings fell even lower, primarily due to the channel's critical coverage of the sex scandal and impeachment trial.⁸⁵ By this time, there was a direct correlation between the number of Fox News subscribers in a particular district and the support for the president by that district's elected officials. As the number of subscribers increased by 1%, support for Clinton decreased by 11%.⁸⁶ Thus, this data demonstrated that Fox News' partisan content had a polarizing effect on congressional behavior.

Elected officials appeared to change their public position based on the media environment in their district because of the delineating effects of cable news on the general public. When partisan channels like Fox News emerged in a congressional district, voters used the channel's biased commentary to reinforce their perspectives, thus pushing themselves away from opposing ideologies. Since polarized viewers were more likely to participate in politics, it made sense that they would want to elect congressional representatives who leaned more strongly towards their political ideology than politically moderate candidates. Thus, congressional members who belonged to districts where Fox News was popular ultimately decreased their support for Clinton to show voters that they also agreed with Fox News.

Cable news channels also had a significant impact on election outcomes. The channels discussed candidates' platforms, vetted their credentials, conducted interviews, and televised snippets of their speeches. The candidates with the most airtime built up the momentum needed in their campaigns to do well in primaries and caucuses, leading to politicians' reliance on media coverage.⁸⁷ As the popularity of biased commentary rose, candidates became even more ideologically partisan to appeal to the channels and receive more airtime. As demonstrated, the dangerous cycle of political polarization between cable news and the public also affected Congress.

Conclusion - Moving Forward: All is Not Lost

Since the emergence of partisan cable news channels like Fox News and MSNBC, the political landscape has become increasingly polarized. This divisiveness ultimately led to the radicalization of opposing viewpoints and a lack of mutual understanding between liberals and conservatives. Because of the rising political partisanship since the 1990s, however, the trajectories of Fox News and MSNBC were predictable. To compete with the mainstream news networks, the two channels had to have a competitive partisan edge to draw viewers into their programming, thus making them more and more one-sided as time went on. However, the advent of new media probably caught cable news channels off guard. New media was able to be even more niche and biased, which drove Fox News and MSNBC even farther right and left, respectively, to appeal to their audience. However, we should not entirely blame cable news for this political fragmentation. Many other factors, such as the end of the Cold War, gerrymandering, economic inequality, and party pressures, exacerbated political polarization.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the dismal correlation between cable news channels and political polarization generates a very pessimistic view of the nation's media landscape.

On the other hand, all is not lost. Positive aspects of our high choice media environment still exist today. Since the creation of cable news channels, Americans have had a wide variety of news source options. Instead of consuming news from only three television networks, people can now access information with perspectives from all across the ideological spectrum via countless mediums other than television. Unfortunately, the vast array of news sources could also be viewed negatively. In the twenty-first century, the habit of consuming news from social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, became increasingly common. To some, new media meant that the American public would become even more

trapped in their ideological echo chambers because there were even more media options to reinforce their views.⁸⁹

Moving forward, however, consumers and news outlets can take steps to break the vicious cycle of media-induced polarization. Cable news consumers can improve their media literacy by becoming more aware of the political biases of news channels. Doing so would clear up the confusion about neutral news versus partisan commentary. The viewers who *are* aware of political biases ignore news sources that do not reinforce their preferences, so consumers should make a better effort to expose themselves to different perspectives. Suppose the general public actively sought out opposing viewpoints and tried to understand varying political ideologies. In that case, it could reach a mutual understanding of others and break free from their ideological echo chambers.⁹⁰

Breaking the polarization cycle is more difficult for cable news channels. Fundamentally, news channels do not have a strong incentive to present unbiased information because doing so would mean lower ratings. It would be unrealistic to expect cable news channels only to air neutral programming. However, Fox News and MSNBC still have a responsibility to inform their viewers of their partisan commentary. This disclosure has not happened yet. In 2017 Fox News changed its slogan from ‘Fair and Balanced’ to ‘We Report, You Decide.’⁹¹ Although the channel parted ways with its rally cry of being neutral, its new slogan deflects its responsibility to distinguish between fact and opinion. Instead, it told its audience that the channel would stay the same, and viewers should simply decide for themselves. MSNBC acted similarly when it changed its slogan from ‘Lean Forward’ to ‘This is who we are.’⁹² Its new slogan had a ‘take it or leave it’ tone which recognized its biases but pushed the blame on the audience. Cable news channels must make more effort to clearly distinguish between the facts and their opinions so that viewers are aware of the partisan slant.⁹³ By doing so, cable news channels can keep their partisan commentary for high ratings while also alleviating concerns about widening the ideological gap.

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**Building the Empire:
Neo-Gothic Architecture and the Creation of an Imperial Network of Architects**

Sara Marcus

*You, the Patriot Architect,
You that shape for Eternity,
Raise a stately memorial,
Make it regally gorgeous,
Some Imperial Institute,
Rich in Symbol, in ornament,
Which may speak to the centuries,
All the centuries after us.¹*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson,
On the Jubilee of Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 was a moment of high imperial sentiment that provided the context for the reveal of a plan to build an Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India.² What famed poet Alfred Lord Tennyson described as a "shape for eternity" and "Rich in Symbol" that will maintain its legacy for generations to come was a building in the style of the Gothic Revival. While the Imperial Institute, touted by Tennyson, was all but demolished in 1965, the Neo-Gothic architectural form dominated the European skyline throughout the nineteenth century. Architecture has been utilized for thousands of years to define eras, nations, cultures, and ideologies, and this understanding of the power of architecture was used to its full potential by the British Empire of the nineteenth century. During this time, European nations began to value their past and stake their current claims to greatness on their histories of ambitiousness. This nationalism extended to the art world, where men of great importance in England restored Gothic architecture to its former glory. Some architects and historians admired medieval artisanship for its honesty and quality in the industrializing world. At the same time, some artists and politicians interpreted a moral purity in the Gothic style that was used to further imperial pursuits. The empire's revival of the style would provide additional authenticity to British culture in the age of competitive European imperialism.

While opinions of politicians, architects, and historians on the role of the Gothic Revival in Victorian Britain are well documented, little attention is given to the pursuits of an empire-wide web of architects that spanned the globe. This paper traces this web of British Imperial architects, beginning with the shifting political tides of the metropole and the architectural competition for rebuilding the Houses of Parliament of the 1830s. This historical context is critical to understanding the episteme of the British government and elite employed. This paper thus demonstrates how this competition and subsequent selection of Charles Barry and A. W. N. Pugin helped catalyze the imperial architects' global network of building projects. This essay asks why the British government embraced the Neo-Gothic style in the mid-decades of the nineteenth century and how this decision led to an imperial network of architects who employed this specific style to design and build the apparatuses of the colonial state outside of the mother country.

The Reform Act of 1832 was crucial to this process as it established the political climate of Britain. This piece of legislation, coupled with the rise of the Gothic Revival, led to debates over the visual direction of the State. Already, men of influence in the political and art world were forming opinions on which forms of architecture they preferred based on connections to other men of importance. The 1834 fire that burned down the Houses of Parliament occurred during this pivotal time. The competitive process of rebuilding this essential structure became a stylistic battleground used to determine the new architectural character of the government. Knowing that the architectural form that the government-backed would elevate that style to the height of architecture, the selection of Charles Barry and A.W. Pugin's design for the Houses of Parliament in 1836 would have powerful, international effects. The Neo-Gothic would go on to facilitate the development of a web of architects throughout the colonies, most notably Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Pakistan, who are all connected to either staunch supporters of the Gothic Revival, high ranking members of the Royal Institute of British Architects, or Barry and Pugin themselves.

The meteoric rise of the Neo-Gothic in the British Empire is rooted in England's political and social situation in the 1830s. The 1830s was the decade of the Whig party. When Charles Grey was appointed Prime Minister in 1830, the abolition of slavery and the passage of the Reform Act swiftly followed. As historians, John Wetherell and Charles Phillips argued, "England's frenzy over the Reform Bill in 1831, coupled with the effect of the bill itself upon its enactment in 1832, unleashed a wave of political modernization that the Whig Party eagerly harnessed."³ Due to the Whig majority, the Tory Party embraced these reforms, which quickly destroyed the political system that had been in effect during the reign of King George III. The new electoral system created by the Reform Act of 1832 led to drastic alterations to England's political fabric. The expansion of the House of the Commons and the redistribution of land affected power dynamics, giving rise to a "new" aristocracy in the House of Lords. The general population was paying more attention to the goings-on of parliament due to the newfound representation people had. What can we learn if we consider the Reform Bill's transformative power and its creation of new social dynamics alongside changes to the architectural world? The revolutionary network of architects that spawned from the embrace of the Gothic Revival would probably not have occurred without the changing of the guard in the art world brought on by shifting social dynamics stemming from the Reform Act.

Due to the 1832 Reform Act, concerns were beginning to mount, even before the fated 1834 fire that destroyed the Houses of Parliament, on the fitness of the House of Commons to hold the expanded number of members. The Reform Bill of 1832 drastically increased the number of members of parliament from about 400 to 658. Some members, including radical Joseph Hume, argued that if the government considered themselves modern and enlightened, an appropriate building would have to be constructed to solidify Parliament's image.⁴ Historian George Weitzman explains that Hume led Radical Utilitarians in parliament to call for a new Parliament building to be built in the style of the Neoclassical.⁵ The classical style associated the British seat of government with republican democracy, rationality, and a political system that prioritized functionality and efficiency.

Hume's commitment to utility was praised in the *Westminster Review* by Sir Henry Cole, an established member of Imperial College London and later the first director of the South Kensington Museum (Victoria and Albert Museum).⁶ Cole was close to the Utilitarian Radicals and firmly backed Hume's campaign for a parliament building to represent Britain's new democratic aims. To powerfully govern in the state of the current Houses of Parliament was not only impractical but "barbarous."⁷ He reasoned that a new parliament building that followed Utilitarian principles would demonstrate how far British society and civilization have

progressed. Built in the Neoclassical style, with its close association to modern science and reason, people would see how the government was both capable and credible of ruling the nation.⁸ The historian Weitzman felt that the Utilitarian position was healthy and reasonable but ultimately coming too prematurely for the time.⁹ I disagree with his conclusion because it fails to consider that the Neoclassical was not seen as uniquely British, a characteristic that was ultimately paramount in deciding the architectural identity of the empire. While the Neoclassical style exudes power, history, and European dominance, the British ties to the Neo-Gothic were that it also shared those traits and was seen as an English invention.

While an overwhelming political majority rejected Hume's 1833 Utilitarian for a new building, Whigs and Tories alike knew they had to proceed with caution from then on about how to represent the direction of government best. The leader of the oppositional Tory Party, Sir Robert Peel, spoke out against Hume's ideas for the parliament building saying that they were "the most imperfect and the most discreditable."¹⁰ After Earl Grey stepped down as Prime Minister in July 1834, Peel took over the position from December 1834 until April 1835, when Lord Melbourne of the Whig Party assumed office until 1840. Even though the political make-up of Parliament was not profoundly different during the 1830s, the Reform Act provided this context of uncertainty over what Parliament should be and facilitated subsequent debates after the fire of 1834.

On 16 October 1834, a fire broke out that destroyed both Houses of Parliament, thus reigniting political debates on the rebuilding process and prompting architectural debates in the art world over the validity of the Gothic Revival. In the *Westminster Review*, Hume, with the assistance of Arthur Symonds, published a piece noting how he believed the fire had "removed the aching tooth of government."¹¹ Radicals stepped up their insistence that the Gothic did not appear as an appropriate style for an enlightened legislature, asserting that, unlike the Neoclassical, the Gothic was prone to the ill-effects of weathering due to the amount of ornamentation.¹²

The *Architectural Magazine*, edited by John Claudius Loudon and issued between 1834 to 1839, shared Hume's concerns with the Gothic's practicality and the meaning behind its style. Loudon used this magazine to promote a rational approach to architecture that focused on the materials and practices of construction with commentaries of pragmatic functionalism and the benefits of modern technology.¹³ One main contributor to the journal was the Devonian architect and engineer Charles Fowler. Like Loudon, Fowler believed the new Parliament signified a new epoch "for the development of genius, and the exercise of the arts and science."¹⁴ Parliament mattered because, as Fowler predicted, the visual style of the parliamentary buildings would influence architecture throughout the Empire. In a fashion on par with the radical Utilitarians, Fowler derided the Gothic as a third-rate style that is, in essence, ecclesiastic when he remarked that, "No Gothic Parliament could be modern in this enlightened age."¹⁵ Outside of the *Architectural Magazine*, Fowler echoed his previous sentiments in his book, *On the Proposed Site of the New Houses of Parliament*, where he states, "Gothic was ignorant and that architecture was inherently connected to a nation's industry."¹⁶ The Gothic style was controversial for men in politics and the architectural world alike. The proposed styles of the parliament buildings were subject to radical discussion, as Parliament was a marked place that men in politics and architectural spheres realized held the direction of Britain in the balance.

But why did these men, in particular, have such an influential voice in promoting the Neoclassical and a vehement dislike of the Neo-Gothic? The answer lies in the connections that all these men had to Sir Robert Smirke, the chief architect to the Office of Works and famed designer of the British Museum. A year before the fire, in 1833, Hume chaired a

committee to consider a new House of Commons. At this meeting, he suggested that benches that faced each other implied a two-party system, and thus the new building should present different options for the interior of the main chamber.¹⁷ One of the first architects to submit a design following Hume's suggestion was Sir Robert Smirke. Through this interaction, it is clear that Hume realized Smirke was on board with his vision and thus sought to elevate the Neoclassical to make his ideas reality.

Radical Utilitarian Henry Cole had a clear connection to Robert Smirke as well. As Smirke spent over a decade designing and building the British Museum (1823-46), Cole worked with Radical Utilitarian parliamentarians such as Hume to institutionalize the arts, starting with the National Gallery. Cole argued that art had broad social, political, and educational value and was thus put on the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures board in 1835.¹⁸ As Cole and Smirke both shared Utilitarian values and worked with Joseph Hume, it is no coincidence that Cole was showing his support for the Neoclassical along with these men. Moreover, Sydney Smirke, the son of Robert Smirke, would eventually work with Cole to design the South Kensington Museum.

Since John Claudius Loudon was an architectural writer, it is fair to assume that he would personally contact a man of Robert Smirke's notoriety. But the connection is deeper than that. When Smirke popularized Grecian style architecture and ornamentation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Loudon quickly lauded Smirke's architectural vision. In 1833 during the height of the Radical Utilitarian push for the Classical architectural takeover, he published the *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architectural and Furniture*. This book contained over 2,000 designs for houses in various Grecian, Georgian, and Old English styles.¹⁹ He published this as a way of showing that Smirke, in his position as Chief Architect of the Office of Royal Works, was the man who would retain the conventions of authentic English architecture instead of descending into chaos through the Neo-Gothic. It is evident through the works of Loudon that his heavy bias in favor of Smirke design styles naturally pit him against architecture dissimilar to what they were both promoting.

It is unclear whether Charles Fowler had a personal relationship with Robert Smirke or not, but his architectural upbringing would have aligned him stylistically with the great architect. The three leading London architects of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were Sir John Soane, John Nash, and Robert Smirke. When Charles Fowler came to London in 1814 at the age of twenty-two, he went to work as an apprentice to the current Architect and Surveyor to the Customs, David Laing.²⁰ Laing had been a pupil of Sir John Soane before being granted this official architectural role. Fowler was trained stylistically by staunch Neoclassicists and developed crucial connections in government through his apprenticeship. When the London Custom House burned down in 1817, Laing put Fowler in charge of the rebuilding effort, which was done in the Neoclassical style and elevated his architectural status to the point where he managed to set up his own London practice a year later. In 1822, when Fowler initially won the contest for the design of the new London Bridge, Smirke was on the committee that chose him.²¹ With the architectural influences and connections that Hume, Cole, Loudon, and Fowler had, their fight against the Gothic Revival is understandable. It provides the crucial context in understanding how webs of architects formed and functioned in Britain.

While the *Westminster Review* and the *Architectural Magazine* brought their anti-Gothic Revival sentiments to the public, Parliament was in the process of determining how they would make the most significant architectural decision of the nineteenth century and their tenures in office. Sir Robert Smirke immediately undertook supervision of constructing temporary quarters for the members of parliament, putting him in a delicate situation as a proponent of

the Neoclassical style. If his designs for rebuilding were in the Neoclassical style, he would keep the growing voices of the Radicals silent but would surely face instant hostility from Tories and Whigs. However, both the Tories and Whigs opposed anything that might fuel the growth of the radical opposition parties. This in and of itself represents the turning point that Britain was facing. Not only was this taking place in the dying moments of Grey's government, but it also exemplified Britain's lack of philosophical direction.

After King William IV summoned Sir Robert Peel to head a Tory administration, he approved the Whig's decision to hire Smirke, putting the government under real pressure to create a definitive plan to rebuild the Houses of Parliament. Peel told the Commons, "The present government approves of what the late government did in this respect," whilst speaking on the hiring of Smirke.²² When the Prime Minister called a general election in January 1835, the House of Commons saw the Whigs and their allies fall from a two-thirds majority to a bare majority. With Radicals and Repealers gaining seats, the press began to attack Smirke's appointment. The main argument was that legislators should choose the architect who would design the new Houses of Parliament if the people were to be forced to pay the bills. These newspapers were capitalizing on public outrage over the cost of rebuilding Buckingham Palace just a few years earlier, in 1826. Historian W. J. Rorabaugh recorded that *The Times* supported an open competition judged by professional architects, while the *Morning Herald* and *The Morning Chronicle* also advocated for a similar contest.²³

On January 31, 1835, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Edward Cust published a pamphlet urging Peel's government to hold a competition for the design of the new Houses of Parliament. With the backing from *The Times* and *Morning Herald*, Cust became instrumental in overturning Smirke's appointment. While Cust was in no way an architect, he felt that the respectability of his character provided him with all the professional requirements he needed. He discredited both Smirke and the Greek style by associating it with the Georgian corruption of the eighteenth century. He noted how "all of the public buildings of the last half-century have been behind the average architectural talent of their day" and that the old system of appointing architects had created a "poverty of taste."²⁴ An open competition would establish a new system that would publicly display the architects of the day. Instead of a commission made up of the old guard architects, an amateur committee made up of members of parliament would decide the finalists, with the king himself choosing the winner.

But why did Cust, a man who was a former member of parliament who dealt outside of the realm of architecture, care so much about blocking Smirke's design? Again, the web of architects rears its head, as Cust had a strong friendship with up-and-coming architect Charles Barry. Cust became acquainted with Barry after the latter won the 1829 Travellers' Club competition.²⁵ On 19 June 1835, it was reported that Cust was an honored guest at Barry's installation as an officer at the Institute of British Architects.²⁶ Not a week before, on June 13, House of Commons committee resolutions favoring a contest were released to the press.²⁷

Unbeknownst to him at the time, the burning of the Houses of Parliament would become the turning point in the life of Charles Barry and the Gothic Revival, as it would elevate his status to one of the greats in architecture and that of the Neo-Gothic as the architectural symbol of the British empire. Charles Barry was born in 1795 to a stationer from a well-off family. In 1817, he embarked on the Grand Tour to study architecture before settling in London.²⁸ His father's death left him with enough wealth to establish his practice, and those he acquainted himself with on the Grand Tour gave him plenty of clientele to begin his firm.

The most important man Barry met on the Grand Tour was British painter, gallery director, and collector Charles Lock Eastlake because it would later put him on the radar of Eastlake's nephew, Charles Locke Eastlake.²⁹ Charles Locke Eastlake was one of the chief

revivalists of the Gothic style and was a prominent furniture designer. He published several influential books on furniture, decoration, and architecture that dictated the British style. From 1866-1877, he was the secretary to the Royal Institute of British Architects, and from 1878-1898, he was the Keeper of the National Gallery in London.³⁰ His relationship with his uncle, also a Keeper of the National Gallery from 1843-1847, made him a prominent figure in the British art and architecture scene.

Much of what we know of how Charles Barry was perceived comes from Eastlake's 1872 book, *A History of the Gothic Revival*. His book records the history of buildings and architects between 1820 and 1870 that were crucial to the development of the Gothic Revival in Britain. As a champion of the Gothic style, Eastlake undoubtedly wrote favorably of the architectural form but recognized the pitfalls of the early revivalists' works. Eastlake wrote that the early Gothic revivalists "reproduced...out of pure respect for tradition."³¹ What Eastlake means is that even though early Gothic revivalists found success as architects, they could never bring the Neo-Gothic to full prominence because they did not add anything new to the design.

The original medieval building is cold in its formal arrangement, and it uses different proportions than those of the Classical style. It is detailed to the point of looking overstrained, and quite simply, artistically out of touch with modernity.³² In other words, early revivalists produced buildings of sound quality but faulty artisanship for the period. That the Medieval Gothic style was predominantly used for ecclesiastical structures only added to the antiquated stereotyping. What made Charles Barry different from his predecessors was his abandonment of the imitation of religious architecture in his influence on his Neo-Gothic designs. Barry developed what became known as the Perpendicular style, which changed the general form, ornamentation, and constructive principles just enough to retain the traditional elements of the Gothic yet still be different enough to be perceived as a modern improvement to the current Neoclassical.³³

With his artistic talent and zeal, Charles Barry became the perfect spark to launch the Gothic Revival to the upper echelon of architecture; all he needed was the right partner to sell it. In 1833, Barry was commissioned to design the exterior of King Edward's School in Birmingham. The man commissioned to design the interior of the building was a man named Augustus W. N. Pugin. Pugin, while twenty years younger than Barry, was already of considerable repute since his father worked under John Nash, one of the architectural "Big Three" of the age and responsible for the restoration of Buckingham Palace. Pugin would go on to be so famous that Eastlake called the early revivalist style "pre-Pugenesque." Pugin began to publish papers on the Gothic style at fifteen years old.³⁴ His artistic skills were lauded in the architecture community as he assisted Barry in sketching hundreds of designs for him to work with for the Houses of Parliament.³⁵ Overall, Pugin's design ideas for ceramics, sculpture, metalwork, stained glass, and other decorative and ornamental arts advanced those art departments and planted the seeds for the Gothic to penetrate other artistic spheres.³⁶

It is crucial to bear in mind that Barry meeting Pugin and gaining notoriety together, the Reform Act and its political effects, and the Radical Utilitarian push for Neoclassicism were all happening simultaneously in the early 1830s. The burning down of the Houses of Parliament in October 1834 sped up this process of the government being forced to make a statement on the architectural direction of the state. Politicians, architects, critics, and journalists all had particular ties that dictated their stances on the Neo-Gothic and the Neoclassical.

Turning attention back to the competition, after the format was announced in June 1835, the most critical resolution regarding the future direction of architecture was reported,

limiting the stylistic choices to Gothic or Elizabethan. In the end, there were both practical and political reasons for this stylistic justification. Undoubtedly, with the location of the Houses of Parliament remaining the same, a building in the Gothic style would fit aesthetically with Westminster Hall and Abbey. Politically, the old Classical taste of King George IV's reign was declining in public favor, especially after the taxation increase to rebuild Buckingham Palace. Parliament wanted to make a decision that would increase its popularity.³⁷ But how does the Elizabethan architectural style fit into this explanation, especially when it had not previously been part of the parliamentary discussion? Because of the ultimate decision to crown Barry and Pugin's Neo-Gothic design as the winner, the Elizabethan style is often overlooked when discussing the plans for rebuilding this critical symbol of imperial power. However, as historian W.J. Rorabaugh notes, the Gothic and Elizabethan styles were specified because they were both styles that originated in Britain. With Parliament as the seat of the imperial government, there was no better way to represent the British power than with a style of architecture native to Britain. A national symbol must be rooted in English heritage, especially at a time of increased nationalism, historicism, and imperialism. This decision could solely be attributed to politics, as Edward Cust, the man who organized the competition, was a Tory but close to Charles Barry, who had Whig connections.³⁸ But, the significance of the government choosing to go in this direction began to demonstrate how the government's national image is evolving through architecture.

Of the ninety-seven candidates and fourteen hundred total drawings that entered the competition, three of the final four selected by the committee and approved by the Crown were Gothic designs, backing up the idea that the government already knew it wanted to go in the direction of the Gothic Revival. Eastlake wrote that "every age and every country have progressively formed to themselves each its peculiar style and character."³⁹ On April 28, 1836, the submission of Charles Barry and A. W. N. Pugin won the contest and the contract.⁴⁰ The judges attached themselves to Barry's design because it avoided unnecessary detail and stylistic choices associated with ecclesiastical designs.⁴¹ This decision did face some public backlash. *The Times* wrote that they were "convinced the Committees of the Lords and Commons committed a great error in limiting the architects of England to the styles which they are pleased to call 'Elizabethan and Gothic.'"⁴² Loudon, the editor of the *Architectural Magazine*, even went so far as to leave an anonymous review of Pugin's book, *Contrasts*, to accuse Pugin of utilizing the Neo-Gothic style to spread Catholic propaganda after his recent conversion.⁴³ But overall, Eastlake had an interesting point to make on ultimately selecting Barry and Pugin's design. He wrote,

Who knows how far the taste for Medieval Art might have been developed at all but for this timely patronage of the State? Is it not rather true that the decision of the Government as to the style of the new buildings gave an impulse to the Revival which could have been created in no other way — an impulse that has kept this country advanced before others in the earnestness with which ancient types of national Architecture are studied and imitated by professional men?⁴⁴

While Eastlake is writing in hindsight, his point raises many ideas on the purpose of the Gothic Revival. This architectural form was brought to the forefront of architectural discourse through government intervention. Likewise, the British government recognized the purpose that the Neo-Gothic could serve for the Empire. It feels as if Eastlake was implying that this style best fits the ideology behind the imperial expansion. According to Eastlake, the Neo-Gothic had made the United Kingdom more advanced than the rest of Europe. Choosing any different form to represent the British Empire would just be imitating the past greatness of

other civilizations instead of continuing the legacy Britain had already forged. After knowing how they revitalized this style for rebuilding arguably the most important building in Britain, the selection of Barry and Pugin ushered in this new age of the Gothic while Britain was expanding its empire abroad.

Following the announcement of the winners for the competition to rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the Gothic Revival turned into the gold standard for building designs across the Empire. It seemed that every government building, Anglican church, and other imperial institutions were Neo-Gothic. These structures were designed by men who had connections to other men in power, specifically in the architecture world. The historical analysis of this phenomenon offered in this portion of the paper clearly outlines this network of architects, showing how there can be no doubt that this is deliberate and an observable trend rather than a coincidental phenomenon.

For the town of Perth in Australia, the erection of the Perth Town Hall between 1867-70 is a prime example of a colony looking to prove itself in the eyes of the mother country through the use of well-connected architects, new resources, and the imposing architectural form of the trending Neo-Gothic. In 1829, the Swan River Colony was created in Western Australia. By 1838, the colony's growth required establishing a local government. By 1842, a chairman and committee of six were drawn up, and the Perth Town Trust and City Council were inaugurated.⁴⁵ The town grew and with it the desire for an Australian identity within the greater British Empire. A decade later, the architect Richard Roach Jewell immigrated from England, bringing with him the style of the Gothic Revival as the architectural form represented the specter of Britain over the development of colonial towns and their political activities.

Richard Roach Jewell was the appointed colonial architect for the Western Australian Government from his arrival in 1853 from England to 1884. He was trained as an architect in Devon, eventually moving to Australia as a free settler. While Jewell would become responsible for most of the distinctive buildings of this period in Perth, he was appointed by the governor with only amateur credentials. However, his name carried a reputation, as he trained in the office of Sir Charles Barry back in London.⁴⁶ Moreover, he shared the quaint hometown of Devonshire with Charles Locke Eastlake, who would be the secretary of RIBA at the time of the construction of the Perth Town Hall. News of Jewell's arrival was reported in the *Perth Gazette*. The budget afforded to public works was minimal, and convict labor was the leading resource keeping construction on infrastructure afloat. It was written how "expenditure of a very considerable amount of public money requires the most careful supervision."⁴⁷ As the only qualified architect in the colony in Western Australia, Jewell was under significant scrutiny by the government in Perth and back in England. This quickly growing colony and the desire for a nationally conscientious and distinctive architecture served the local community.

The appointment of Richard Roach Jewell to construct the Town Hall and clock tower highlights how the Gothic Revival was viewed as an architectural marker for the growth of civilization and the designated central point of the town. While under construction, the *Perth Gazette* wrote, "The opening of such a building should be signaled by an event of no common occurrence in the annals of the province."⁴⁸ This building was monumental to Perth, for it could not even afford stone to build its town hall. The article says that an exhibition of all of the crafts and resources that the colony has to offer should be on display upon the completion of the town hall. This building was created as a symbol of Perth pride, community engagement and unity, and a grandiose statement to Britain that this colony is productive and key to the empire. It is already becoming clear how the appointment of Pugin and Barry for the construction of the Palaces of Westminster began to create a network of Gothic Revivalist architecture through which Britain could unconsciously spread its new age, imperial identity.

Upon opening the Perth Town Hall, the governor's speech and forthcoming infrastructure ventures suggest that this new Neo-Gothic building was fundamentally responsible for ushering in a new era of civilization in Western Australia. When the Town Hall was near completion, the *Perth Gazette* compared Perth to other British colonies and highlighted how before the Town Hall, Perth lacked "a notable landmark to judge by as to how far behindhand we are with the rest of the world."⁴⁹ This insinuates how the Perth Town Hall, which would open in June of 1870, was to remedy this lack of a signifier of civilization.⁵⁰ From an architectural standpoint, a Neo-Gothic building with distinctive medieval features such as arches, arcades, pinnacles, and tourelles, is being seen as the marker of civilizational progress in the same year that the new Palaces of Westminster back in London officially completed construction. This is further solidified in the speech given by the Governor of West Australia, Frederick Aloysius Weld, at the opening of the Town Hall. Weld picked up on this view of the Town Hall being a turning towards a new beginning of this colony when he hoped that the colonists "may live to see this little city, so beautiful already by its natural advantages, made worthy of this its principle edifice."⁵¹ In the coming decade, a marketplace was established beneath the clock tower. A botanical garden and cricket ground were built nearby. The Perth Town Hall, in its Gothic Revival glory, became what Governor Weld hoped it would become. It was a venue that symbolized civic duty to the colony and empire. It was a building that glorified the ideals of the past and a reminder of the achievements of a colonial architect in the present with strong ties to the metropole.

Five thousand kilometers southeast, in Christchurch, New Zealand, the new Christchurch Cathedral was being built. Again, architects with the right social connections, raised by Gothic revivalists, utilized their positions of authority to oversee an official British architectural vision far from London.⁵² Designed between 1864 and 1904 by George Gilbert Scott and Benjamin Mountfort, the Christchurch Cathedral heralded much praise upon its consecration. On 3 January 1863, the *New Zealand Press* explained that "The very general and warm approval with which the proposal to begin this great work has been greeted by the public, has convinced the Commission that the time has arrived when they may make this appeal with a certain prospect of success."⁵³ Christchurch became a city by Royal Charter in 1856, making it officially the oldest established city in New Zealand. It is evident by the quote that the people of the town wanted this Anglican cathedral erected, hinting at the religious affiliation of the citizens. "Complete plans for the whole Cathedral by Mr. Gilbert Scott are in the hands of the Commission; and they have determined to adhere rigidly to a design which is worthy of the great name of its author."⁵⁴

The building commission held great affinity towards Scott and his status. Scott was a pupil of Henry Roberts, and Roberts had trained under Robert Smirke. With a connection like Smirke, there is no doubt your skills and reputation are to be taken seriously even before having designed anything. Scott also worked as an assistant for a short time to his friend Sampson Kempthorne, a specialist in Gothic works. It is documented that Scott wrote about how Pugin inspired him to participate in the Gothic Revival.⁵⁵ Scott was awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 1859 and was President of the association from 1873-76. Scott advocated using Neo-Gothic architecture for secular buildings, rejecting what he called "the absurd supposition that Gothic architecture is exclusively and intrinsically ecclesiastical."

The other designer, Benjamin Mountfort, was an early pupil of George Gilbert Scott (from 1841-46). He also studied architecture under the Anglo-Catholic architect Richard Cromwell Carpenter, whose medieval Gothic design style was to have a lifelong influence on Mountfort. He started reading Pugin at age 16 as well. Whatever the philosophy behind the Gothic revival, in London, the nineteenth-century rulers of the British Empire felt that Gothic

architecture was suitable for the colonies because of its strong Anglican connotations, representing hard work, morality and conversion of native peoples. Scott and Mountfort together were a powerful Gothic colonial force that stemmed from their connections to influential Gothic Revivalists that set the visual era and their links to other powerful men and institutions that allowed them to reach the positions of authority that they did.

In North America, the Cathedral of St. James in Toronto, Canada, is another Anglican church from the latter half of the nineteenth century designing central buildings in the Neo-Gothic style and employing architects with strong connections to well-known revivalists.⁵⁶ The St. James Cathedral is home to the oldest Anglican congregation in Canada. In 1849, the original cathedral was destroyed in a fire, prompting the creation of a competition to decide who would rebuild the new church specifically in the Gothic style.⁵⁷ The design by Frederick William Cumberland and Thomas Ridout eventually placed first. They would later be joined in the building process by William George Storm and Henry Langley. Cumberland and Ridout initially met when studying architecture at King's College, London, in the mid-1840s.⁵⁸ Storm was brought onto the scene when he began working under Cumberland. However, before he came to Canada, Storm apprenticed under William Thomas, who Barry and Pugin mentored.⁵⁹ Langley apprenticed under William Hay, an architect who specialized in the Gothic Revival.⁶⁰ While all of these men spent most of their architectural careers in Canada, only one was born there, and even he was sent abroad to study in London.

While the Gothic Revival was growing in popularity across the empire as architects moved from metropole to colony, the ties to Britain that St. James' Cathedral brought were much more profound. In 1856, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada met to vote on specific bills and motions. One rejected ruling was "to remove all semblance of connexion between Church and State" and force St. James' Cathedral in Toronto to pay pew rent on specific items.⁶¹ The failure of this bill to officially renounce the separation of church and state and granted the government the responsibility of providing financial support specifically for St. James' Cathedral. The construction of Neo-Gothic buildings across the colonies inexplicably represents loyalty and allegiance to the philosophy of the British Empire and the Anglican Church. Moreover, the web of architects responsible for facilitating this British ideology through architecture undoubtedly stems from the government's appointment of Barry and Pugin to rebuild the Houses of Parliament.

While it is unsurprising that Anglican churches were erected in the Gothic style, we see something more significant than the ecclesiastical buildings when focusing on the architects employed and their networks. So far, there has been an undeniable connection between all the architects mentioned, whether through Barry and Pugin or other famous architects and Gothic revivalists. Moreover, no matter if the Church of England commissioned these churches, none of these architects were employed for strictly religious structures. George Gilbert Scott even spoke out against the stereotypical belief that the Neo-Gothic was exclusively for religious institutions. He stated, "the great hindrance to the perfect success of our revival...is the absurd supposition that Gothic architecture is exclusively and intrinsically ecclesiastical."⁶² Though the case studies in this paper are predominantly churches due to the well-kept digital records, this was by no means meant to be interpreted as the Gothic Revival being pigeonholed into a purely ecclesiastical role. The key orchestrators of this movement meant for it to be all-encompassing on a global scale. The network of architects that Scott addresses here was aware of their goals, thus purposefully delivering the British Empire into a new era of civilization through architecture.

Keeping George Gilbert Scott's words in mind, the last great Gothic Revivalist structure mentioned in this piece is the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in Lahore.⁶³

Lahore is currently the capital of the Pakistani province of Punjab. Still, in 1846, the British East India Company seized control of the city and was annexed to the British Indian Empire in 1849. The architectural landscape of Punjab began to be altered by the colonial forces in 1875 when British architects began deploying the Indo-Saracenic architectural style in new constructions. This style combined the Gothic Revival with traditional Indian architectural forms. The historians Aonghus Mackechnie and Florian Urban wrote in their analysis of Balmoral Castle that the strength of the British nation and nationalistic consciousness made the Gothic Revival in the colonies uniquely British. Britain's imperial cohesion and territorial integrity were unquestioned during the second half of the nineteenth century. Because of this, I agree with these historians that there was evident architectural flexibility in incorporating regional styles that could fit in with the nationally adopted Neo-Gothic.⁶⁴ As long as the building's grandeur was tied to the glory of the mother country and the monarchy, the inclusion of distinctly non-European horseshoe arches in the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection was permissible and even encouraged to keep the feel of the structure local.

Lahore's Mayo School of Art, the leading art institution in the city, promoted the new style under J.L. Kipling (Rudyard Kipling's father).⁶⁵ The British Indian government commissioned the creation of a fiat town, meaning a city where urban planners precisely map out every detail. Lahore's transformation into a model town was intended to create a perfect city with gardenscapes and modern comforts that included colonial institutions such as a university, government buildings, and of course, a giant Anglican cathedral. The Cathedral Church of the Resurrection was completed in the middle of the town in 1887. It was built by John Oldrid Scott, the son of Sir George Gilbert Scott, who was the man that created the Christchurch Cathedral in New Zealand.

Both John Scott and Kipling were born in England but spent most of their careers in colonies around the Empire. These men both perpetuated imperial ideologies across multiple generations and through the utilization of the Gothic Revival. When John Scott died, his obituary said, "He was not an architectural genius, for genius will not be confined within the limits of a formula."⁶⁶ Scott came from a line of well-connected architects and men of status in London, putting him in a position to carry out the ideologies of the metropole. He was one of dozens of architects, like his father, George Gilbert Scott, in New Zealand, Cumberland and Ridout in Canada, and many others in every colony, that was a part of this imperial network of architects inspired by the Gothic Revival because of the platform that the government gave Barry and Pugin over forty years earlier. While the Church of the Resurrection opened its doors in Lahore in 1887 – over 5,500 miles from London – Britain was celebrating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The announcement to unveil the Neo-Gothic design for the new Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India was announced in this celebratory context.

Charles Locke Eastlake wrote, "Before a national taste can be made effective, it must be instructed, and before it is instructed, it must be created."⁶⁷ The Reform Act of 1832 and the nearly decade-long dominance of the liberal Whig governments of the 1830s created a political and social environment ripe for a change in national identity. The rapidly developing taste for ancient English architecture with the growth of the Gothic Revival was predominantly overshadowed by the Neoclassicists both in Parliament and in the architectural world. However, as Charles Eastlake argued, the uniqueness of what Barry and Pugin brought to the table, along with increasingly nationalist sentiments in Britain, paved the way for the Parliamentary Committee to take a stand that all but stipulated that the Gothic would replace the Classical as the visual representation of imperial power.

As connections in the political and art world influenced the stances that men in positions of power took, these same networks were also responsible for putting Gothic Revivalists across the Empire in prominent roles that saw them create a Gothic architectural takeover that aligned with Britain's status as a world power. Barry and Pugin gave the nation a taste of what could be, and Parliament instructed and put them in a position to change the architectural world. Those that apprenticed under them or shared the same ideologies allowed the Neo-Gothic not just to be a national taste but a symbol of the global reach of British imperialism. The Houses of Parliament, the Perth Town Hall, the Christchurch Cathedral, St. James' Cathedral, and the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection all stand today in their original form, showing that the sun never set on the power of the Gothic Revival.

Appendix



Stec, John C. *Houses of Parliament; Palace of Westminster from the west across the Thames Exterior*. 1980. Photograph. Society of Architectural Historians, UC Riverside and Gluck Program.



Harrison, JJ, *Perth Town Hall, Perth, Western Australia, Australia.* March 23, 2012.



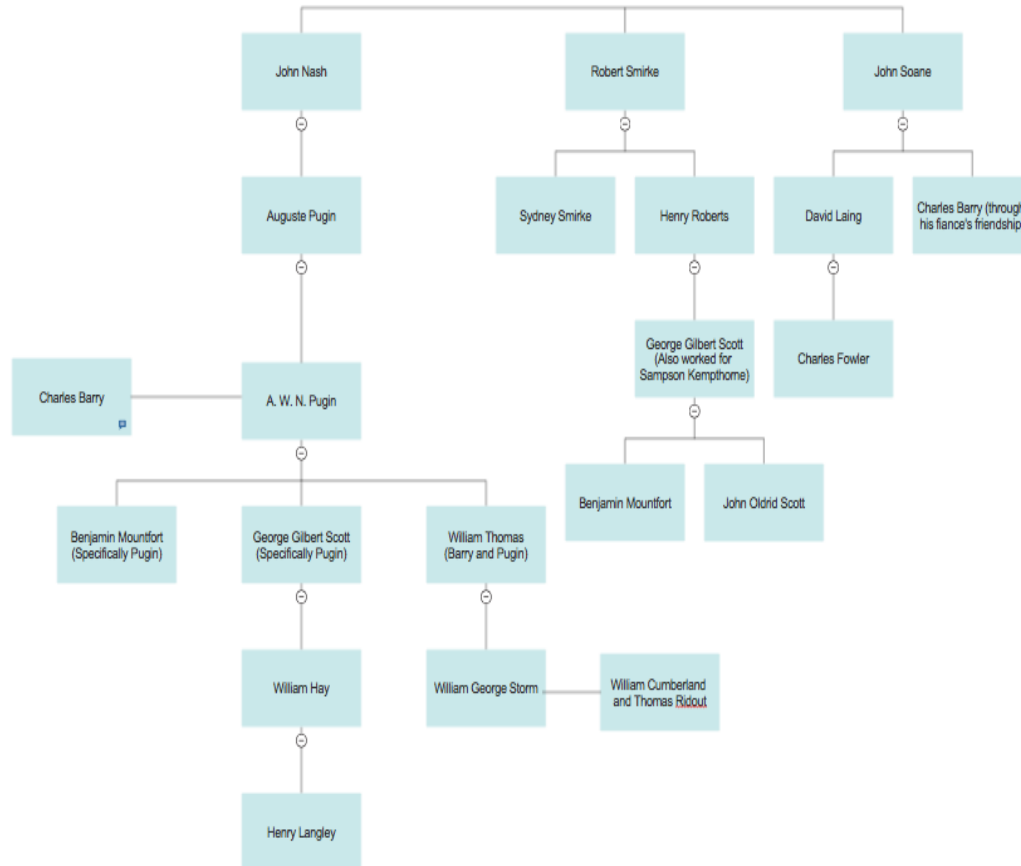
Christchurch Cathedral. 1900-1940. Photographic lantern slide. Museum of New Zealand – Te Papa Tongarewa.



Paris, Simon, *St. James' Cathedral in Old Toronto, seen from the northwest on Church Street, August 7, 2016.* Photograph. Wikipedia.



Cathedral Church of the Resurrection. July 23, 2009. Photograph. Wikipedia.



¹ Alfred Lord Tennyson, *On the Jubilee of Queen Victoria*, (1887).

² Alex G. Bremner, "Some Imperial Institute: Architecture, Symbolism, and the Ideal of Empire in Late Victorian Britain, 1887-93," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62:1 (2003), p. 50.

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The Pandemic in the Immigrant Home: Oral Histories of First-Generation Los Angeles

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The year 2020 is now synonymous with the deadly COVID-19 virus. By June, when I conducted oral history research, there were upwards of 7.2 million confirmed cases worldwide, of which 410,000 resulted in deaths.² Social distancing, lockdowns, and quarantines had set in globally. Yet, by March 2021, as I finished writing this article, according to Johns Hopkins University, more than 128 million cases worldwide had led to about 2.8 million fatalities.³ In the United States, the 30 million confirmed cases and more than 551,000 deaths, worse than most other countries, is an ongoing grievous tragedy.³

In California, between March and August, many people who politically identified as conservative consistently refused to participate in social-distancing norms and wear masks wherever mandated.⁴ The media widely covered these debates as the tragedy of the infectious virus turned political. Even as infections kept rising, news organizations were occupied with controversies around the anti-vaccination protests. In Los Angeles, coverage of right-wing movements claiming “a violation of constitutional rights” and raising demands for the security of their “personal freedom” was consistent and common across news media.⁵ These narratives were often dominated by people born and raised in the U.S. who were predominantly white, affluent, and privileged individuals. In complete contrast, the most vulnerable communities – undocumented families, immigrants, disabled persons, Black and Latino families – were comparatively overlooked in the widespread media.

By explicitly focusing on Black and Brown immigrants in Los Angeles County who arrived after 1980 from varying countries, this article examines how the pandemic affected first-generation immigrants. First-generation immigrants are subjects with immediate ties to their previous homelands and often struggle to establish a sense of home in the U.S. There is a missing sense of belonging in many immigrant communities in Los Angeles, as immigrants not only see their homeland as a birthplace but a vital aspect of their identity. Using oral histories conducted with 19 interviewees between April and June 2020, I argue that the pandemic starkly exposed feelings of isolation among recent immigrants, deepened the lack of a sense of belonging, and severely pressured the sense of unity within immigrant communities. Through the reflections on home, food, and strategies of survival under the pandemic in the testimonies of my interlocutors, I argue that such voices and perspectives redirect our attention to how emotions of dignity and nostalgia centered on the home are valuable counterpoints to mainstream narratives of the global pandemic.

Interviewees in my research had transnational familial connections with Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, Jamaica, Cambodia, and Egypt. Having migrated to Los Angeles after 1980, these connections are sentimentally still powerful. I interviewed nine men and ten women, most of them aged between thirty-five and sixty.⁶ I used extended interviews and structured questionnaires focused on the importance of their cuisine, grocery shopping practices, familial relationships, employment, and policies in their former home countries around the pandemic.⁷ Participants generally expressed the pain of being separated from family and former feelings of familiarity that crossed generations. Despite a sizeable immigrant population in Los Angeles, with little over a third of residents having been identified as “foreign-born”, feelings of isolation and discomfort remained frequent themes.⁸ According to

the first State of Immigrants in L.A. County (SOILA) report, conducted by researchers at the University of Southern California's Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, immigrants from Mexico alone constitute 2.5 million people in Los Angeles.¹³ Without homogenizing "immigrant" as a category while still using it capaciously, my research suggests broad patterns of similar viewpoints and shared struggles, despite different national backgrounds among my interviewees.

In this article, I focus on the dignity of self, nostalgia for food, and the sensibility of home as three shared patterns across my interviews. These intersecting patterns became more sharply visible under the pandemic, as my respondents expressed feelings of isolation, lack of community, and yearning for feelings of "home" and "belonging". I locate these intersections in relationship to California's food economies and large grocery chains, which have historically tried to attract an affluent customer base, effectively dissociating from working-class peoples of color. Under conditions of food scarcity in smaller food stores or Latino-focused grocery chains, these structural inequities of race and class became more evident as my respondents remained intentionally distant from large food businesses.

Dignity, Home, and Nostalgia

As the pandemic surged in April of 2020, California had suffered 1,469 deaths, fifty-four percent of which were in Los Angeles.⁹ Los Angeles has a population of upwards of ten million people, 3.6 million of whom were born abroad.¹⁰ The SOILA report found that eighty percent of that population has been in L.A. for less than ten years. It also noted that immigrants make up forty-four percent of the workers in Los Angeles and contribute "a combined spending power of about \$108.6 billion and pay around \$38.2 billion in state, local, and federal taxes."¹⁰

California offered no less than \$600 a week to those who were unemployed due to the pandemic. Many documented and undocumented immigrants are self-employed or work for the service industry and were deemed "essential," meaning they could not access these benefits. Elise Gould and others conducted a study at the start of the pandemic in early 2020, examining how COVID-19 impacted specifically undocumented and Latinx immigrants. The researchers found that these immigrants experience a lack of health insurance, work for low wages, and have higher levels of unemployment without the option to receive unemployment benefits.¹¹ It became evident that other immigrant communities of color experienced similar situations to that of the Latinx. In addition, once the quarantine began, people panicked and rushed to every store to buy up most of the edible goods, such as pasta, vegetables, meat, and rice. These people also cleaned the shelves of toilet paper, soap, and hand sanitizer. Many people have the privilege to walk into any store, feel welcomed, and find their desired items. Recent immigrants, such as those interviewed for my research, do not have this privilege. Their struggles show how the COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated existing issues of class inequality, isolation, lack of belonging, and discomfort.

Since the 1980s, California has witnessed refugee migration from the Vietnam War, Iraq War, and civil unrest in Asia, Central, and Latin America. PKM is an immigrant from Cambodia who explained her journey as "difficult" and "traumatic." She, along with her sisters, arrived first in San Francisco in 1981, aged 14.¹² She was a refugee, coming from a concentration camp, and sought refuge with her grandmother, who resided in California. She explained to me the pain of not knowing the language and only being able to communicate with her family, saying she "was fourteen and couldn't make any friends, so the only people [she] has to talk to and learn from are [her] sisters."¹³ Relationships of community and support built in the near past have thus been the focal point of the pressure felt by my respondents during the pandemic. Many immigrants rely on the support of their families to maintain social

and cultural ties. A special bond is created between families who immigrated together, such as the bond PKM shares with her sisters. Having to exist in a foreign land with a strange and different society is highly straining on one's sense of self. As such, all that is familiar, such as one's family members, becomes essential.

Over time, the topic of the legalization of immigration has proved to have racist and classist tones. The criminalization of immigration and deportation is a historical phenomenon. While U.S. immigration systems have evolved to recognize those seeking refuge and safety by changing its laws and visa procedures to include refugees, the same laws are still structurally anti-immigrant. In *The Deportation Machine*, historian Adam Goodman traced the history of deportation, detention camps, and border walls in the United States. Goodman noted that since 1882, the United States government has deported more than 57 million persons, more than any other country.¹⁴ Historically, the 'Alien and Sedition Acts' of 1798–1801 provided a basis for the exclusion and expulsion of immigrants on political grounds. Legal restrictions in 1875 banned individuals with "crimes involving moral turpitude" and "prostitutes" to bar many Chinese women from entry into the United States as a precursor to the more restrictive 'Chinese Exclusion Act' of 1882.¹⁵ In 1929, the United States Congress made "unlawful entry a misdemeanor, punishable by one year of imprisonment or a \$1,000 fine, or both, and made a second unlawful entry a felony, punishable by two years' imprisonment or a \$2,000 fine, or both" with the passage of the 'Immigration Act.'⁵

In 1930, as the Great Depression set in, the *Los Angeles Times* argued for the restriction of Mexican immigration, conceiving them as a "charity burden."¹⁶ Though immigrants represent a significant part of the workplace in Los Angeles, the underlying racist sentiment behind this narrative has been perpetuated for over a century. A broader culture of xenophobia is reflected in American immigration legislation through the repeated criminalization of immigrant groups. This repeated history of barring and discrediting various immigrant groups normalizes the disrespectful tone toward immigrants today on both the macro and individual levels.

Since the 1970s, the United States has expelled more individuals than it has allowed to stay permanently, with most deportations conducted in private without due process.¹⁷ Among my interviewees, 'S.C.' came from Honduras as a single mother and was detained by the Texas Border Patrol in 2018. She said, "I was so scared, they separated me and my son (who was five at the time). I didn't know if we were going to be sent back and, even if we were sent back, where we would stay. It's a pain I do not wish on any mother."¹⁸ S.C. witnessed a process that punishes vulnerable immigrants instead of welcoming them.

Sentiments toward immigrants have been appalling and racist. According to the Chicago Survey Council that studied the sentiments toward immigration into the United States in 2019, 78% of Republicans and 24% of Democrats considered refugees and immigrants a threat.¹⁹ The same study also reported that 81% of Republicans and 25% of Democrats backed the Trump administration's deployment of 3,600 troops to the Texas border, basing their support on their concern for the safety of U.S. citizens. Recent immigrants feel more strongly unwelcome, criminalized, and racially oppressed. In 2016, the then President of the United States labeled "Mexican immigrants" as "rapists" and people "that have lots of problems" who "bring drugs and crime."²⁰ Followers of the President breathe the same hate and continue his narrative. For Black and Latino immigrants, what was it to be like in the U.S. in 2020, when the country's highest elected office deemed entire cultures and nations criminal? Torn between nationality and residence, these struggles were critical to this oral history project.

As stated previously, immigrants make up thirty-five percent of the Los Angeles population and forty-four percent of the workforce.²¹ Immigrants are paid less than U.S.

citizens and often accept whatever wage they can get to survive. Exploitation through poverty wages continues even though “immigrants have a combined spending power of about \$108.6 billion and pay around \$38.2 billion in state, local, and federal taxes.”⁷ Per capita, immigrant workers face the lowest wages, longest hours, and often no health insurance. A 2015 study conducted by members of the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education found that fifty-eight percent of garment workers, thirty-five percent of domestic workers, and thirty-two percent of building or restaurant service workers in L.A. (all positions that are majorly held by immigrants of color), experienced minimum wage violations.²² I asked S.C. why she accepted lower wages and brutal treatment from her employer at a restaurant in Woodland Hills, and she replied, “I take every opportunity as a blessing. I know that many of my fellow people here struggle to find *any* work. I am lucky. I thank God every day that I am able to feed my son and send the little I make back home to help my mom.”²³ Like SC, all of my interviewees stated that they send money or care packages back to their families. Working extra hours to support their family in the U.S., as well as in the country they left behind, was a common thread in my interviews. S.C.’s emphasis on blessings shows how some immigrants endure burdensome conditions in the United States by casting it as a blessing. This notion of ‘blessing’ captures their gratitude and serves as a means through which immigrants make sense of the inequality they face. To my interviewees, being in the U.S. alone is enough to be thankful for, while the harsh conditions they endure are explained merely as necessary parts of their life.

This politics of dignity, or the careful ways immigrants resist any articulation of neediness or vulnerability, is critical to analyzing the COVID-19 pandemic. Greater isolation, precarious jobs, and employer intimidation during the pandemic are further silenced in narratives already couched in the language of dignity. The fear of embarrassment or appearing ungrateful came up in all my interviews. On being asked if they would rather be in their former home country during the pandemic, all but three respondents replied in the negative. GM, a forty-five-year-old woman from Mexico who arrived in 1981, put the financial and emotional stakes of supporting a family across the border in these words: “I want to support them because they have no one else. If I had the choice, I would rather bring them here. They’ve closed off my pueblo, and my aunt can’t access her medication, supplies, or money. The government isn’t saying much. They’ve closed the small shops that the pueblo relies on for money and their lives, but [the government] doesn’t support them. It’s horrible; I feel helpless.”²⁴ What G.M. described as helplessness, caused by the broader economic and policy shortcomings both in the U.S. and Mexico, was shared by other respondents but not in equally frank terms.

One other respondent, SR, a 30-year-old Black man who came from Jamaica in 2008, shared a similar story of cross-border relationships of care. He had immigrated to the United States to further his acting career and expressed how stressful it was to be far from his family during the pandemic, noting that “my brothers are all in the hotel business and they all were out of work. Jamaicans don’t receive unemployment checks like Americans do; it’s more of a ‘figure it out’ type of thing.” He continued, “my brothers have children and my parents who can’t work to support, and I am over here trying my best to offer whatever support I have. I’m here for my career; if I could do that in Jamaica, I would.”²⁵ Without mentioning more specific details, S.R. still managed to convey the scale of the support needed, as several family members abroad are supported by a meager part-time acting income. In such refusals to acknowledge feelings of lack of historically structured cultural norms of dignity. Especially in working-class immigrant families, notions of dignity mean that one must keep their chin up and not ‘let them see you cry.’

Expressions of privacy can surround and hide experiences of inequity, something sharpened by the pandemic. In my interviews, I chose to frame questions around realities in the home, such as food, groceries, and domestic chores. Home is more than just a house. It is a safe place where people create private memories separated from but in relation to outside pressures. The freedom to organize the physical interiors of homes allowed my respondents to feel closer to their families in their former domestic country. My respondents have expressed that they feel they cannot always exist comfortably in this overtly anti-immigrant country. Home is the site where they expressed their lived, transnational realities. For example, LC, an Afro-Latino woman from Guatemala who immigrated to the United States in 1990, said it brought her joy to put up the Guatemalan flag and paintings passed down from her grandmother in her house, saying that at home, “she represents who [she] is.”²⁶ Immigrants experience the difficulty of existing and building a future in a new country while still being deeply tied to the cultural value systems of another. Having to uproot generations of ways of life and move to another country makes the story of building a home a potentially painful one.

In one sense, the new nation-state is a home, just as a neighborhood or a house is. Building on the history of segregation and urban redlining in the U.S. that structurally created isolation, current xenophobic narratives create more discomfort and anxiety around socializing and exploring. Such histories shape how immigrant families relocate and stick to one area or neighborhood. Many of my interviewees did not have more than two family members who resided in Los Angeles when they arrived. For example, JMP arrived in Los Angeles from El Salvador in 2010 without legal documentation. While he began by expressing how he came hoping to venture and relocate more than once, he quickly changed his ambitions. He remarked, “I came to this country thinking that I would explore other cities or states. But when we arrived, it was difficult for me and my family to get to know our own area and how to get around that. I found a decent job and have stuck with it for years. We’ve been in the same house for nine years, and I don’t plan on moving any time soon, either.”²⁷ Efforts to assimilate and find a sense of belonging within neighborhoods or areas, broadly defined, take longer for recent immigrants like ‘JMP’ than for those native to the United States. Without legal documentation, many of these immigrants live in fear, and as a result, their hopes and aspirations become seemingly unattainable. Many respondents confirmed a contrast between knowing the ‘ins and outs’ of places in their previous countries and lacking familiarity with the United States. Freedom to roam around in the past was often compared to trouble and insecurity in the present. PM, another immigrant, remembered El Salvador, saying, “you know it, you see it, and you feel it.” PM further explained, “I may not know where everything is at, but I know what I can, and I can’t do. I grew up there. It will always be home.”²⁸ The words “always” and “home” capture the tension present in the long time it takes to accept a new place of home while still facing racial prejudice and social isolation that limits practices of community and socialization.

With the spread of the coronavirus, the closure of churches took a substantial emotional toll on immigrant communities. Building communities around language, food, religion, and experiences with the U.S. immigration processes were common to my respondents. In my interviews, more than half of my respondents indicated that they relied on church and the workplace for socializing. EPM, a 45-year-old woman from El Salvador, who came to LA in 2010, goes to church to show her gratitude and love for God, but also to regularly feel “welcomed and loved” by the people who join her in giving thanks.²⁹ Catholicism binds many immigrant communities from Central and Latin American countries. Churches are more than places of worship – they provide social services and help members negotiate with the U.S. government and social sector, in addition to providing worship and sociality on Saturdays and

Sundays. JMP commented on how the church closure affected him, saying, “Church was a Sunday ritual for my family and me. My wife and I always had Sunday off. The kids would dress nice and go to youth service, my wife would chat with her friends, and my father even preaches sometimes. It was really the only day we had with friends.”³⁰ More than half of my interviewees came to the United States without knowing anyone, and many said the church was their primary way of making friends and receiving advice on the city. Many are referred to or recommended for jobs through connections from church since immigrants often arrive without leads on employment. Churches hold clothing drives, provide free or affordable home-cooked meals, and design small social gatherings for Christians across ethnic backgrounds. The impact of the pandemic on such broader practices of home, centered around the church, is severe and difficult to quantify.

Impacts on food and cuisine, the cornerstone of home, were equally concerning. With the disruptions to food circulation due to the pandemic, my interviewees articulated the importance of culture to the place where food is purchased. When I asked BM, a 65-year-old woman from Mexico who arrived in 1980, where she buys groceries, she replied, “I shop at Vallarta because they speak Spanish. I don’t like to speak English, so I go where I’m comfortable. Where I know my people are.”³¹ During the pandemic, even though the long lines at grocery stores caused wait times of up to three hours, B.M. and many other interviewees stuck to their regular grocery stores and firmly stated that they didn’t bother venturing out searching for shorter lines. YM, a 19-year-old immigrant from Egypt who arrived in 2011, explained, “There was no need to look at other stores. I already knew they didn’t have the ingredients I needed.”³² The culture and foodways of a grocery store were more critical during the pandemic than ever before.

In March and April of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic first spread in California, food shortages became a significant challenge. Besides a source of nutrition, food is also a mode of cultural, emotional, and intellectual communication between generations of the same family and different social groups. All my respondents clearly emphasized how they were still primarily making dishes according to culinary styles from their previous home countries. They had never intended to sever any ties with food practices, even in the face of different kinds of food availability or cooking tastes prevalent in the U.S. Just as the food shortage intensified under the pandemic, rice, pasta, cuts of meat, milk, and butter became challenging to find in stores. This fundamentally challenged the insistence of my respondents on their “fixed” diet, the strongest piece of home that they have.

Spices such as turmeric and ginger, valued in these immigrant households for both taste and medicinal value, ran out in stores, as stories of the antiviral benefits of these spices made headlines.³³ However, the absence of rice, quickly bought up due to ease of storage, was the most fundamental turning point for most interviewees. PKH gave a heartfelt testimony on rice, claiming, “Rice is the staple of my country. In Cambodia, we eat rice for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It’s all we eat. I couldn’t find rice for me or my family for weeks; it was hard. And to add to that, the stores have almost doubled the price! The stores are definitely taking advantage of us; they know it’s all we eat.”³⁴ PKH came to the U.S. in 1981 from Cambodia and still cooks all her dishes using methods her father taught her. She explained that it was a way for her to keep her country with her, even though it didn’t necessarily taste the same given the different quality of store rice. PKH was visibly angry and frustrated, saying she had settled for a small bag of brown rice at the fifth store she visited. It was not enough for her household, nor was it the type of rice she was accustomed to cooking. To ensure the place of rice in her home, she cut down on her meat consumption and turned solely on

vegetables, saying, “vegetables in America are bland and don’t have a ton of flavor, but it’s better than the meat. Meat just is not natural at all.”³⁵

Many of my interviewees stated that they did not alter their diets despite widespread hoarding, price rise, and unavailability of customary foods. They tried their best to keep dishes as familiar as possible. This unwillingness to surrender the diet to the pressures of the market is complicated. Having left home to begin building a new life in the U.S. is fundamentally about not forgetting, more than it is about learning what is new. When interviewees like PKH were furious and disappointed about foods being hoarded and prices inflated due to market panic, their frustration was borne of an unwillingness to relinquish generations of food cultures to the supposed conveniences of U.S. market fluctuations. Food is more than just nutrition. Even when the lines wrapped around the store for hours during the pandemic, all my interviewees reported that they stuck to their preferred stores to get at least some of the foods they were accustomed to, rather than go to a store with a shorter line and therefore less chance of exposure and product shortage.

The decisions of grocery store chains to stock certain kinds of food at specific prices reveal subtle signs to immigrants about whether they are welcome as customers there. While Los Angeles’ Latino and Chicano population is over fifty percent of the total population, stores such as Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, Sprouts, and Vons, with their extensive supply chains and highly advertised quality of foods, are primarily located in affluent areas with predominantly white residents. This is yet another facet of structural urban segregation that upholds racial differences in the U.S. Working-class immigrant persons interviewed in my research were not exposed to the “quality” that these stores usually advertise. I asked PM why he did not visit these stores, and he answered, “They’re expensive.” This was not a curious assertion, and he later admitted that he had never stepped foot in or interacted with anyone at these stores.³⁶ Their locations in white neighborhoods instead shaped his opinions on prices and the subtle exclusionary approach of such stores. For instance, Trader Joe’s stores are in affluent and gentrified areas, such as Beverly Hills and West Hollywood. In predominantly Black and Latino communities, like Downtown Los Angeles, Compton, Gardena, South Los Angeles, and East Los Angeles, the nearest Trader Joe’s is at least ten miles away and conveniently near the University of Southern California’s campus to cater to its wealthier student population. The exclusionary and prohibitive pricing strategies in bigger grocery stores like Trader Joe’s indirectly caused tremendous overcrowding at outlets run by Super King, Vallarta, and Food4Less when the virus spread in L.A. These stores speak to a larger base of ethnically and racially diverse communities and the pressures on their stocks during the pandemic only revealed how deeply my interviewees felt unwelcome at stores like Trader Joe’s.

The taste of food emerged as another area where my respondents acutely felt the pandemic. S.R. explained his previous food buying habits in Jamaica compared to those he developed in the U.S. Once the pandemic began, he resorted to buying more groceries through online services and stocking up on spices like ginger root and turmeric. He was deeply nostalgic for the way his food tasted in Jamaica. Compared to more “synthetic” tasting food in the U.S., he recalled Jamaican produce that was naturally grown near his house. He nostalgically described the pleasure of going outside and picking a ripe orange or mango off a tree. His cassava, porridge, and “ackee and saltfish” have lacked the same embodied experience of taste in the U.S. due to differences in flavor and the unavailability of some ingredients.³⁷ S.R. resorted to going to Latin supermarkets to find similar ingredients once the pandemic began. “I went where I was going to find the stuff I needed,” he said, since “Vallarta has some stuff like Jamaican supermarkets.” However, he continued, “I would usually get most of my key ingredients shipped from Jamaica because American food lacks taste. The Spanish markets

is as close as I was going to get.” Importing small quantities of key foods was common among many interviewees who considered food in the U.S. either unnatural or less flavorful.

Y.M. talked of dishes his mother made with tomato sauce and rice, saying that he too can taste the difference, and it makes him “miss home.”³⁸ JCM, who arrived in Los Angeles in 2019 from Honduras, explained the pork stew and a yucca dish is “nowhere near the same as home,” yet he noted, “I’d rather eat that than any other food they have made in the supermarket. It’s better than nothing.”³⁹ Many of my interviewees who professed their different palette as an intricate part of their feeling of belonging consistently held on to it even under the pandemic. Even with produce being scarce, their styles of food consumption did not change. C.S. stated that she would never resort to American dishes, noting, “This is my culture. This is my home; why would I want to even try to change it?”⁴⁰ Such resilience of specific food cultures stands in direct contrast to the general ignorance in the U.S. around foods like yucca or cassava root, let alone salt fish. The lack of spices noticed by my respondents across supermarkets in Los Angeles is a result of how large grocery chains ignore the needs of immigrants despite fetishizing organic and foreign foods.

DM, an immigrant from Jamaica, explained to me what it was like to have mangoes in her house in Jamaica: “You know when there are ripe mangoes in someone’s house because the home fills with the smell of mango. They are picked when they are ripe and ready to eat, often from folks’ backyard.”⁴¹ The ripeness of the fruit and the desire for its taste are deeply tied to the sensory history of the body. D.M. said that in Jamaica, one goes by scent.²³ Due to the normalization of chemically engineered food preserving practices in the United States, most of my respondents seemed to believe American food to be “unnatural”. Karen Miner has previously studied how grocery store produce in California arrives after vegetables are ripened in controlled atmospheric storage days before delivery. She found that many vegetables that are on the shelves for weeks or even months are kept intact by “regulating the oxygen, carbon dioxide, and nitrogen levels, along with temperature and humidity.”⁴² According to her research, apples on shelves can be up to a year old. Bananas can be manipulated to control the pace of ripening. In contrast, many other products are “washed in a solution of chlorine and preservatives before being put in cold storage for up to a month.”²⁴ In complete contrast, she further adds that in the U.K., fruits and vegetables are typically stored for about a week.

Similarly, the Fruit Growers Supply News found that farmers from Mexico produced a vast amount of food sold in California. In the U.S., “50 percent of fresh fruits and 20 percent of fresh vegetables” come from Mexico.⁴³ In the U.S. commercial food businesses, fruits and vegetables are waxed to create a more presentable store shelf and an aesthetically appealing fruit or vegetable rather than a more flavorful one. This loss of taste is most clearly articulated through the sensory and bodily experience of recent immigrants interviewed during the pandemic. Long-term residents in the U.S. have been accustomed to deeming newer tastes more acceptable. On the contrary, my interviewees were not ignorant of alternative tastes of fresh foods and confirmed how this also structured their feeling of alienation and discomfort under pandemic conditions.

Nostalgia was a consistent theme in my conversations on food sensibilities. Like PKH’s testimony about meat tasting unnatural, B.M. told me that meat in the U.S. tasted “very synthetic” and that she preferred the meat in Mexico.⁴⁴ She reminisced about the beef stew her mother would make for her, saying that she would “love to go back and enjoy it one last time.” CS, an immigrant from Guatemala who came in 1992, described meat there as “tasteful,” since “the meat is fresh and never frozen.” Further, she said, “I think that once they freeze and maybe ship the meat all over the place, it loses its taste and texture.”⁴⁵ PM stated that the cuts were “smaller and natural” in El Salvador where, in his recollection, “they

only kill the animals if there is a demand for the meat.” He further stated, “you know some farmers raise the cows and only kill them when they need to. So, a lot of the meat that you’re buying is from an animal that was just butchered no longer than the day before.”⁴⁶ Talking about food made all my interviewees smile as they reminisced about their days at the butcher shops in their former hometowns.

The normalization of American factory farming practices using feedlots and meat-packing plants stands in stark contrast to the culinary and cultural practices of many that I interviewed. Recent immigrants registered the effects of such foods through their bodies and senses. When my interviewees described meat as synthetic and tasting like plastic, they were not exaggerating. Instead, they were disclosing how their bodies are responding to broader dynamics of food economics in California and the United States. Thinking about the relationship between the body, the home, and emotions is critical to understanding the experiences of immigrant families that current COVID-19 discussions have ignored.

Conclusion

The body is central to the economy, just as the tongue is central to bodily experience. When mainstream COVID-19 narratives focus on large-scale economic disruptions, we lose sight of how such disruptions eventually come home and affect the body. The home can tell us a lot about the impact of the pandemic on the immigrant family, and their experiences in the U.S. can tell us a lot about the pandemic. All my interviewees shared a critical element – they were highly conscious of the taste of foods in California and preferred food in their former home countries. Food, and its effects on the body, are crucial to their ability to find comfort and belonging in the U.S. while remaining grounded in their culture and traditions. Since immigrants after 1980 have not had as much time to acclimate to U.S. food cultures, their struggle to retain and reproduce familiar tastes reveals how the pandemic unsettled their everyday routines and the immigrants’ resilient response. The pandemic has exposed immigrants to greater vulnerability and brought to the forefront how cultural notions of thankfulness and dignity continue to structure their lives, despite severe inequalities.

The struggles of first-generation immigrants in Los Angeles have only been exposed and worsened by the pandemic. High numbers of deaths from the virus among California’s Latino and Black population, business closures, rocketing unemployment, and closed places of worship have made the burden on immigrants heavier than other more long-standing groups. Few governmental resources for Black and Latino immigrants and xenophobia raging in the system of the United States make the reality grimmer. D.M. told me in her interview that some of her friends from Jamaica gave up their green cards and went back to Jamaica. While a few had done so after the election of Donald Trump, the pandemic was another reason many others were moving back. “I know my best friend C. just gave up his green card,” she said, “it was really a long time coming because ever since Trump got in office, it has been harder for him to come in and out of the country to visit his wife. The airport workers would harass him harshly in customs.” D.M. was justly frustrated, remarking, “I mean, the man just wanted to visit his wife a couple times out of the year, and every time, since Trump, they would act like he was a criminal and interrogate him. I don’t blame him for moving back.”⁴⁷ Her anecdote is a reminder that there are other forms of refusal at play – some simply do not consider being in the U.S. worth the uphill battle. The dignity and gratitude of those who stay and endure the pandemic, unwilling to change their meals or give away their pain too easily – their stories have a lot to teach us.

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- ¹ I am grateful to all the interviewees who shared their experiences and life stories with me. For help with research, I thank Dorothy Williamson, Rosie Villegas, and Blanca Milgarejo. In addition, I give the utmost thanks to Dr. Utathya Chattopadhyaya for his counseling and support throughout this journey.
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- ³ "[COVID-19 Map](#)," *Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center*.
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- ⁷ All interviews were conducted solely by the author. Recordings and transcripts are in the author's possession and all names have been initialized and altered to ensure confidentiality. Translations from Spanish are by the author.
- ⁸ USC Dornsife, "[The State of Immigrants in LA County](#)," (September 17, 2020).
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- ²⁴ "Interview with GM," (April 22, 2020).
- ²⁵ "Interview with SR," (April 21, 2020).
- ²⁶ "Interview with LC," (April 19, 2020).
- ²⁷ "Interview with JMP," (April 22, 2020).
- ²⁸ "Interview with PM," (May 13, 2020).
- ²⁹ "Interview with EM," (May 12, 2020).
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- ³⁸ "Interview with YM," (April 29, 2020).

³⁹ “Interview with JCM,” (April 30, 2020).

⁴⁰ “Interview with CS,” (May 13, 2020).

⁴¹ “Interview with DM,” (April 30, 2020).

⁴² Karen Miner, “The disturbing truth of your grocery store's produce department,” *Mashed*, (May 16, 2019).

⁴³ “[How Does Produce Get to the Grocery Store?](#),” *Fruit Growers Supply*.

⁴⁴ “Interview with BM,” (May 13, 2020).

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⁴⁶ “Interview with PM,” (May 13, 2020).

⁴⁷ “Interview with DM,” (April 30, 2020).

Witchcraft Treatises in Early Modern Europe

Kayla Ouerbacher

In early modern Europe, a society where piety was expected, and God was exalted, the conceptualization of witchcraft as praise for the devil threatened the status quo. It also helped to define what was deemed righteous by providing such a stark counterexample. The ideas of witchcraft that permeated society in the early modern period centered around pacts formed with the devil to practice evil and inflict harm upon others.¹ Assumptions about who was most likely to ally with the devil were based mainly on stereotypes and misogyny. This is evident in the treatises of contemporary legal scholars that worked to help “construct a difference between the normal [Christian] world and the world of witchcraft in such a way as to legitimize the institutions to which they belonged or otherwise supported.”² By the fifteenth century, legal scholars and demonologists were publishing treatises to convey their beliefs about witches in general and how to best prosecute them. This paper addresses how the legal scholarship written in the early modern period by demonologists such as Heinrich Kramer, Jean Bodin, Nicholas Remy, and Henri Boguet was shaped by cultural influences, and in turn, influenced how society perceived and acted upon the problem of witchcraft. These highly educated scholars and theologians give us a window into the values, thought patterns, and biases held by prominent figures of early modern society that further our understanding of how witchcraft became such a significant concern for people of the era. Some scholars, such as Kramer, appealed to the religious virtues of European judges and society, emphasizing the heretical nature of witchcraft, its inherent ties with the devil, and the “fallacies” of skeptics as they aimed to support the Catholic Church. Others, such as Bodin, were more tolerant of differing religious beliefs yet advocated stringent prosecution methods.³ Ultimately, demonologists were greatly influenced by religious convictions, conventional expectations of womanhood and sexuality, and their geographical locations. In turn, legal scholarship by such demonologists was primarily driven by fear of both threats to the Christian Church by the Devil and demons, and by women who defied expectations of domesticity and sexual repression. By ‘othering’ and targeting perceived threats in their writings on witchcraft, demonologists worked to legitimize the subordination of women and uphold the role of the Church in society. To highlight how such influences are evident in demonological texts, I focus on religion, sexism and misogyny, sexual deviancy, and recommended prosecution methods to explore how the legal systems functioned in the regions where these scholars were located.

Historians have written extensively on the complex history of witchcraft and demonology, especially concerning the aspects of religion, misogyny, magic, sex, and philosophy. In Stuart Clark’s “Thinking With Demons,” he situates the subject of witchcraft within a larger conceptual framework of how early modern thinkers viewed the world in general through a “Saussurean” lens, wherein concepts can only exist with their opposite. Clark asserts that witchcraft existed in the minds of early modern scholars as something they could contrast against a “good” society. Clark explains that the language of the early modern period was rooted in binary opposites. To scholars of the time, “witchcraft was construed dialectically in terms of what it was not; what was significant about it was not its substance but the system of oppositions that it established and fulfilled. The witch — like Satan himself — could only be a contingent being, always ‘a function of another, not an independent entity.’”⁴ As such, the concept of “witchcraft” could only exist when juxtaposed against what it was not. Likewise,

the idea of witchcraft helped to validate institutions promoted as its moral opposite. When placed in the Saussurean framework assumed by Clark, this is undoubtedly the case. However, rather than discuss demonology broadly, I focus on specific texts and how the theoretical framework of inversion is implied in these particular writings.

Jonathan Barry notes that many demonologists viewed witchcraft as threatening to the Church, and in turn, wrote treatises out of anxiety, fear, and anger.⁵ While women were persecuted for witchcraft at higher rates than men, both Barry and Clark note that misogyny was not suddenly heightened in the period, nor were demonologists any more misogynistic than society at large. Instead, the weakness of women relative to men was taken to be self-evident.⁶ Barry claims that in the 15th century, “an increasing emphasis on clerical celibacy... meant women were in danger of being seen as both tempters and pollutants.”⁷ This helps to show that while witch trials were not created as a misogynistic ploy to target women, early modern society viewed women as the inferior sex, more apt to fall prey to the Devil’s temptations. Thus, witches were generally conceived of as women. Barry states that early modern theologians such as Kramer and Boguet viewed witchcraft as a “battle between the armies of God and the forces of evil.” This confirmed early modern assertions that witchcraft threatened to subvert the status of the Church’s power while simultaneously validating the Church as the moral authority.⁸

Marianne Hester has also commented on the association between women and witchcraft accusations, asserting that witch-hunts functioned as a form of “social control of women” within a patriarchal society.⁹ She claims that the conceptualization of the witch as a female helped to confirm men as the superior sex and provided an avenue to prosecuting women who did not conform to patriarchal society’s expectations of women.¹⁰ Hester claims that the construction and sexualization “the female” were tools to oppress women and maintain patriarchal power.¹¹ While men were undoubtedly tried for witchcraft, female sexuality was feared and objectified, and male sexuality was not viewed as equally damaging. Hester also points out how women were expected to be submissive to their husbands. The supposition that female witches fornicated with the devil further heightened the threat that female sexuality posed to a male-dominated society.¹² Unlike the claim made by Clark and Barry, Hester explains that the frequency of which women were implicated as witches was not only a result of longstanding misogynistic views but also as a mechanism to assure the repression of women in favor of maintaining a patriarchal status quo.

Belief in witchcraft was not a new occurrence during the early modern period. Much of the general public believed in magic, often citing it as an explanation for many of the misfortunes that faced ordinary people.¹³ Cultural biases against women shaped the stereotype of witches, resulting in the most common conception of witches as elderly, single, poor women.¹⁴ As the early modern period approached, people began to understand witchcraft and magic as having direct connections to the devil. The Catholic Church, which had maintained a monopoly on religious beliefs throughout prior centuries, was now threatened by the advent of Protestantism, which was just beginning to gain traction in regions where loyalty to the Catholic Church was relatively weak. While the Catholic Church blatantly denied the existence and power of witchcraft in prior centuries, by 1550, the Church’s stance on the matter changed drastically.¹⁵ The Church embraced the belief that witchcraft was inherently tied to the devil, thus making witchcraft a crime against God. The division of Christianity into Catholicism and Protestantism resulted in a barrage of religious wars, and both religious denominations sought to garner support through addressing fears of witchcraft and, in turn, assuring peoples’ safety from evil.¹⁶ This rift in the Christian faith made it necessary to define what constituted a moral, pious society. By establishing witches as evil and defiant towards God, it became easier to

validate existing institutions as the paragon of morality. As many demonological writers had ties to Christianity, the opinions of authors such as Kramer, Sprenger, Bodin, Remy, and Boguet simultaneously influenced and were influenced by the Church, its reaction to witchcraft, and the need to draw distinct boundaries about what was moral.

There is a prominent focus on religion throughout demonological writings and how witchcraft was inextricably connected to Satan. As one of the first authoritative statements from the Church regarding witchcraft as a crime, Pope Innocent VIII's 1484 Bull granted permission to Dominican inquisitor Jacob Sprenger and Dominican theologian Heinrich Kramer of Germany to embark on the mission of persecuting witches.¹⁷ Two years later, Kramer and Sprenger published the *Malleus Maleficarum*, a work that became a crucial resource for later demonologists. As Dominicans, an order of the Catholic Church, and "keen advocates of the cult of the virgin [Mary]," the authors would have been viewed as religious authorities, and the influence of religion is seen clearly throughout the *Malleus*.¹⁸ Dominicans exalted the virgin Mary as representative of purity and viewed most earthly women as aligning with the Biblical Eve, who was thought to represent lustful indulgence.¹⁹ Kramer claims that the Bible instructs believers to kill witches, and in his own words, if "witches did not really and truly make a compact with devils... to bring about...harms," then the Bible would not advocate such severe punishment.²⁰ Using the Bible to emphasize the gravity of witchcraft, Kramer communicated that the prosecution of witches was an urgent, pressing problem facing society.

To further illustrate the Biblical stance on witches, Kramer cites a selection of verses likening the "souls of witches and soothsayers," and "wizards and charmers" to "pythons in whom the devil works extraordinary things."²¹ Kramer treats these Bible passages as evidence that the persecution of witches was mandated and approved by God. Like many of its successors, the *Malleus Maleficarum* asserted that witches gained their powers to perform acts of evil through pacts with the devil through a four-step process: renouncing the Catholic faith, devoting themselves to evil, offering unbaptized children to the devil, and "indulging in carnal lust."²² This denial of God, as described by Kramer, helped popularize the notion that witchcraft was a crime of heresy, which made witchcraft not only a religious crime but also a secular crime that should be taken seriously in all judicial proceedings of every type of court. This provided grounds for many Catholic and Protestant witch hunters alike to "flush out witches living among them," helped by the fact that the *Malleus* quickly became the most sold book in Europe apart from the Bible.²³

As was relatively common for scholars of the time, French jurist and demonologist Jean Bodin had an extensive religious background. Born in 1529, that Bodin lived in the Renaissance period is evident in his religious persuasion. Though raised in the Catholic Church, Bodin grew critical of the Roman Catholic Clergy and its hierarchical structures in adulthood.²⁴ He studied philosophy in Paris, where intellect and spiritual experiences were bountiful, and went on to study law in Toulouse.²⁵ Due to his extensive education, Bodin was highly educated in secular aspects of the world. At the same time, Bodin's knowledge of the Catholic faith, and his reverence for God and the Bible, are all apparent in his *Demonomania*, wherein he asserts that witchcraft is a crime against God regardless of one's religion.²⁶ Similar to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, themes concerning witches renouncing God to obtain power from Satan are found in Bodin's writing.²⁷ Bodin believed that angels and demons served as middlemen between humans and God and that such beings were God's method of intervention in human matters.²⁸ Likewise, Bodin held that any compliance with demonic activity through witchcraft was treasonous toward God.²⁹ In the *Demonomania*, Bodin cautions against falling into the trap of believing "white magic" to be natural and good, saying instead that all invocation of the "good angel of the planets" requires "abominable idolatry by

worshipping its demon.”³⁰ Essentially, Bodin claims that there is no distinction to be made between “white” magic and “Black” magic, but rather that Satan had turned magic into “diabolical witchcraft,” which he then disguised as pious to lure “respectable men” to its clutches.³¹ Bodin cites an example of a young man who supposedly forced a sieve to move through words as proof that an evil spirit accompanied the young man. Bodin claims that this type of allegiance and reliance on a spirit was blasphemous towards God, performed through diabolical means, and “forbidden by the law of God,” as no one can make an object move without touching it by any natural means.³²

Bodin’s focus on blasphemy against God indicates that one of his primary concerns regarding witchcraft was the defiance of God inherent in a witch obtaining their powers. Bodin believed witchcraft to require direct contact and cooperation with evil spirits and demons and submission to Satan. Bodin explicitly believed witchcraft to be one of the most loathsome crimes possible to commit, as it “takes revenge both on the soul and the body.” Bodin believed that practicing witchcraft would damage the soul of an individual due to the pact with Satan that said individual was thought to have made, which forced them to renounce God and “visit with” the Devil. Bodin additionally asserted that by not fully prosecuting witches, the wrath of God would be brought down upon a community, meaning it was in the interest of the people that witches be hunted and punished.³³

Similarly, French lawyer Nicolas Remy, a contemporary of Bodin’s born in 1530, believed witchcraft was a crime against God. As Procureur General of Lorraine in the sixteenth century, Remy led a massive witch hunt and claimed to have burned close to 800 witches to death. However, some scholars disputed this number who claim trial records prove the actual number to be much lower.³⁴ In Remy’s *Demonolatriy*, published in 1595, he implicates Satan as a force capable of leading people “astray” through witchcraft. Remy describes Satan as capable of utilizing human failings to deceive people into thinking he could equip them with the means necessary to satisfy their wants.³⁵ Additionally, Remy lists examples of the poor being promised riches, and the wronged being promised means to avenge themselves, both ways by which Remy claims that Satan “burrows into their very hearts.”³⁶ He further explains that Satan gained people’s allegiance, as Satan could not fulfill his promises unless one turned against God and instead devoted themselves to the devil. It was believed that witches were only ‘rewarded’ with the power to harm if they shifted their allegiance from God to Satan.³⁷

Henri Boguet, another sixteenth-century French lawyer who worked in Franche-Comté, wrote *An Examen of Witches*, wherein he states that the reason to exterminate all witches was Biblical. Throughout *An Examen of Witches*, Boguet refers to various Bible verses in the margins of his text, indicating that he believed the Bible to be the ultimate resource for evidence on the evils of witchcraft. He asserts allowing witchcraft to endure would be direct disobedience to “the Majesty of the Most High” and that the Bible proved that God had threatened cities and villages for allowing witchcraft to persist.³⁸ This concern is reflective of Bodin’s beliefs that witchcraft was not only dangerous to those harmed by witches but also to the souls of those infected by Satan. Both authors warned of the wrath of God upon communities that ignored this threat. Boguet cautions that failure to prosecute the multitudes of witches throughout Europe could result in numbers “strong enough to make war upon a king.”³⁹ Through such threats, Bouget stresses the urgency and immediacy required of witch hunters to take action to defend the kingdom of God. In *An Examen of Witches*, Boguet also references the Biblical Book of Job to support his claim that Satan possessed the most expansive power on Earth, allowing him to grant witches the ability to do evil.⁴⁰ As other demonologists before him had claimed, Boguet clarifies that witches would have no access to powers were it not for the pacts they made with the Devil. He further explains that the

relationship between witches and the Devil is like that of the soul and the body: witches could not perform magic without the Devil, but the Devil needs witches to carry out evil.⁴¹

These authors emphasize religion and the role of God when it comes to witchcraft. They argue that witchcraft involved the rebuke of God in favor of the devil to gain a witch's powers. The influence of the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s assertion that witchcraft was heretical in that it required witches to denounce God is also seen in each author's writing. Although these authors share similar beliefs in this regard, they differed substantially regarding their religious beliefs. While Kramer and Remy were ardent Catholics and supporters of the Church, Bodin was incredibly tolerant of all religious beliefs. Bodin, like Boguet, advances his argument by asserting that witchcraft was not only a crime in the eyes of the Church but also a crime against God, capable of ravaging the soul and jeopardizing communities.

Another theme throughout the genre of demonologists' treatises was the view that women were the weaker sex and thus more likely to fall into Satan's trap of witchcraft. The *Malleus Maleficarum* features rampant misogyny. Although Remy, Bodin, and Boguet's treatises tend not to be as blatantly misogynistic, the biases against women popular in early modern society are evident in their works. In the sixteenth century, "marriage, education, politics, and religion" structured society patriarchally. This profoundly influenced demonological writers who believed that men, as heads of homes, were superior.⁴² While it is true that in the early modern period, men and women occupied clearly defined separate spheres of society, and gender roles were firmly adhered to, condemnation of women in Heinrich Kramer's writing is especially brutal.⁴³ This can be attributed partially to the understanding that women were the so-called 'weaker sex,' who resorted to supernatural methods of avenging themselves and were thus expected to turn to witchcraft more often than men.⁴⁴ Even though in France (as elsewhere in Europe), the stereotype of witch hunts as wars on women is mainly false, many demonological authors nonetheless assumed that women were significantly more likely to become involved in witchcraft than men.⁴⁵

In Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum*, he claims that the reason women were more likely than men to become involved in witchcraft was that women were "intellectually feeble, morally weak." A woman's sexual perversion made them more inclined to fall prey to the Devil's persuasive nature, deny God, and engage in demonic activity.⁴⁶ Although he concedes that there was a possibility of men becoming witches, only claiming that it was "more likely" for women to engage in witchcraft, Kramer focused almost all of his attention on the supposed weaknesses of women. He goes on to say women are "an inescapable punishment...a desirable calamity,... and evil painted with fair colors."⁴⁷ The rhetoric that all women were "fragile" both of mind and body speaks to Kramer's biases against women. This might be an indication of why Kramer so adamantly sought to convict women of witchcraft.

Although milder than Kramer's assertions of female inferiority, Remy still advances misogyny in his *Demonolatriy*. Remy states that it was "easier for the Demon to impose his deceits upon [the female] sex" and that "it is not unreasonable that this scum of humanity should be drawn chiefly from the feminine sex."⁴⁸ Remy's language in *Demonolatriy* demonstrates the societal view that women were inferior to men and so weak-minded that the devil viewed them as easy prey. Although he does not explicitly claim that women were evil by nature, as Kramer had, Remy writes about women using derogatory language that communicates his patriarchal views. Bodin, however, differs slightly from Kramer and Remy in his gendering of witches. Although most of Bodin's testimonies were told by women, and he believed that female witches outnumbered male witches fifty to one, he admits that male witches did exist.⁴⁹ Despite this admission, Bodin still maintained biases against women, explaining that due to women's "larger internal organs," they were more likely to act on

opportunities allowing them to give in to “bestial desires,” as was possible through witchcraft.⁵⁰

Boguet’s gendering of witches appears to fall in line with the beliefs of Bodin. Most of the testimonies cited by Boguet throughout *An Examen of Witches* are of females, and he centralizes many of his arguments against witches on evidence that people in mostly female positions, such as midwifery, often turned to the devil. Boguet claims that “midwives and wise women,” who practice witchcraft, frequently kill the children whom they deliver. Since midwifery was viewed as a profession belonging to the female sphere, Boguet viewed women as threatening and inherently inclined to conspire with the devil.⁵¹ From a modern perspective, it is unsurprising that many babies died during childbirth due to a lack of medical knowledge. However, due to the prejudices against women and superstitions of the early modern period, these natural, albeit tragic, deaths were often attributed to female witches. Like Bodin, however, Boguet does not omit men entirely from the crime of witchcraft. He implicates male witches in his theory that they were as “addicted” to sexual pleasure as their female counterparts and were ‘known’ to appear at Sabbats and engage sexually with female demons.⁵²

Although some regions indeed had a relatively even ratio of males to females accused of witchcraft, women ultimately made up the majority of those convicted of witchcraft, a phenomenon that can be linked to the biases these authors pushed.⁵³ While the opinions of demonologists were not necessarily the sole cause for the uneven ratio of women to men convicted of witchcraft, they reflect the sexist bias against women.⁵⁴ The sexist sentiments of demonologists found in their published treatises illustrate how understandings of women shaped the legal scholars’ beliefs. Kramer and Remy held definitive beliefs that women were the weaker sex in all mental and physical aspects, and they merely alluded to the potential of males to become witches. In contrast, Bodin and Boguet admitted that although there were more female witches than male witches, men were tempted by the Devil’s promises as well.

Following the reasoning that the devil sought women to work as witches because they were “sexually perverse,” demonologists often discussed the sexual encounters between witches and devils, sabbats,⁵⁵ and rituals at great length. The purity of women was prized in the early modern period, and thus female sexuality was both feared and repressed. While crimes considered male-centric were typically those pertaining to violence, crimes centered around femininity were chiefly related to sexuality. The idea that women could “lead men astray” to commit adultery was widely considered criminal.⁵⁶ This projection of the Madonna on the “moral” female population is contrasted against the rampant sexuality that demonologists believed was universal amongst immoral witches. The fear of female sexuality manifests itself in the literal and figurative demonization of women and sex throughout demonologists’ treatises. The belief that witches made compacts with the devil typically involved a witch having intercourse with the devil, with demonologists arguing that these pacts were made in denial of God. Thus, sexual acts with the devil were seen as a means for Satan to take over both body and soul. Kramer, Bodin, Remy, and Boguet each discuss to some extent the sabbats and accompanying orgies witches would attend to fornicate with the devil supposedly.

Kramer fixates on the sexual aspect that many people believed to be involved in witchcraft and the sabbat. He describes at length acts of copulation between witches and devils or demons and claims that confessions have proven that the accused attended orgies frequently at sabbats.⁵⁷ Kramer insists that it is not merely the opinion of demonologists that witches copulate with the devil; he contends that testimonies of witches prove that this belief is credible.⁵⁸ He also concludes that witches “willingly embrace this most foul and miserable servitude,” based on his claim that the courts have witnessed many women punished for

engaging in sexual activity inconsistent with the Christian faith.⁵⁹ This is another manifestation of Kramer's flagrant misogyny, as he takes the sexuality of women in general as definitive proof that women would willingly engage in sexual acts with the devil. Kramer claims that the devil takes on the form of an incubus, a male demon capable of having sex with women, and presents itself visibly to the witch herself. However, the devil is invisible to any bystanders, and the "agitation of the legs and thighs" is the only visible evidence that witches "have been copulating with the Incubus devils."⁶⁰

Bodin addresses the supposed sexual practices of witches and demons in his *Demonmania* similarly. He uses the testimony of Jeanne Harvillier, a young French woman who claimed to have been "presented" to the devil by her mother, and the testimony of Marguerite Bremont. She claimed to have attended a sabbat and witnessed witches "lying with" the devil to support the claim that the devil physically copulates with witches upon their renunciation of God.⁶¹ Bodin also references the *Malleus Maleficarum's* explanation that witches copulated with the devil in "broad daylight," despite outsiders' inability to see any figure lying with the witch.⁶² This narrative, advanced by both Kramer and Bodin, alludes to the fears that demonologists, along with most of society, had regarding female sexuality. One can assume that these accounts of witches engaging in sexual practices with no other visible figure were because there *was* no other figure present. These cases were likely instances of self-stimulation. These demonologists assumed a demonic force was involved because the concept that women were sexual beings directly countered their world view of domestic, pure, and pious women. While Bodin does not come to a firm conclusion on whether children could be born due to a witch's sexual encounter with a demon, he addresses the question by claiming that doctors had not yet come to a consensus.⁶³ Bodin also considers the opinion presented in the *Malleus Maleficarum* that children born of this copulation would have been devils in the form of children capable of doing evil themselves.⁶⁴

Similarly, Nicholas Remy's *Demonolatry* emphasizes the sexual nature of a witch's relationship with the devil and women's susceptibility to the devil's temptations. He uses two testimonies from women accused of witchcraft as "firsthand proof" that although anyone could succumb to witchcraft, women were seen in more significant numbers than men at the devil's sabbats and were, therefore, more likely to become witches.⁶⁵ Remy discusses these sabbats as events where witches would participate in massive orgies with the devil and demons. Citing a 1588 testimony from Didatia of Miremont, who claimed she "was always so stretched by the huge, swollen member of her demon that the sheets were drenched with blood," Remy argues that the sexual encounters witches had with demons were mainly against their will.⁶⁶ He ponders whether one could become pregnant with the spawn of a demon. He goes so far as to graphically recount the testimony of a child that demons, as 'Incubi,' keep human semen they received as 'succubi,' (demons who appear in the female form to seduce men) and insert it into a witch.⁶⁷

Boguet's *An Examen of Witches* also advances the claim that witches performed sexual acts with the devil and demons. He references eleven different confessions wherein the woman accused admitted that Satan uses "carnal pleasures... as a means to bind them to his allegiance by such agreeable provocations."⁶⁸ He takes the confessions of Antoine Gandillon, Clauda Janguillaume, and Clauda Paget, among others, as evidence that the Devil used sex to bind witches to evil. Like Kramer, Boguet believed women were sexually perverse and claimed that women love carnal pleasures. Thus, witches enthusiastically engaged in this practice, commonly occurring at sabbats. However, while other demonologists such as Kramer exclude testimonies of male witches' participation in sexual acts with the devil, Boguet claims that just as women relished this practice, men were also "addicted to this pleasure" and attended

Sabbats as well. Boguet's beliefs regarding witches' desires to participate in these acts seem to contradict themselves. However, Bodin later claimed in *An Examen of Witches* that "coupling" with Satan was painful and capable of causing burning sensations in women. It was thus not pleasurable in the slightest.⁶⁹ He attributes this problem to the supposed physical deformity and ugliness of Satan. Still, Bodin claims that Satan was powerful enough to engage in sexual acts with witches using a body "formed from the air...so dense it is capable of coition of a woman."⁷⁰

While Kramer attributed the sexual perversion of women in general to be the *cause* of women becoming witches, it appears that other demonologists tended to view sexual perversion as a *result* of women's pacts with the devil. However, all these demonologists seem to concur that witches engaged in sexual acts with the devil and demons. Kramer describes this sexuality as "carnal pleasure," insinuating witches relished in the experience, while Remy clarifies that witches did not instigate or relish the act whatsoever. In *An Examen of Witches*, Boguet makes conflicting claims that witches loved carnal pleasures and that copulation with the Devil was a painful event that witches did not enjoy. While Bodin does not comment directly on whether or not witches experienced pleasure through sex with a demon, the fear of female sexuality shared by much of society is apparent in his *Demonmania*. The question of whether women could conceive children from these acts with the devil was debated as well. Boguet believed that a central reason for "coupling of the Devil" was to bear evil children detested by God, indicating that he believed children could be born out of sexual acts with demons.⁷¹ He further claims that the conception of a child with the devil was possible by "shooting male semen into the womb," thus impregnating the witch.⁷² Remy also questions how it could be possible for children to be born out of sexual encounters with the Devil, concluding based on the testimony of a child that demons reserved the sperm of a human male, using it to impregnate female witches. Though Bodin references this theory, he does not seem persuaded that demons impregnated witches in this manner.

In adherence to one of the primary functions of their legal treatises, each demonologist advises how to best obtain confessions from those accused of witchcraft, the degree to which torture should be used, the evidence needed for a conviction, and how to carry out punishment properly. These treatises were written to guide judges in their rulings on witchcraft, but they were not necessarily followed. Demonologists often wrote to encourage judges to diverge from standard prosecution procedures to condemn witches more easily. Many of the guidelines proposed by demonologists seem extreme and inhumane. Still, it is crucial to bear in mind that torture was frequently employed as a means of obtaining a confession in the early modern period, and many of the recommendations advanced by demonologists stemmed from the genuine fear that witchcraft was a serious threat to society.⁷³

The third section of Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* is predominantly concerned with how witches should be dealt with legally. Kramer refers to Roman Canon law to conclude that witches should be tried in civil and ecclesiastical courts. He believes witches can be seen as both apostates⁷⁴ or heretics,⁷⁵ depending on the nature of their crimes.⁷⁶ Kramer lists several methods by which a trial against someone accused of witchcraft can be initiated. The third involves "no accuser or informer, but a general report that there are witches in some town or place" is the most typical and allows for an anonymous accusation wherein the accuser does not need to appear before the court.⁷⁷ Kramer asserts that although two witness testimonies are not necessarily sufficient to convict an individual of heresy or witchcraft, due to the grave nature of said crimes, if the judge has "strong suspicion" based on witness testimony, the accused must be made to renounce their heresy. It is up to the judge's discretion to decide whether or not to condemn the accused.⁷⁸ Kramer also writes that witches may be used as

witnesses against one another, a common practice that ultimately resulted in an exponential increase of witchcraft accusations.⁷⁹ He also explains that the judge was not required to inform the accused of who testified against them because a witch may cause harm to those individuals.⁸⁰ While Kramer instructs that unless an accused witch confesses to the crimes they are accused of, they may not be sentenced to death, he nonetheless allows the use of torture in obtaining a confession. Although Kramer cautions that some witches may be immune to the pain inflicted by torture, not all witches are granted this protection. Thus, he argues, torture can be beneficial in exacting a confession.⁸¹ Ultimately, Kramer argues that upon conviction of a witch, the only punishment suitable is death.⁸² These harsh and seemingly immoral methods of conducting a trial related to the belief that the Devil was a master manipulator and that witches posed a threat to the safety and spirituality of society.

In his *Demonmania*, Bodin argues that failure to punish witches to the fullest extent would result in the wrath of God exacted upon a community. Witchcraft was dangerous because it could cause physical suffering and that it would also destroy the soul.⁸³ Despite his tolerance for different religious confessions, Bodin was incredibly harsh regarding the punishment of witches. In the fourth book of his treatise, *Demonmania*, Bodin claims that if witches were not made to renounce their “evil” ways, any punishment “prescribed for witches, even roasting and slowly burning them,” could not compare to the suffering they would otherwise experience at the hands of Satan or the suffering they would endure eternally for renouncing God.⁸⁴ Bodin also emphasizes the difficulty in prosecuting witches due to the secrecy under which they operate. He argues in *Demonmania* that witchcraft should be considered an “excepted crime,” as heresy and treason were, to work around the strict burdens of proof required by Roman Canon law.⁸⁵ Therefore, he asserts, witches needed to be named by accomplices because “respectable people” could not discover the depth of a witch’s crimes. According to Bodin, these accomplices could implicate an “infinite number” of fellow witches.⁸⁶

Like Kramer, Bodin grants the power to prosecute witches to both “regular” and ecclesiastical judges. Bodin also asserts, however, that crown prosecutors had the responsibility to lodge complaints against potential witches, as he raises the possibility that citizens could be too fearful of becoming involved.⁸⁷ As a means to resolve this problem, Bodin suggests that churches have a box for “poor simple people” who feared witches so that they could leave accusations anonymously.⁸⁸ Bodin’s stance on torture was similar to Kramer’s, as Bodin believed that witches had access to drugs that could numb the pain of torture. However, if they lost the drug, the immense pain inflicted by torture would compel witches to confess. Bodin also recommends methods of psychological abuse by prolonging the events leading up to torture itself and having someone in the torture chamber “cry out with a dreadful cry, as if he were in torment” due to torture to instill fear and incite a confession.⁸⁹

Bodin goes on to instruct judges on what evidence was required to prove one was guilty of witchcraft. He cites three forms of proof that were to be considered “necessary and indisputable.” First was concrete fact, the second was a voluntary confession, and the third was testimony by witnesses.⁹⁰ In identifying three different ways in which one could be proven guilty, Bodin gives judges options for prosecuting the accused, making it more likely to secure a conviction. This approach also bolsters his credibility amongst his readers, as it shows that he was knowledgeable about how witchcraft could be “proven.” Among the things which Bodin cites as “concrete proof” are poisons and spells in the possession of a witch, “digging beneath the doorway of a stable” preceding the death of livestock, possession of toads, possession of “waxen images pierced with needles,” or having been seen with someone who suddenly fell ill.⁹¹ Although most people now recognize how easy it would have been for any

number of these instances, or “proofs,” to be circumstantial, Bodin exhibits the superstitions of early modern Europeans by claiming that these “proofs” were sufficient evidence for a conviction. He instructs judges that if proof of this sort was produced, a confession was not necessary to convict someone of witchcraft.⁹² He also asserts that witness testimony by at least two witnesses could qualify as “clear and certain proof.” Likewise, if the accused remained silent, it should be interpreted as a confession, and a conviction could follow.⁹³ His justification for such methods of conviction was that witchcraft, practiced in secret, was very difficult to prove and that the ramifications for not persecuting witches would be grave.

Boguet also describes the methods of prosecution he viewed as proper through articles addressed directly to judges in *An Examen of Witches*. Like Bodin and Kramer, Boguet believed that the “usual legalities and ordinary procedure” for standard convictions need not be adhered to strictly, as witchcraft was an elusive crime to prove.⁹⁴ Boguet also advises that an individual should be imprisoned if even one convicted witch accused them, based on the reasoning that “witches who have confessed have as a rule never laid information against any who were not of their brotherhood.”⁹⁵ Boguet references both *The Malleus Maleficarum* and *Demonmania* as useful guides for judges to follow but adds that gentler questioning methods should be implemented to trap the accused into contradicting themselves.⁹⁶ Boguet also cautions against the use of excessive torture as, like his contemporaries, Boguet was convinced that witches had methods to minimize the pain they felt.⁹⁷ He concedes that torture was sometimes necessary but maintains that this was only when there was reasonable suspicion against the accused, knowledge of a confession made outside court, or the accusation by or association with another witch.⁹⁸ Boguet additionally advises against Bodin’s proposed practice of judges falsely promising witches immunity in exchange for a confession, as he considered such a practice to be immoral.⁹⁹

Many contemporary demonologists held similar views on how witches should be handled in court. Kramer, Bodin, and Boguet each condone departures from the standard legal procedure due to the secrecy surrounding witchcraft and the difficulties this caused in convictions. Where Bodin and Kramer each recommend using torture to extract confessions from those accused, Boguet rejects this, save for specific circumstances, as he was not persuaded of its effectiveness. However, while to the modern reader the use of torture to obtain a confession is not only morally wrong, but also conducive to false confessions, torture was a relatively common practice in criminal proceedings in the early modern period under Roman canon law.¹⁰⁰ Thus, as suggested by demonologists, its use would not always have been considered outlandish or uncommon.

The legal systems in the different regions where some of these demonologists wrote and worked often operated differently. In France, prosecution practices relating to witchcraft often varied between regions. The Parlement of Paris, the supreme appeals court, was incredibly reluctant to issue death sentences to accused witches because they were concerned with the lack of tangible evidence.¹⁰¹ Bodin often wrote on sensationalized cases wherein the defendant was sentenced to death as a means of setting precedents to “justify harsh sentences passed by lower courts” and pressure the Parlement of Paris to abstain from passing lighter sentences.¹⁰² Some of these tactics of persuasion do appear to have been effective. From 1565 to 1575, witchcraft appeals in the Parlement were heard at roughly the same rate as other crimes, with five or six appeals heard per year. By 1587, however, the witchcraft appeals heard by Parlement constituted approximately ten percent of all cases they reviewed.¹⁰³ While the number of cases heard by the Parlement in peak witch hunting years increased substantially, the Parlement remained far more lenient in their decisions. Nearly thirty percent of cases resulted in punishments as minor as a fine, and in eighty years beginning in 1565, only ten

percent of accused witches were condemned to a death sentence.¹⁰⁴ While this number may seem relatively high, it is important to note that this is roughly the same rate at which defendants in appellate cases of crimes such as arson and murder were sentenced to death. Although witchcraft was not a crime that could be proven with tangible facts as others could, people of the early modern period truly believed witchcraft to be a heinous crime and treated trials with appropriate seriousness. This illustrates that witch trials heard by the Parlement of Paris often resulted in lenient sentencing due to the court's concern that the lack of physical evidence made it difficult to determine guilt with certainty, not because the court itself denied the existence of witches.

Franche-Comte, where Henri Boguet tried witches, was part of French territory. However, "at the relevant dates" for this paper, rule over Franche-Comte was split between Germany as part of the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of France.¹⁰⁵ While France was more moderate in its prosecution and sentencing of witches, Germany took a different approach. In the Holy Roman Empire, the *Criminalis Carolina* was a set of laws governing criminal procedure. Among these laws was the requirement that a suspect could be tortured to derive a confession if they met two criteria: living or associating with those convicted of similar crimes.¹⁰⁶ These conditions were not difficult to meet, and torture was used frequently in the Holy Roman judicial proceedings to elicit a confession, as advocated by Kramer. Although Germany was a part of the Holy Roman Empire and governed by the *Criminalis Carolina*, Germany was not a unified nation at the time, and its leadership varied greatly between localities.¹⁰⁷ Small territories typically controlled their legal systems, and the mass panic of German witch trials, along with the standards of the *Criminalis Carolina*, resulted in different judicial systems in small locales persecuting witches in vast numbers with the use of excessive torture.¹⁰⁸ For example, regions such as Wurzburg and Bamberg even began persecuting judges who opposed the recommended procedures for witch trials as dissenters.¹⁰⁹ As France-Comte was also partially under the control of the Holy Roman Empire, the *Criminalis Carolina* would have been similarly applied.

In the early modern period, Witchcraft threatened the existing conditions of moral society yet helped define ethical behavior. Demonologists, many of whom were devout Christians, propagated much of the fear surrounding witchcraft by amplifying the supposed religious ramifications and emphasizing the Biblical claims against witchcraft. Still, their beliefs were primarily influenced by societal norms of the time. Society was relatively pious, and these religious claims against witches worked to demonize those accused of witchcraft. However, in hindsight, many of the crimes witches were charged with were circumstantial events. Kramer, Bodin, Remy, and Boguet utilized the fear of both God and the Devil to push judges to condemn witches, who were thought to have made deals with the Devil in exchange for the power to induce harm. Demonologists often proposed that women were the most likely to succumb to the Devil's temptations, falling in line with the sexist undertones of society. Women were expected to fulfill duties within their societal sphere -- acting as homemakers, mothers, and wives. When a woman exceeded these boundaries or did not comply with early modern expectations, people feared this and used such women as scapegoats to blame for misfortunes. Women of the early modern period were also expected to uphold religious standards of modesty and repressed sexuality.

Fears of sexually awakened women were expanded upon and used to vilify such women and link them with witchcraft. Ideas surrounding witches performing these sexual acts with the devil indicate these fears, as female sexuality was sensationalized and literally demonized. Although it was undoubtedly the case that men were not excluded from those accused of and tried for crimes of witchcraft and associations with the devil, societal biases

against women were undoubtedly conducive to women being implicated in crimes of witchcraft more frequently than men in writings by prominent demonologists. Many authors advocated for severe punishments and alterations of standard criminal procedures to convict those accused of witchcraft more easily. Although some methods employed in these trials, such as torture, were relatively common for the time, one can understand how prosecutor procedures recommended by demonologists would undermine the equity of a trial. Many demonologists suggested that minimal evidence was required due to the “secrecy” of the crime, witches were encouraged to implicate others as fellow witches, and torture was presented as a means of obtaining a confession. Each of these suggested practices demonstrates how those accused of witchcraft were deprived of fair prosecution practices. Ultimately, the witch craze was borne out of fear. The writings of prominent legal scholars grant insight into the mindset of a society that allowed many innocent people to be sentenced to death.

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³ Brian P. Levack, “The Witchcraft Sourcebook,” *Routledge* (2004), pp. 72, 143.

⁴ Clark, “Thinking with Demons,” p. 9.

⁵ Jonathan Barry etc., “Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography,” *Basingstoke* (2007), p. 17.

⁶ Barry, “Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography,” p. 19.

⁷ Barry, “Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography,” p. 20.

⁸ Barry, “Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography,” p. 25.

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¹⁰ Hester, “Patriarchal Reconstruction,” p. 292.

¹¹ Hester, “Patriarchal Reconstruction,” p. 293.

¹² Hester, “Patriarchal Reconstruction,” p. 295.

¹³ Ruiz, “The Terror of History.”

¹⁴ Susan Moulton, “Witchcraft: Creation of the “Evil Other,”” (2011).

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¹⁸ Lyndal Roper, “Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany,” *Yale University Press* (2006), p. 136.

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²² Kramer, “Malleus,” p. 61.

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²⁸ Lindfors, “Jean Bodin.”

²⁹ Lindfors, “Jean Bodin.”

³⁰ Bodin, “Demonmania,” p. 94.

³¹ Bodin, “Demonmania,” p. 93.

³² Bodin, “Demonmania,” p. 97.

³³ Bodin, “Demonmania,” p. 143.

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- 57 Kramer, "Malleus," pt. 2, IV.
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- 61 Bodin, "Demonmania," p. 130.
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- ¹⁰⁸ Briggs, "Witches and Neighbors," p. 411.
- ¹⁰⁹ Briggs, "Witches and Neighbors," p. 412.

Freedom Cannot Be Given: An Analysis of the Significance of Women in the Cultural Revolution

Zhen Tian

Introduction

“It was a weird period, you know, in which many girls cut their braids and dressed up as boys, sometimes you can’t tell one’s gender at first sight. So, you would hear several screams in women’s bathrooms every day.” He Cuixiang, my grandmother on my mother’s side, said so when I asked her about her memories of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). At the turn of the 1960s, she had just graduated from a high school in Hebei Province and began actively participating in numerous campaigns. Zhang Fenlan, my grandmother on my father’s side, who grew up in one of the then poorest villages in Inner Mongolia, had a completely different story. “What Cultural Revolution? I don’t know such a thing. When I was young, I was the one who supported the whole family when your grandfather was working away in town, and that was not easy. I had to work in the fields while taking care of your father and aunts. Women in our village were all like that, we worked harder than men to earn work points, and that was highly encouraged.”

Familiar rhetoric in the two seemingly distinct memories caught my attention—there was a blurred gender expectation resulting from women’s masculinization. During the Cultural Revolution, there was an ongoing but never completed process of redefining gender roles. As He and Zhang suggested, many women—the “Iron Girls” who worked harder than men, for example—were encouraged to devote themselves to the process of becoming men and even their superior. Chinese women’s shifting gender ideologies in the Cultural Revolution appear as an interesting topic for further exploration. Yet, women were often forgotten in one of the most insignificant corners of history. After a series of feminist movements and the prospering of women’s studies in the late 19th century in the West, people started to examine women’s contributions and struggles. In the field of the Cultural Revolution—a relatively new field of historical studies—there was even less attention paid to women as a separate social category. Prominent scholars like Andrew Walder, who perceived the Cultural Revolution as a power struggle, emphasized the political center and reduced the common people to opportunists who took actions for self-protection.¹ Other scholars, who focused on the class struggle, incorporated both genders into a vaguely stratified society, implying that since all commoners lost their voices at the time, looking at women as a separation from men might not be necessary.

However, it was impossible to say that women and men had the same experiences. Even if one insists on arguing that the gender differences were relatively subtle, it is still worth asking why it was so. A lot of questions quickly emerged: Was it a universal phenomenon in the then PRC? Why did it happen? What was gender’s significance in understanding the Cultural Revolution? Also, what caused women’s masculinization? Was it the women’s movement? More so, was there even a women’s movement during the Cultural Revolution? Could examining women’s roles at the time bring about new thinking about equality and liberation or specific insights to understand the transformation of socialism within the PRC?

To answer the questions above, I examined news reports from the People’s Daily (*Renmin Ribao*) and articles from the dawn of the founding of the PRC to the mid-1970s, by which the Criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius Campaign (*pi Lin pi Kong*) brought about moral

renewal movements for women to oppose male chauvinism.² Generally speaking, women's movements continued during the Cultural Revolution, which successfully created a shared consciousness of liberation. Yet, women's inferiority was only modified rather than eradicated. They were recognized as men's comrades and key labor force, but they were often "held to male standards," with their characteristics and needs ignored and even despised.³ A housewife was labeled as an unrevolutionary role, and women like the "Iron Girls" ended up being victimized and awkward—forgotten, and even denied their existence—position within the socialist society. As a result, instead of averting the degeneration of socialism, the unachieved women's liberation and equality became a catalyst that accelerated the nation's shift away from Maoist socialism towards the current Chinese socialism or capitalism with Chinese characteristics.

The Historical Roots of Women's Inferiority

Before analyzing the women's movement during the Cultural Revolution, it is necessary to address women's subordinate position throughout Chinese history to understand the Cultural Revolution's influences on women. About ten thousand years ago, humans began to transit from hunter-gatherer societies to sedentary societies. Men replaced women to become the primary source of production, marking the beginning of patriarchal societies. For thousands of years, ancient Chinese people were expected to fulfill their assigned roles in family and society in a strict patrilineal world shaped by Confucianism. For women, they were taught by countless government regulations, scholarly teachings, and practices to demonstrate their deference to the Three Obediences and Four Virtues (*san cong si de*) as well as the Three Principles and Five Norms (*san gang wu chang*).

The Three Obediences asked daughters to obey fathers, wives to obey husbands, and widows to obey sons; the four virtues required women to show proper ethics (*fu de*), speech (*fu yan*), visage (*fu rong*), and works (*fu gong*). Also, husbands were required to surveil and guide their wives (*fu wei qi gang*). Apart from the spiritual limitations, the painful foot-binding custom physically prevented women from leaving the household freely. For instance, in the Ming dynasty, only men studied Neo-Confucianism to discipline themselves as frugal and diligent, and women were asked to meet moral expectations by following the standards set by their male partners.⁴ Even women who surpassed male dominance, like Emperor Wu Zetian and the female leaders in the Taiping Rebellion, could not be viewed as adequate examples of female sovereign despite their high positions because they "only mediate the law" rather than possessing it.⁵

The veiled reason for such regulations was the shared belief that women were the most vulnerable to—or were the origins of—social and moral evils and thus needed to be constantly under men's control. Throughout ancient Chinese history, the juxtaposition of imposing female chastity and denying female virtues reinforced and justified the favored patrilineal system. As a result, Confucianism created a set of confinements for Chinese women, and such suppression was prolonged into the PRC newly established in 1949.

Marxist-Leninist Theory and Maoism Practice of Women's Liberation

According to Marx, "the direct, natural, and necessary relation of person is the relation of man to women."⁶ Therefore, it is natural and essential for men and women to view one another as comrades fighting for a common glory purpose. This set the ideological base of liberation that urges men and women to fight side by side against inequality rather than foster gender dichotomy. Marx believed that women were the essential force in the working-class struggle and suggested that labor was the most effective way for women to strike down gender

inequality. With Marxism as the theoretical foundation, Leninist socialism in the Soviet Union promised women political and economic equality by paralleling their liberation to that of the workers. Therefore, in a Marxist-Leninist society, women's emancipation must come about as part of a grand proletariat class emancipation, and women must unbind themselves from domestic works and actively participate in social works to actualize complete liberation.

Following Lenin's example, while holding a firm belief in the capability to incorporate Marxist-Leninist ideology of women's liberation into Chinese society, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under Mao Zedong's leadership announced that the emancipation of women was to be accompanied by the emancipation of labor. Women could be truly emancipated only when the proletariat gained power.⁷ Following Lenin, Mao has put the Marxist theory of women's emancipation into practice in the PRC, hoping that incorporating women's struggle into the class struggle led by the proletariat would enable the CCP to continue walking down the path of socialism in his vision. In 1964, during his visit to the Ming Tombs Reservoir, Mao delivered a famous speech that said, "Time is different, men and women are the same. Women are capable of doing things that men can do."⁸ Around the same time, the phrase "women hold up half the sky"—recognizing women as the essential players in the proletariat revolution against feudalist oppression and capitalist exploitation—also became widely circulated.

When the Cultural Revolution was still in its nascent stage at the beginning of the 1960s, the concept of class struggle was intensified. In 1962, Mao reminded the people to "never forget about class struggle."⁹ In an article published by the People's Daily in October 1964, it was written that "the emancipation of working-class women, in general, is an important part of the proletarian revolution; the formulation and solutions of the women's problems must be subordinated to the interests of the proletarian struggle as a whole."¹⁰ The co-emergence of society's need for labor and women's personal need for value and acknowledgment made many women believe that once the proletariat class became strong, they would be freed as an inseparable contributor to its prosperity.

Women's Movement in the PRC: Definition and Limitations

The clarification of Marxist-Leninist and Maoist ideologies on women leads to another question: What is a women's movement in Marx and Mao's viewpoints? At the time, "women's movement" was the most frequently used term in news articles compared to similar expressions like gender equality, women's liberation, women's problems, and women's development.¹¹ Since the term is still commonly used, many people's direct understanding is derived from their knowledge of the women's movement of the 1960s in the United States when American women advocated for civil rights, equal pay, and reproductive rights. However, what happened in the PRC and the United States was utterly different, giving the Chinese "women's movement" a completely different definition.

The term "movement" itself has a notably different definition in the PRC than in Western ideology. In Western comprehension, a movement always consists of an intense series of public campaigns calling for liberating changes in certain groups' social, economic, and political status. The women's or feminist movement in the west was "a comprehensive critical response to the deliberate and systematic subordination of women as a group by men as a group within a given cultural setting."¹² According to the Cultural Revolution Dictionary composed by underground scholars and activists, a movement is a special working method or organizational form in China. It represents a large-scale mass class struggle and political action commanded by the monolithic party and government operation system and organized by the CCP Politburo cadre leaders to set goals, guidelines, and policies to mobilize the whole society to realize political and cultural revolutions.¹³ The essence of a Chinese movement was, in fact,

a total and unquestionable mobilization of the mass. Unlike how Americans were mobilized during the Civil Rights Movements as multiple different groups with separate political pursuits, the mass mobilization in the PRC forced the synchronization of Chinese civilians and aimed at the gradual elimination of any differences, such as the concept of class. Instead of emerging from the ordinary people's desire to let the state acknowledge their rights, all the movements in China were parts of a class struggle with the initiative belonging to the party.

As Mao explained, "the women's movement was not just a feminist movement, but a revolutionary movement that united other oppressed people in a common struggle for liberation."¹⁴ The women who participated in the women's movement in the PRC were not feminists. There was no need for them to fight for female rights in society because there was already a tacit approval that, by including women's movement in the proletariat class struggle, gender inequality was already eliminated. The party cadres were responsible for helping women with their liberation, "just like teaching a toddler to walk."¹⁵ In numerous news articles on *Renmin Ribao*, women excitedly thanked "Chairman Mao and the CCP" for "pulling them out of the abyss of sorrow." Therefore, the established consensus at the time was that The Messianic CCP generously bestowed Chinese women freedom.

During the Sino-Japanese War and the Civil War before the establishment of the PRC, the country eagerly needed labor forces. By then, many women were encouraged by the state to take up the responsibility to participate in industrial and agricultural production, especially when men were fighting the war in the front. In 1946, the People's Daily reported incidents of women participating in textile production as examples of "self-reform," which enabled them to obtain higher status within family and society.¹⁶ In March 1949, the first National Women's Congress convened and established the All-China Women's Federation. At the time, the dominant rhetoric of women in major newspapers was that "only men should take charge since women do not count as people" should be eradicated. More and more women responded to the nation's calling by receiving education and participating in the production, and many put great emphasis on marriage freedom. Many of the CCP's provisions served as key factors to elevate women's status.

However, did the "given freedom and equality" really mean that all women suddenly began enjoying a satisfying emancipated life? First, it was still widely believed that "women were suited only for less skilled tasks."¹⁷ In the Maoist socialist society, the lack of productive power limited many women from gaining respect, not to mention equal treatment. It also implicitly blamed women for not being as strong as men, which resulted in the persistence of gender inequality. Second, Mao's emphasis on the importance of bearing class struggle in mind in the early 1960s was interpreted by many activists as approaching social problems solely in terms of gender was problematic. Discussions of "Why do women live" and "What are the standards for choosing a partner" were labeled as reactionary or capitalist because they deviated from the proletariat class struggle.¹⁸ After the Cultural Revolution was fully launched, these politically correct interpretations became highly influential. In 1973, major press like the People's Daily criticized Lin Biao and Liu Shaoqi for "making women the tamed tools that never ask about proletarian politics or care about national and world events." It reiterated that "it is wrong to deviate from the class struggle and line struggle to deal with the issue of women's problem."¹⁹

Summing up, the Chinese women's movement was directly organized and promoted by women's federations under the leadership of the CCP. It was closely linked to the fate of the party and the nation. By devoting their time and strengths to raising productions, the gender movement became an almost indistinguishable part of the working class-led movement. Thus, the central tasks and goals of the women's movement were following the

party's main plans, which was to be an additional force actualizing the party-led socialist modernization. However, despite the general improvement in women's conditions, the limitations of the women's movement made the liberating process never complete. Mao only thought in terms of the needs of the revolution from a man's perspective as a proletariat leader, and gender difference was minimized and denounced. At the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese women remained—or many have returned to—a socially and economically inferior position compared to men. As Simone de Beauvoir wrote:

Feminism itself has never been an autonomous movement: it was partially an instrument in the hands of politicians and partially an epiphenomenon reflecting a deeper social drama. Never did women form a separate caste: and, they never sought to play a role in history as sex. The doctrines that call for the advent of women as flesh, life, immanence, or the Other are masculine ideologies that do not in any way express feminine claims.²⁰

It was so for feminists and only more so for Chinese women at the time. Men led the struggle for women's rights within a larger class struggle, and women accepted men as the natural mentors in their pursuit of equality. Despite their different political stands, women were to become men's tools to achieve success. Consequently, after seeing men being in an ideal state of power, an increasing number of women began engaging in an unhealthy process of masculinization for self-emancipation.

Women's Movement during the Cultural Revolution

After a basic understanding of why the PRC's women's movement was an incomplete liberating battle for Chinese women, it is necessary to look at its significance in the Cultural Revolution. The critical question that needs to be asked is: What happened to Chinese women and their movements from 1966 to 1976? What inspired more and more Chinese women at the time to join the collective effort? The turning point for women to become politically active came with the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign in 1972. Before diving into further discussion about the campaign, it is important to briefly examine the years before it took place. In the first five years of the Cultural Revolution, there was little collective effort on women's problems, and the women's movement remained only a distant promise. Although the women's movement or mobilization in the PRC was promoted as a symbol of socialism, the violence that was going on at the time put nearly all effort on halt. Primarily influenced by the "either friend or enemy dichotomy" rooted in the class struggle, women's pursuit of equality became scattered only in subtle ideological forms.

Even worse, many forms of female activism, such as the women's federation calling for women's liberation through education and working, became the condemned targets of the revolution. In May 1967, in a directive speech to the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee, Mao criticized that "in the past ten years since liberation, we have been detached from the masses; the Youth Federation, the Women's Federation and the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League are all just facades."²¹ In 1968, the Women's Federation became a victim of military control and surveillance (*jun guan*), and news reports featuring women experienced a significant decrease. Therefore, the continuing years of turmoil and Mao's direct criticism resulted in severe setbacks for women's sociopolitical advancements.

The turning point occurred at the turn of the 1970s. On September 13, 1971, Lin Biao, then the vice-chairman of the CCP and Mao Zedong's close comrade and successor, died in a plane crash in the People's Republic of Mongolia. Although the party cadres were reluctant and awkward in releasing information, the official explanation of the incident accused Lin of plotting an assassination against Mao. It claimed that Lin's family were on their way fleeing to

the Soviet Union. After Lin's mysterious death, the violent massive purge gradually faded, and Mao began openly criticizing Lin in multiple circumstances. In a conversation with Wang Hongwen and Zhang Chunqiao in 1973, Mao associated Confucius with Lin Biao and negatively labeled them as "driving history backward" and thus "has to be criticized."²² Under Jiang Qing's call, the Criticism Group of Peking University and Tsinghua University, in the pseudonym Liang Xiao (a homonym to Two Schools), compiled and circulated "Lin Biao and the Doctrines of Confucius and Mencius" in February 1974. The responses to Lin Biao's death quickly brought about a nationwide campaign to Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius.

Historians studying the Cultural Revolution have reached an agreement on the narration of the historical facts of the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign. The overall explanations and analyses of the movement are clear and coherent. The primary claim of the campaign starting in mid-1973 was to denounce the saying "restrain oneself and return to the rites" (*ke ji fu li*) that was suggested by Confucius and upheld by Lin Biao. It was widely believed that the Confucian mindset was counter-revolutionary because Lin wanted to use it to overturn the proletarian democracy and restore feudalism and capitalism. More subtly, the campaign led by the "Gang of Four" headed by Jiang Qing made then Prime Minister Zhou Enlai their real target. They tried to label Zhou "the present-day Confucius," yet their effort eventually fell apart in late 1974 when Mao disproved the "Gang of Four." Generally speaking, the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign—which lasted about a year—was a relatively short-lived movement in the ten years of turmoil from 1966 to 1976.

In the seemingly complete narration, women became an invisible element in general. There was more to the story. In most dynasties, Confucian thoughts have been used by courts and governments to justify and consolidate male supremacy while nailing the submissive and dependent position of women. Thus, the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign provided a unique opportunity for Chinese women to become politically active by criticizing Confucianism, giving rise to a series of women's movements. In 1972, the women's movement made a powerful comeback. As the People's Daily confidently wrote, "the depth and breadth of the women's movement have never been greater," and the results were also cheering—"women's political, economic, cultural and family life are given the same status as men."²³

Indeed, simply skimming through the news reports—the People's Daily, for example—and seeing the abrupt increase in reports on women could show that participating in criticizing Confucius conventions has created remarkably awakening and empowering effects on Chinese women. In 1973, the number of news reports of the People's Daily on women skyrocketed to an unprecedented level, particularly for the ones reporting stories of the "Iron Girls."²⁴ The "Iron Girls" and the "Three-Eight Working Units" were powerful proofs of women's unprecedented level of productivity in agriculture and industrial construction. During the same year, Beijing and Shanghai held the 6th Women's Congress to discuss women's future development directions. More and more women began learning Marxism and Mao Zedong's thoughts and preparing themselves for assuming leadership positions within the party. In general, women cherished every opportunity to reach gender equality. They believed that they needed to—just like the "Iron Girls"—continuously improve physical fitness and become even stronger than boys.

However, although an increasing number of women participated in different activities calling for liberation and equality, the so-called "women's movement" never belonged to them. For the Red Guards like He Cuixiang---my grandmother on my mother's side---in big cities, they often got carried along by the proletarian movement and never had the chance to have their voices be heard; for the "Iron Girls" and other hardworking women like Zhang Fenlan in rural areas, their efforts and devotion was mainly for the Party and the working-class people

rather than for women's betterment. Therefore, the women's movement hardly ever established any clear or independent political goal. After Lin's death, there was "disillusion, confusion, and cynicism abounded."²⁵ This had made the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign merely a part of the CCP's larger plan to restore people's faith in Maoist socialism.

The legacies left by the women's movement were very controversial. On the one hand, it has created more favorable conditions for Chinese women. Elisabeth Croll of the University of London argued that although structural constraints were working against women's further liberation in the campaign, the ideologies of breaking down male supremacy and redefining women's roles were vitalized.²⁶ On the other hand, it was viewed as a cruel lesson. According to Baidu, one of the most used search engines reflecting the public consensus of the modern PRC, the Criticizing Lin, and Confucius Campaign had no contribution to the nation's progression.²⁷ Following this logic, the women's movement as a part of the larger campaign was also a historical mistake that should be regretted and avoided in the future. Hence, the next series of questions awaiting answers would be: What was the meaning of the women's movement in the Cultural Revolution? Was it an empowering step forward or a traumatic setback? Also, were women just senseless tools used by the CCP cadres to defend socialism with no side effects?

The "Iron Girls"

As discussed previously, the women's emancipation movement during the Cultural Revolution gave birth to a group of women who trespassed the gender line both psychologically and physically. After Mao Zedong claimed that "men and women are the same," the "Iron Girls" began making their appearance on the historical stage as one of the most representative icons of the era. Therefore, analyzing the meaning of the experiences of the "Iron Girls" at the time would provide an insightful answer to the questions above.

The earliest use of the term "Iron Girls" in the People's Daily was in 1958. On 11 November, under the title "Iron Girls vs. Desolate Desert," the news article depicted how five teenage girls of the poor farmer class successfully changed the desert to fertile land available for farming. The farmland in then Jiahe of Shandong Province was almost dead dirt that made growing plants very difficult. Farmers must remove the sand on the surface by turning over the soil for at least two meters for their crops to grow. Five teenage girls, the oldest being only eighteen years old, were determined to contribute to the extremely challenging work. They "never moan about their sore legs, never complain about the cold weather, never stop working even in heavy snows, never cry even with their bones broken, and never call out for pain when bleeding," and were given the name the "Iron Girls."²⁸ Similar cases were reported sporadically throughout the following years, with the Dazhai "Iron Girls" of Shanxi Province being the most prominent figure. In 1963, 1966, 1968, 1972, and 1974, women in Dazhai worked nights and days to fight against floods and droughts.²⁹ Along with the rising tide of the Cultural Revolution, under the strong influence of Mao's teaching, more and more women were encouraged to walk out of the households, push beyond their bodies' limits, and participate in hard labor.

In 1969, the PLA Daily publicized Mao Zedong's newest slogan, "One, not afraid of exhaustion; Two, not afraid of death" (*yi bupa ken, er bupa si*). When the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign started, and the women's movement revived in the early 1970s, the "Iron Girl" figure—the living example of the slogan—fitted the political need at the time and experienced a large-scale publication in news reports. More and more women cadres gained power and were acknowledged as both the backbone and the forerunners of the production lines. Song Liying would leave her family's clothes unwashed for several days because she did

not want to interrupt the collective work; Guo Fenglian, who established the “Iron Girls Team,” worked in the fields all the time; Guo Ailian attended work for more than 290 days a year despite her three young children were at home; Jia Cunsuo had a heavy burden of housework, yet she still actively participated in the most challenging parts of the production. According to the People’s Daily, they all “worked as hard as men” all the time in all tasks and influenced many more women to join them with the ideology of “working for the proletariat revolution.”³⁰

The women’s movement was flourishing not only in agricultural and industrial production but also in the sociopolitical arena, in which they borrowed the spirits of the “Iron Girls.” One female cadre leader said:

In the past feudal society, we women were belittled as only being able to cook and raise children. After the liberation, many of us took positions as cadre leaders and participated in the revolutionary movements. This was the result of Chairman Mao’s leadership and the powerful critique of Lin and Confucius’ ways.³¹

Female leaders and working-class women participated in the women’s mobilization as a powerful force in the socialist revolution and construction. As an ordinary woman said:

In the past, women were victims of the Three Principles and Five Virtues. After the liberation, working class women were emancipated. The Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign further made us realize that all of our past struggles were caused by the exploitative structure of the feudal society.³²

Multiple news reports used similar phrasing like, “Under the CCP’s guidance, we must communicate and implement the lines, guidelines, and policies to the masses of women quickly and accurately.”³³ In numerous places, many Chinese women, who felt empowered by the “Iron Girls” accomplishments in the past decade, began criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius’ false slandering of women and the feudal rituals’ exploitation of the working-class women. They blasted the “men are more superior than women” (*nan zun nü bei*) and “women are useless” (*funü wuyong*) ideologies and rejected the Three Obediences and Four Virtues and the Three Principles and Five Virtues.

Through a series of mobilizing efforts, women, with the “Iron Girls” as the prominent figure, were assigned multiple important social and political roles as workers, farmers, leaders, and so forth. As a result, there were definite improvements for Chinese women, which set a seemingly promising future for socialism in the PRC. First, the newly legislated laws that adhered to the principle of gender equality unchained women from the heavy shackles of *de jure* inferiority. The Marriage Laws imposed monogamy and freedom of marriage and prohibited bigamy, concubinage, child brides, and many other derogatory traditions. Also, the Constitution clearly stated that “women have equal rights with men in political, economic, cultural, social and family life,”³⁴ and further provided women with voting rights and labor protections. Second, like the “Iron Girls,” women realized that their potentials could be extended far beyond households to a broadened field of employment. Just as Marx envisioned, within a socialist society, women and men were no longer in opposition but could affirm an absolute sense of brotherhood beyond their natural difference.³⁵

However, the CCP-led women’s movement had side effects unanticipated by many cadre leaders, and there were two reasons. First, the women’s movement never belonged to themselves. Under the strong influence of the belief in the necessity to follow the line of class struggle, the women’s movement at the time appeared as a mass mobilization designed to consolidate a greater framework created by men. This might be one of the fatal limitations of Maoist socialist ideology and approach that forced women to only intervene by being in

concert with men and from a masculine point of view. Second, *de facto* inequality persisted, and women suffered greatly. After establishing multiple laws and policies and the well-known “Iron Girls” icon, many people firmly believed that equality between men and women had been achieved. Yet, the “Iron Girls” showed that the state only manipulated women as a tool for protecting socialism. The physical differences between men and women were ignored and criticized as survivalism (*huoming zhubuyi*) and even reactionary.

As Emily Honig pointed out, people believed that “as soon as a woman becomes an Iron Girl, other issues regarding gender roles in the workplace, including women’s domestic responsibilities, will be solved.”³⁶ However, the “Iron Girls” were relatively minimal in number, and their sense of freedom was attained by sacrificing their true self and making themselves men’s equal. The publication of their stories in renowned newspapers like the People’s Daily showed that the PRC’s attitude encouraged such sacrifice. Accordingly, women were taught to transcend the gender barrier and become men to “elevate” themselves “appears as a ‘real woman’ disguised as a man, and she feels awkward in her woman’s body as in her masculine garb.”³⁷ Many more women who failed to do so were disproved as weak or, more tragically, being on the wrong line.

By making the “Iron Girls” a mark of success, the CCP has created an illusion that the state-socialist system was functioning. However, due to biological and historical causes, women could never become men. They were soon about to find out the denials and suppressions of femininity in a disguised form of emancipation were doing them more harm. At the same time, many men complained that women’s emancipation was overdone. They charged the “Iron Girls” as women “devoid of femininity.”³⁸ They became increasingly dissatisfied with women’s defeminization and masculinization because many could not find a balance within their families. Therefore, the women’s movement changed the existence of gender inequality, which planted the seed for many people, both men and women, to willingly move away from Maoist socialism in the Deng Xiaoping era.

Jiang Qing

Apart from the representative revolutionary group like the “Iron Girls” in the PRC’s women’s movement, individual females, particularly those who rose to the top position of the CCP like Mao Zedong’s wife Jiang Qing and Lin Biao’s wife Ye Qun, also stood out. Briefly examining Jiang Qing’s experience during the Cultural Revolution could provide another angle of understanding the general limitations of Maoist socialism in liberating women. Yan’an, the holy land of the Chinese Communist revolution, was a male-dominated world before the establishment of the PRC, in which nearly all the Party cadres’ wives were “victims of the chauvinist attitudes of their husbands.”³⁹ Their responsibility was to support their husbands, and the realization of their revolutionary ideals remained mainly out of reach. After Mao divorced, He Zizhen in 1938, Jiang Qing became Mao’s fourth and last wife, only with a few conditions. One of the conditions required Jiang not to “show her face in public” (*pao tou lu mian*) and was forbidden from participating in politics for twenty years.

Jiang did remain a “qualified” wife supporting her great husband for the first twenty years of their marriage. However, when the women’s movement began taking root as part of the Cultural Revolution, she was no longer willing to remain submissive. Jiang rose as a political leader of the CCP and quickly became a living example of Mao’s words— “women hold up half the sky”—by being a vanguard of the class struggle and the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign. In 1974, Jiang began giving many public speeches. She paid high regard to powerful female figures like Emperor Wu Zetian and Empress Lü of Han as an expression of her determination to strike down the “men are more superior than women” ideology.⁴⁰

Following Jiang's instructions, Liang Xiao published an article titled "Wu Zetian: A Successful Female Politician," which praised her for leading a successful campaign against Confucianism and the conservative reactionaries.⁴¹ By saying that "Wu Zetian's historical role is not comparable to that of the peasants who drove the history of feudal society forward," the article subtly placed Jiang in a more advanced position than Empress Wu as a female proletariat leader in a socialist society.

However, Jiang Qing soon faced conviction and imprisonment as the head of the "Gang of Four" at the end of the Cultural Revolution. It was described as "the shattering of Jiang Qing's dream of becoming female Emperor." Discontent already appeared in 1974 when the Criticizing Lin and Confucius Campaign was at its peak from the top and the bottom of the power ladder. In a letter from Mao to Jiang, Mao commented that "Do not show up in public that often, do not sign documents that often, do not form a cabinet (and be the secret boss)...One should know one's place."⁴² An anonymous letter from one named "Red-heart patriot" wrote:

Empress Jiang,

Hundreds of flowers bloom in the spring breeze, all the living things perish in the cold wind. You have gone [obscenity] crazy and made our great country into this chaos. The harms and wrongdoings you did to the nation and the people have far exceeded Imperial Concubine Yang and Empress Zhao Feiyan...Stop showing off. No matter how many peacocks feathers a crow uses to dress itself, a crow is always a crow, never a peacock.⁴³

On the one hand, Mao's words revealed that, apart from his sincere concerns for socialism's path forward, he was very dissatisfied with Jiang gaining political power while he was losing control. As the highest leader of the PRC and Jiang's husband, Mao felt that his dominant position was seriously threatened. On the other hand, the anonymous letter showed an intense nationwide feeling that male supremacy was under humiliating attacks from women. Red-heart patriot's referring to Jiang as "Empress" and comparing Jiang to Imperial Concubine Yang. Zhao Feiyan signaled that Jiang was not regarded as a politician with sincere ideas about the proletariat revolution. Instead, she was no more than a beautiful woman who relied on Mao to "exploit her position," and her involvement in the Cultural Revolution was denounced as "wives in politics" (*furen zhengzhi*) that deserved to be blamed for the disastrous results.⁴⁴

In 1976, Peking University's Movement Office published a collection of excerpts of Jiang Qing's anti-CCP "black" remarks, criticizing her for being anti-CCP leaders, including Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, and Hua Guofeng, because she had the ambition to usurp political power. The evidence the collection relied upon included a significant amount of Jiang's comments on gender equality, for example:

Both men and women are participating in revolution and production. Women are able to do things men can do and are even capable of doing things men cannot do. However, when it comes to power, men always want to control everything and leaves women with nothing.⁴⁵

Although Jiang's many speeches were no more than stating the facts about women's problems, in the end, they were viewed as reactionary and were generally denied. This was a direct reflection of the limitations of the socialist society in Mao's ideal. Women's status was still not recognized as men's equal, but many of their images appeared as challenges against the deeply rooted male chauvinism. As a result, both men and women were dissatisfied and confused by the current state of society at the time. The unsolved women's problem became a powerful force that undermined people's trust and faith in Maoist socialism.

Conclusion

It was undeniable that the women's movement in the Cultural Revolution challenged the traditional gendered labor division and freed many women from the submissive societal position caused by feudal restrictions. However, the socialist society in Mao's dream only allowed women to advance without damaging the patriarchal authority.⁴⁶ The "Iron Girls" suffered physically and psychologically through being degenderized, especially when the degenderization happened in the form of deconstructing the idea of female selfhood itself. Despite the ongoing social turmoil, the expectations for an ideal Chinese woman to be a reproductive wife and a caring mother persisted. The "men and women are the same" motto made many women, only temporarily, believe that their true emancipation lay in being able to shape themselves to the standard of men. Instead of "being women" in the PRC, many women began putting their efforts into "becoming men." To be more specific, Chinese women during the Cultural Revolution wanted to reconfigure the "alluring, vulnerable, dependent, and inferior" labels,⁴⁷ so they began defying and even despising their biologically and socially set female body, identity, and responsibilities.

Yet, this was highly problematic because, first, women could never enjoy gender equality in this social structure. The seemingly promising transformation was, in reality, a manifestation of male hegemony. Second, since the movements were mobilizations led by the CCP cadre leaders, many people, especially women, lost the opportunity to pursue their own beliefs. Third, although the cadre leaders designed a series of policies and institutions to free women from housework, most women could never truly escape their traditional responsibilities. Even if some of them could peel off the label as a traditional Chinese woman, many men began calling for them to return home. Despite their completely different experiences during the Cultural Revolution, both He Cuixiang—the passionate Red Guard—and Zhang Fenlan—almost an "Iron Girl"—returned to their families and continued to "be women." From their twenties to seventies, the two women never again tried to "become men." Most importantly, although Chinese women at the time were defeminized and silenced in a man's world, they were never willing to be forever silenced and used as a tool. There were always women fighting to eliminate their deformed female identity—a product of patriarchal discourse—and trying to find their value of existence.

Women's suffering in the Cultural Revolution destabilized individual families as well as the socialist social structure. After many women gained inspiration through education and campaigning and still felt uncomfortable in their new way of "freedom," women started to call for attention to gender differences and women's protection. It would be interesting to investigate further how women in the Cultural Revolution became a factor that influenced the public to embrace Deng Xiaoping's "bring order out of chaos" (*bo luan fan zheng*) ideology, which may have led the PRC into a transition from Maoist socialism to socialism with Chinese characteristics, which was an alternative term of capitalism with Chinese characteristics.

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³ Gail Hershatter, "Chapter 1: Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and Gender Difference," *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*, (University of California Press, 2007), p. 46.

⁴ "Family Instructions," in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook, Second Edition*, trans. Clara Yu, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey (New York: Free Press, 1993), pp. 241-43.

⁵ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex, Kindle Edition*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage Books, 2009), p. 1727.

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- ¹⁸ Wanmuchun, “Zenyang Kandai Funü Wenti,” *The People’s Daily*, 28 October 1964.
- ¹⁹ “Jiji Peiyang Dadan Shiyong Funü Ganbu,” *The People’s Daily*, 1 February 1973.
- ²⁰ de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, p. 3060.
- ²¹ Huang, “Wenge Shiqi Nüxing Xingxiang Zhengzhizhuhua Yanjiu,” p. 84.
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- ²⁴ Huang, “Wenge Shiqi Nüxing Xingxiang Zhengzhizhuhua Yanjiu,” pp. 62-64.
- ²⁵ Wu, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, p. 204.
- ²⁶ Croll, “The Anti-Lin Piao and Confucian Campaign,” p. 41.
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God and Politics: John Knox and the Scottish Reformation

Megan Tien

In spring 1547, a man ran out of a Church in St. Andrews, Scotland, shocked and in tears. Just a few moments earlier, this man had heard the preacher declare, “In the name of God, and of his son Jesus Christ and in the name of these that presently calls you by my mouth, I charge you that ye refuse not this holy vocation [...] that ye take upon you the public office and charge or preaching.” Afterward, the congregation replied in affirmation, “It was and we approve it.”¹ John Knox had just received a calling to become a minister to the Protestant Reformation. Rather than accept this calling in honor and joy, Knox was upset and confused. Knox was a man who thought of himself as merely a simple scholar, but now his life was about to change completely. After some consideration, Knox returned to accept this daunting task of being a minister as his new purpose in life. Because of this, Knox would end up spearheading a movement more significant than he could have ever imagined, the Protestant Reformation in Scotland.

This paper demonstrates how John Knox wanted to set up the Scottish Church, known as a Kirk, based on his religious beliefs and political authority perspectives. Scholars describe Knox as an outspoken man of passion and theology, noting his fiery approach to reform through his expressive opinions related to his work supporting Protestantism and against Catholicism. Knox condemned Catholic practices as “ungodly” and attacked Catholics like Queen Mary Stuart in the political realm. Scholars like John Gray criticize Knox for his intensity and “exaggeration.”² Quentin Skinner affirms this notion of aggression, describing Knox’s writings as “inflammatory.”³ Nevertheless, Knox remained an instrumental figure who helped advance Reformed thinking. Gray acknowledged that while Knox had a “habit of exaggeration [...] a serious flaw” in his character, this was due to his sense of desperation and urgency during a time when the direction of the Reformation in Europe was quite unpredictable.

Knox needed to take immediate and critical action to ensure that the Protestant cause would be pushed forward, even if he used what some people believed were intense “remedies.”⁴ Richard G. Kyle stresses Knox’s vision for the structure of all churches in general, which Knox had based upon the Old Testament and First-Century Church. He also examined Knox’s viewpoints on the roles of both secular and religious authorities. Kyle’s arguments about Knox’s basis for the Scottish Church are crucial to understanding how Knox saw himself as a reformer.⁵ While Knox was concerned with political influence on the church, his allegiance was not to any mortal being but to God. Knox did not care about pleasing people, such as the king, nobility, or commoners. Instead, he worked to assure that the truth of the Gospel be made known in whatever way possible, even if that meant coming off as combative and belligerent. Especially during a period when the Catholic opposition had a firm grip on Scotland, it was reasonable for John Knox to resort to extreme measures to reveal to the people what he believed was life-saving truth.⁶ Ultimately, Knox wanted to uphold his obedience towards God. To do so, he did his best to spread Protestantism to others.⁷ He did so not only because he believed that it was his religious duty to God but because he believed there were eternal stakes involved for each member of humanity. Because Knox thought that the Bible’s central message would affect one’s eternal life trajectory, it was vital for him to try

to spread his beliefs to many people. Above all, Knox did not want to see people being misled down the wrong path into an eternal life of destruction and separation from God.

In the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation began to spread throughout Europe. During this period, political drama loomed over many people's heads and contributed to their social motivations. Knox's beliefs about church-building and politics remained constant in that his reverence for God remained central. Still, his efforts increased in urgency over time due to his imprisonment in the galleys, relocation to England, return to Scotland, and awareness of the rise and fall of monarchs in England and Scotland. Knox's *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, "A Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God's Truth in England," as well as his "Scots Confession of 1560," act as windows into Knox's views, helping to demonstrate how and why these changes occurred. Through these texts, we witness Knox's evolution from a figure who did not interact with political entities to someone who actively sought to work with or against political figures for the sake of building up the Scottish Church. Knox's three pieces of writing reveal both his evolving views on politics as well as his enduring commitment to being ultimately loyal to God.

Due to his position as a minister and reformer, Knox had an idealistic view of reform, best seen through his call to ministry and first public debate. Knox made his reformed theological beliefs known but lacked a specific plan for the structure of the church. Protestants were less concerned than Catholics about the performance of certain acts and particular behaviors to achieve salvation. They did not recognize the same number of sacraments as Catholics and believed that these acts did not affect salvation. Reformers were concerned with spreading the message of the Bible, directing all learning and meditation to the figure of Jesus Christ, who would ultimately be the only one to bring salvation.⁸ As a Protestant reformer, Knox had the same attitude as his evangelical contemporaries, whose fundamental beliefs would influence his decisions and visions for the Scottish Church. These Reformed beliefs ultimately influenced Knox when he began his role as a new minister in the late 1540s and continued to inform his actions when he helped lead the formation of the Scottish Church in the 1560s. Knox's Reformed beliefs were a constant in his ministry, from beginning to end.

Knox's Structure of the Scottish Church

While John Knox did not have a grand vision for the Scottish Church during the beginning of his ministry in the 1540s, he understood his role was to promote the integrity of God's word. Based upon his belief in Reformed theology, Knox declared that the church needed to be defined based on what was described in the Word of God and that it was through that basis that the church would remain authentic. He declared, "Before we hold ourselves[...], we must define the Church, by the right notes given to us in God's Scriptures of the true Church."⁹ This foundation ensured that the church's trajectory and type of religious culture that Knox wanted to cultivate would not stumble in the same way that the Catholic Church supposedly did, by deviating from Christianity's fundamental essence and becoming too embellished.¹⁰ This would ensure that the Protestant ideals that Knox wanted to uphold would be preserved in the future of the Scottish Church.

Knox also provided an unnamed article with nine points in his *History of the Reformation of Scotland* that laid out the core beliefs that he concluded based on his knowledge from the Bible. While these points did not describe any specific plan related to how the body of the Scottish Church should be organized, Knox made it clear through his points that the church leadership should ultimately come from God. He described that "no mortal man can be the head of the church," thus making it clear that absolutely no one could wield ultimate power over the church of Scotland.¹¹ Knox understood that, as per the Bible, it was God who had

ultimate authority. This same understanding also brought Knox to denounce the pope. Knox wanted to prevent a pope-like figure from rising to power in Scotland's future. At the same time, Knox supported the existence of bishops in the Church, as he asserted that bishops needed to fulfill their role as preachers. This may come off as contradictory to Knox's Protestant beliefs since the Catholic Church usually used bishops. However, it is likely that Knox's understanding of bishops was not one that fit the hierarchical mold employed by the Catholic Church, but rather a view more similar to that of the Protestant Church of England, wherein being a bishop meant being a preacher and shepherd, not an administrator of 'unnecessary' sacraments. Knox wanted to protect the doctrinal integrity of Christianity from wayward leaders, as is reflected in his insistence that no point of Christianity could be added upon or altered by humans. In Knox's mind, Christianity must always be grounded and defended solely by what was stated in the Bible. As part of this, Knox believed that only God had ultimate authority in life. He thought that the church could not be head of the state because even the church was not worthy of such power.¹² These were the main principles that Knox lived by in hopes that he could successfully build up a church of integrity in the future.

Before establishing his view of the Scottish Church, Knox first desired to rid Scotland of all Catholic influence. Before Knox began his ministry, Scotland was a predominantly Catholic kingdom, with a vast network of Catholic religious structures and thousands of Catholic clerics across the land.¹³ This strong Catholic hold significantly hindered the growth of the Protestant movement in Scotland. The sovereigns of Scotland in the 1540s, James V and his wife, Mary of Guise, were devout Catholics.¹⁴ As such, Knox took it upon himself to remove the Catholic stranglehold on Scotland so that the Protestant cause had a chance to reach the masses. Apart from it being one of his essential duties as a minister, one of the main reasons Knox felt compelled to begin preaching and ministering publicly was to challenge the Catholic figure Dean John Annand of St. Andrews. Referred to as a "rotten Papist" by Knox, Annand was a Catholic who had "long-troubled" John Rough, the Protestant preacher who had commissioned Knox to be a minister. Knox saw Annand as a reason for renouncing Catholicism.¹⁵ Knox argued that the Catholic Church wrongly believed that good works would bring salvation when the Bible declared that faith in Christ alone led to eternal life in heaven.¹⁶ Through revealing what he thought was an erroneous dogma of the Catholic Church, Knox could point out that specific works such as pardons by Catholic priests or sacraments during mass were not of Biblical origin and were instead part of a false system of 'justification by works.' Knox also had a public debate with another Catholic figure, Friar Arbuckle, at the beginning of his ministry. In their debate, Knox revealed the logos of Protestantism and exposed the faults of Catholicism to his audience. Knox asserted that the ceremonial aspects of Catholic Mass were embellishments created by humans, which went against Biblical doctrines such as not altering the Lord's commandments. In his debate with Friar Arbuckle, Knox boldly declared, "Now unless that ye be able to prove that God has commanded your ceremonies, that his former commandment will damn both you and them."¹⁷ By revealing these faults, Knox began the process of convincing people to turn away from Catholicism. Knox needed people to understand the merits of the Protestant path over Catholicism for the Reform movement to grow. In addition, denouncing Catholicism meant denouncing its hierarchical means of organization, which would later influence Knox's formation of the Scottish Church.

While Knox previously held a more generalized and theoretical view of the proposed structure of the Scottish Church, over time, his motivation to eliminate Catholic influence in daily life increased, and Knox started to consider the impact of political figures in bringing about religious reform. Knox's work was put on hold after the fiery start of his ministry in

Scotland when he was arrested. Initially, in the 1540s, it seemed like the Protestant movement in Scotland was on an upward trajectory because parliament allowed for Bibles to be printed in common languages. Despite this success, Scottish reformers expressed concern that they would face obstacles and setbacks. Their worries came to fruition in 1547 when the French-Scottish alliance allowed for Catholicism to regain control in Scotland. The French Navy seized Knox for his Protestant rebelliousness, and he was sent away to a galley, a ship that depended on forced laborers to row and propel the vessel forward. Knox labored on boats like this before being released after a few years.¹⁸ Instead of returning to Scotland, where Catholicism was steady, Knox first went to England, where Edward VI was the Protestant monarch for a brief period.

Knox and Political Figures

During the reign of King Edward VI in England, Knox came to understand that earthly political authorities could help push reform and that even if a political figure failed, God would still sustain his people. In his writing of the “Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God’s Truth in England” of 1554, Knox expressed his support for the “elect and chosen vessel of God,” whom Knox believed was King Edward VI, due to their similar religious beliefs and Knox’s high view of royalty.¹⁹ According to Gray’s “The Political Theory of John Knox,” Knox believed in the king’s authority, or the highest civil power, as an ordainment by God.²⁰ This does not mean that Knox believed in kings as the ultimate power holders, but rather that kings were placed in such an influential position to use their power to preserve the integrity of the church, especially against papal authority. However, if the monarch’s power was corrupted and went against God’s commands, Knox felt it was righteous to admonish them.²¹ Knox also believed that lower forms of political authority, such as princes and officials, could use their status to uphold godliness. Referencing Jeremiah 26, Knox described that the prophet Jeremiah prophesied and warned that discipline would come to Jerusalem if its people did not repent and change their wicked ways. In the Bible passage, the priests who heard this message reacted in anger and wanted to put Jeremiah to death. However, officials, or “princes,” intervened and demanded that the prophet Jeremiah be left alone because he was speaking truthfully and out of a desire to uphold godliness amongst the people.²² Ultimately, the reign of Edward VI in England created a friendly environment for Knox to do reform work. This allowed Knox to understand that using the right political climate could be pivotal for his ministry work. He would have to wait for the opportune moment of political leniency towards Protestantism in Scotland to enact his visions of reform.

While Knox exalted the power of Edward VI in England, he did not exalt higher civil powers without any qualifications, as Knox would only support a ruler if he believed they met his standards of obedience to God. Knox’s prioritization of God was evident when he “was too completely intoxicated with God to pay any attention to the values of monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, or ecclesiocracy in themselves.”²³ In the mind of John Gray, Knox was not concerned with the “absolute supremacy of the king,” instead of being “interested only in the sovereignty of God, and was indifferent with regard to the servants He might use.”²⁴ Knox’s primary concern in life was that all people in the world, especially in Scotland, would obey God. Knox did acknowledge that the welfare of a kingdom depended on the morality of its king or queen.²⁵ Knox stated that rulers were “God’s lieutenants,” meant to obey and honor God while on their thrones. According to Knox, the role of a “lieutenant” was to carry out their assigned responsibilities and conduct their duties appropriately as someone with high authority and responsibility. In this light, rulers were not operating out of their independent discretion but held accountable to God. These rulers were then supposed

to use their powerful positions to uphold the values of God.²⁶ They were to preserve the church's integrity and the faith of their constituents, especially against the papal authority of that early modern period. Because of their status, rulers had significant influence over the religious state of their kingdom, for better or for worse.²⁷ Given this expectation, if a ruler disobeyed and disrespected God, then the trajectory of a kingdom could go towards destruction, and on a more practical level, prevent Knox from achieving the reform work he desired to accomplish. Knox's own words on rulers were quite sharp when he described that if a ruler were a "murderer, adulterer, or idolater," he would be held accountable by God. The ruler would not get preferential treatment as a higher power but instead be treated as any other offender in society. The ordinary people justifiably put the law into execution.²⁸ Knox found potential new allies in influential political figures, such as the English King Edward VI, who could make the work of Knox's ministry easier. With this trust in the proper political authorities to help move the reformation forward through their influence and power, Knox realized that he could find potential allies in politics to help build up the Protestant church.

There were still many threats to the Protestant Reformation due to different political powers strongly connected with Catholicism. This caused Knox to become even more motivated to weaken Catholic influence. Upon the death of King Edward VI in 1553, shortly after Knox arrived in England, the Catholic Mary Tudor ascended to the throne and immediately oversaw the persecution of Protestants. Knox was forced to leave England, shaken by the undoing of the Protestant movement in such a quick time.²⁹ He worried about the fate of England because Mary Tudor's extreme power meant that she could force the English people to comply with her idea of the "right" religious beliefs.³⁰ Though this situation did not directly affect Scotland, it would set back the course of Knox's ministry and prevent people from receiving true salvation in his ultimate desire for people to turn to Protestantism.

Knox rejected and admonished Catholic rulers like Mary Tudor. Mary, I was the daughter of King Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and Knox saw Mary I as evil and unhelpful to his reform work. Knox wrote the "First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women," which admonished women rulers and claimed that it was against the natural order of the world for women to rule, naming a section of his work "The Empire of Women is Repugnant to Nature."³¹ He quoted First Corinthians 11:8-10, which stated that "Man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. And man was not created for the cause of the woman, but the woman for the cause of man; and therefore, ought the woman to have a power upon her head." Based on this passage, Knox concluded that a woman should know that man was lord above her; and therefore, that she should never have pretended any kind of superiority above him."³² Knox believed that God designed women to serve men, and consequently, a woman ruling an entire kingdom would be entirely out of line. Knox acknowledged female authoritative figures in the Bible, including the judge Deborah, justifying her authoritative position by declaring that she was ordained and privileged by God for reasons unknown to humanity.³³ In this light, Knox was capable of seeing women as legitimate rulers. Still, because the female rulers of both England and Scotland were Catholics during much of Knox's ministry, Knox had much incentive to despise them and associate their femininity with their religion.

Influences of Calvinism on Political Views

During his exile from England, Knox further developed his views on the merits of working with or against political authority, reflecting the importance of political leadership in building the church. The fact that monarchs had the power to control religious practice was a significant threat to Knox and his desire to reform. During this turmoil in Europe in the 1500s, political

leaders influenced the religion practiced in their domains. Many Protestant reformers and scholars like Knox were considering how to respond to this perceived threat. The Calvinist, Protestant, response was surprisingly passive. A famous Genevan reformer, John Calvin, had only written a short description regarding this position in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, first published in 1536.³⁴ Calvin believed that it was important never to disrespect a ruler's authority, even if they were unworthy and even corrupted their holy ordination from God.³⁵ However, Calvin and most other leading Protestant leaders did acknowledge that magistrates, or civil authorities, had the right to "oppose tyrannical higher authority" because God divinely appointed both magistrates and higher officers.³⁶ So-called "lower magistrates" attempted to uphold godliness in rulers by holding certain rulers accountable for their actions.³⁷ However, if these magistrates were acting ungodly and oppressive, Calvin believed that the ordinary people were not supposed to resist or depose them actively. Calvin believed the common people did not have "the right" to expel any seemingly "tyrannical" ruler.³⁸ Calvin did acknowledge that ordinary people could resist tyrannical rulers passively, but he firmly believed that active resistance was inappropriate.³⁹ Calvin ultimately condemned the radical beliefs of those who thought it was necessary to pursue active resistance.⁴⁰ Eventually, as John T. McNeill wrote regarding uncooperative leaders, Calvin believed that obedience toward political leaders should be encouraged and that resistance was a hostile act.⁴¹ In the end, Calvin showed little interest in attaining the 'proper' form of government because he believed that God's will ultimately appointed all power.⁴²

Calvin's thoughts and documents most likely circulated throughout Europe, so his ideas were probably made known to John Knox. Knox's first exposure to Calvin's teachings may have been through the *Institutes of Christian Religion*, but it is equally possible George Wishart, one of Knox's university professors, revealed Calvin's doctrines to Knox. Wishart was a Scottish preacher who was likely exposed to Calvinist and other Protestant doctrines while traveling across Europe.⁴³ After his exile to mainland Europe in 1553, Knox had a close personal relationship with John Calvin. Calvin was a patron to Knox, and there are multiple accounts of discussions between the two men. Calvin was embarrassed to be associated with Knox after Knox published the polemical *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* because Calvin disagreed with Knox's negative statements toward females in authoritative positions.⁴⁴ In 1557, when Knox was hesitant to accept an offer to return to Scotland, Calvin charged Knox "to be faithful to his flock," which ultimately convinced Knox to return to Scotland.⁴⁵ Knox respected Calvin as a Reformed teacher, but he also had some ideological disagreements with him.

Knox shared Calvin's views that both men were not necessarily concerned with the type of government that existed and felt it necessary to obey and regard rulers highly. However, Knox deviated from Calvin's claim of passivity and relative inaction towards ungodly rulers. This can be seen as Knox grew in radicalism during the 1550s, something that worried many Calvinists. Knox was curious whether "an 'idolatrous sovereign' might be lawfully resisted by the nobility or other inferior magistrates."⁴⁶ While Knox believed that God rightfully ordained rulers and monarchs, he also thought they were not immune to corruption. Due to their fallible human nature, rulers had the potential to turn away from God. In this event, Knox believed that it was necessary to take action against rulers, a deviation from Calvin's statement of belief.

Meanwhile, in contrast to the Calvinists in continental Europe, English reformers with Calvinist backgrounds seemed to support the idea of lawful resistance against authority that Knox proposed. Protestant commentators John Ponet and Christopher Goodman declared that God ordained rulers to do godly work, not deviate from it. Ponet and Goodman

referenced the book of Samuel in the Old Testament, wherein God's chosen people, the Israelites, asked God for a king. The two commentators pointed out that in this instance, God appointed a king. Still, God intended that the ruler steward their high societal position with reverence to promote godliness in their kingdoms instead of wielding unlimited power.⁴⁷ Knox shared Ponet and Goodman's belief in proper religious stewardship for rulers. One mark of Knox's developing awareness toward regulating and interacting with political authority was in 1554 when Knox asked Calvinist Heinrich Bullinger if one needed to be obedient towards a political leader "who enforces idolatry and condemns true religion."⁴⁸ John Knox asked this out of a sense of urgency and panic. In 1554, Catholic rulers held power in Scotland and England and acted with violence and force towards reformers to maintain Catholic religious unity.⁴⁹

Influenced by these radical thoughts, Knox understood that while rulers were to be respected, they also could not be above the rest of society, where they would remain untouched and unchecked. Knox and other radical Calvinists believed that the impetus for dethroning monarchs did not come from a political or moral right but rather out of religious duty.⁵⁰ Instead of political tyranny, Knox and his fellow radical thinkers believed that monarchs who acted out of line were heretics who went against the law and ordainment of God. In comparing these monarchs to "oppressors, and malefactors" who allowed "the Devil [to take] possession of the throne," Knox was convinced that their misconduct was a religious offense.⁵¹ Due to a high calling and spiritual commitment, Knox felt it necessary to resist ungodly rulers.⁵² This reinforced Knox's desire for action over passivity, in contrast to traditional Calvinists, and was a product of the understanding that political authority had significant influence over a kingdom's spiritual trajectory. Knox's mind, passivity toward an ungodly ruler would allow the nation to succumb to idolatry and harmful values. As a result, Knox believed it was essential to have the ability to resist Catholic political figures actively, further proof that Knox began to consciously realize that rulers had the potential to bring about spiritual growth or destruction.

Before Knox could do more, he needed to convince Scottish Christians to abandon their old ways of Catholicism. So, Knox spoke with even greater urgency, especially on the topic of idolatry. Knox observed that many Scottish people still performed the Catholic rituals he had tried to discourage since the beginning of his ministry. To dissuade this Catholic-related behavior, Knox emphasized the importance of the Bible by explaining how "the perpetual meditation, exercise, and use of God's holy word" was a spiritual necessity.⁵³ Knox claimed the Scottish people were going against God's holy word and therefore harmed their spiritual well-being by performing Catholic sacraments. Knox's great desire to stop these Catholic-based rituals came from his belief of what a "true church" should be, where there would be "preaching of the Word of God, right administration of the sacraments of Jesus Christ, and upright ministration of ecclesiastical discipline."⁵⁴ Knox most likely already held this belief during the beginning of his ministry in his vision for churches in general, and it would be specifically applied to the formation of the Scottish Church through the "Scots Confession of 1560". Knox's explicit reference to the proper use of sacraments indicated his awareness of the Catholic ceremonies as an obstacle to Protestant church reformation. This came from the understanding that a church was not defined by "lineage or historical significance" but rather by its identity in God.⁵⁵ This definition would shape Knox's ideas in the future, as he would articulate what the Scottish Church should be like as a congregation centered around God's authority. This attack on Catholic rituals was necessary for the Scottish people to understand the dangerous circumstances of their faith and help pave the way for a Protestant-centered church in the future. His appeals to the Scottish people reveal that Knox still maintained

religious integrity, despite evolving his views on political authority. Even after time passed and new perspectives on political figures were made, he was still focused on obeying God and not political rulers. Ultimately, Knox was concerned with his obedience towards God in spreading what he believed to be true and necessary to his people.⁵⁶

Through these experiences in the mid-1550s, Knox realized that political authority had the power to bring down or push forth a religious movement. Because of this realization, Knox was willing to accept the creation of the Scottish Protestant Parliament to draft an extensive declaration of faith and a design for what the Scottish Church should be like. Knox, along with fellow ministers John Winram, John Spottiswood, John Douglas, John Row, and John Willock, were called upon by the “Reformation Parliament” in 1560 to write out a multi-page set of beliefs called the “Scots Confession of 1560.”⁵⁷ Knox took advantage of this opportunity in which the political authority was Protestant-friendly, and the resulting “Scots Confession of 1560” ensured a stable foundation for the future of the reformation in Scotland. It also marked a shift for Knox, who previously did not interact much with political entities.

Knox now felt comfortable relying on political power, recognizing its importance in bringing about religious change. Knox favored the king and nobility, as he wrote about the importance of obedience to and acknowledgment of higher-ranking groups. However, if those in power disobeyed God’s will, Knox believed it was right to dispose of them and saw the ordinary people as a check against tyranny.⁵⁸ This would be important as it was reflected in Knox’s core belief that the Scottish Church would ultimately not be ruled over and controlled by a mortal leader. Knox believed that the Scottish Church should be united in common belief rather than in a centralized structural network. Not wanting to repeat the mistakes of the Catholic Church, which he believed focused too much on ceremonial aspects, Knox wanted to model the Scottish Church after the Early Christian Church from the first and second centuries. According to Gray, Knox believed that the true church was one that found identity in the core theological beliefs of Christianity from the first and second centuries CE, rather than in past cultural and historical significance that the early modern church based itself on.⁵⁹ The Early Christian Church was not under a centralized power, as there was no religious or mortal political head who dictated and controlled it. Moving away from the organization seen in the Catholic Church and the Church of England, wherein the Pope and King Henry were the respective mortal leaders, Knox instead preferred a church with God as its leader. While he respected earthly rulers, Knox would not compromise and allow them to hold power within the church.

Ultimately, the 1550s was a significant moment for the Protestant Reformation, with France becoming the location for the “first-ever successful Calvinist revolution.”⁶⁰ In 1559, Knox began penning his *History of the Reformation of Scotland*. Some claim that the first portion of this work (now known as Book II) was “a party pamphlet to justify the revolting Protestants” of that time, but in reality, the *History* was not published until the conclusion of such revolts.⁶¹ The rest of the *History of the Reformation in Scotland* was composed in the 1560s, during the latter years of Knox’s life, and ultimately Knox became the “only first rank leader of the Reformation who recorded in an historical narrative the events through which he lived.”⁶² Despite the *History* not being published until much later, crucially, in 1560, Knox was able to compose and publish “The Scots Confession of 1560.” Knox wrote “The Scots Confession of 1560” under the Reformed Scottish Parliament, and the document symbolized Scotland’s official adoption of the Protestant Faith.⁶³ Knox called for the “whole body of the godly people [to] rise up against the congregation of Satan in order to establish the congregation of Christ.”⁶⁴ This powerful, almost revolutionary declaration reflected Knox’s great passion for pushing forward the cause of Jesus Christ through the Protestant

Reformation. After his experiences in England and exile in continental Europe during the 1550s, in 1560, Knox, with his new understanding of his relationship to politics, applied his religious fervor to establish the structure of the Scottish Church. This structure ultimately reflected the fundamental yet straightforward core of Christianity that Knox found in the Bible and desired to see in society.

Knox's insistence on remaining true to the Reformed interpretation of the Bible continued and was concretely applied to the formation of the Scottish Church. In terms of understanding what had been commanded in the Bible, Knox insisted on relying on the Holy Spirit, rather than human wisdom, to interpret a passage, especially "when controversy ar[ose] about the right understanding of any passage or sentence of Scripture, or for the reformation of any abuse within the Kirk of God."⁶⁵ This ensured that the information people were learning was in line with God's will and not based upon human wisdom or whims. Knox mentioned that during disputes or confusion over scripture, people should not necessarily look to peers or higher rulers for the answers.⁶⁶ Although Knox believed monarchs were to be respected and revered, even they did not have the authority to make claims about God's word in the Bible. In terms of sacraments, Knox also only allowed for two to be applied in the Scottish Church, as he believed they were the only ones that the Bible acknowledged: Baptism and Communion, as they were "instituted by the Lord Jesus and commanded to be used by all who will be counted members of His body."⁶⁷ This was in contrast to the multitude of sacraments performed by the Catholic Church. Knox stated that he wanted the Scottish Kirk to be different from its contemporary counterparts, but also reflective of the "particular Kirks, such as those in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, and other places where the ministry was planted by Paul."⁶⁸ This is a direct reference to the New Testament, where Paul, one of the early church leaders, corresponded with small groups of localized churches by region. They were united ideologically and were named by Paul as "Kirks of God."⁶⁹ Adopting this local structure without a central authority for Scotland, Knox desired that the Scottish people replicate the same gatherings in their cities, villages, and regional areas to reflect what he believed was the biblical view of the church.⁷⁰ This desire to create a Biblical church structure was due to his Reformed beliefs, as seen at the beginning of his ministry when he began preaching about following what was written in the Bible and not creating embellishments. Because the structure was localized, it would also prevent the Scottish Church from having a human leader and subsequent geographical center, pitfalls Knox believed were found in the Catholic Church. This smaller, localized structure of churches based upon the Early Church in the Bible became the model that Knox wanted to replicate for the Scottish Church.

This people-focused, localized church structure was important because it reflected a Biblical model and because it maintained godliness in Scotland in the context of accountability towards monarchs. Because the Scottish Church was structured in a localized way, the masses that were part of the church had a stake in what went on in their local churches and the spiritual well-being of the land. Knox believed that people were in a covenant with God to "uphold the rule of godliness and 'revenge to the uttermost of their power' any injuries 'done against His majesty' or laws."⁷¹ Knox viewed the nobility as people who could hold the king accountable. The nobility was not there to only please and affirm their respective rulers but also acted as a barrier preventing their king or queen from giving orders that went against the intentions of God.⁷² Rather than seeing the nobility as mere defenders of the crown, Knox also identified them as people who would ultimately "defend the crown rights of the Redeemer against the king."⁷³ Knox believed that it was a righteous act of faith to hold accountable those who did anything that went against the teachings of Jesus, even if they were of high socio-political standing, as regardless of their social position, their behavior was evil. To be a

bystander and not speak out against an offending party made one guilty by association, even if they did not commit the original iniquity.⁷⁴ However, Knox soon realized the unpredictable nature of nobles, comparing them to the likes of the Catholic pope or volatile rulers, which Knox held little respect for.⁷⁵ It was then up to the commoners to ensure the upholding of God's will in society. He claimed that the people should be able to punish their social superiors, including the king if these elites' ungodly actions threatened the eternal welfare of those around them.⁷⁶ This was a revolutionary way of thinking compared to other Protestant views, especially the anti-resistant beliefs of Calvin. Because Knox was concerned for the spiritual welfare of the people and his idea that rulers would not be immune to judgment, he believed that spiritual correction from across social classes was necessary, even if that meant challenging the nobility or ruling class. The Scottish Church structure's focus on local, small churches meant that any church member was significant regardless of social standing. Whether they be of noble or common background, the people, empowered through the structure of the Scottish Church, would be able to protect and advance the Protestant cause.

Ultimately, what Knox cared about the most was the glorification of God through obedience and authenticity. While Knox had high regard for the rulers of the time and saw them as ordained by God, he believed they could be rejected and deposed by their subjects if the monarchs acted out of line with God's commands. By understanding that rulers could easily be corrupted and try to control the church, Knox avoided the structure of a hierarchical church headed by a secular leader, as was seen in the Church of England. Also, Knox understood that people, in general, could become power-hungry and dishonest. People could end up trying to gain power through obtaining status in a religious context, as seen in the Catholic Church through the pope and the system of bishops. This was another reason Knox did not want to create a system of tiers evident within the Catholic Church. Instead, as reflected by his desire to maintain true to the essence of the Bible, Knox ultimately decided that the Scottish Church should be like the Early Church in Christian history. Grouped by small localities, these regional churches would eventually be connected not by a higher mortal power but by God.

Over time, through various events during his ministry, Knox ultimately recognized the importance of political figures in the movement towards religious reformation. When Knox was just a new minister in Scotland in the 1540s, he was merely concerned with the doctrinal aspects of Protestantism. He did not have a clear view of how he wanted to structure and establish a reformed church in Scotland. All he knew was that he needed to purify Scotland from the corruption and ungodliness that he believed came from the Catholic Church. However, Knox's life changed when French and Catholic-favoring Scottish forces came to arrest the Protestant reformers in St. Andrews, and he was sent to perform forced labor. Needing a safe place to go after being released, Knox arrived in England, where he realized the benefit of having a Protestant ruler in power because it would provide a safe place for the spread of the Protestant message. Later, when Catholic Mary I gained power, Knox escaped to continental Europe to learn more about Calvinism. It was through those life events during the 1550s that Knox came to observe how political authority brought kingdoms to glory or downfall in the eyes of God. With the continued desire to take action against Catholicism and the new understanding that he could depend on sympathetic political powers, Knox took the prime opportunity in 1560 to write the Scots Confession at the request of the Scottish parliament. John Knox was a fiery and passionate reformer for the Protestant movement, which ultimately wanted the Protestant Biblical portrayal of God to be made known to the people around him. While he did have flaws in his somewhat aggressive communication, he desired that the people of his homeland would have restored relationships with God. He

recognized that establishing a church meant ridding the land of old Catholic ways of life, creating a localized church structure, and teaching people what it meant to be a Protestant Christian. Knox learned that if political figures agreed with his beliefs, he could rely on their religious sympathy to enact reform across the land. Politics were not his primary focus, however, as he always ultimately put the will and supremacy of God first in his life.

¹ John Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 2 vols., ed. William Croft (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc, 1950), 1:83.

² John R. Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," *Church History* 8:2 (June, 1939), p.146.

³ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought Volume Two: The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 302.

⁴ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 146.

⁵ Richard G. Kyle, "The Church-State Patterns in the Thought of John Knox," *Journal of Church and State* 30:1 (1988), p. 71.

⁶ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 146.

⁷ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 147.

⁸ James Kirk, *Patterns of Reform* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd., 1989), p. xii.

⁹ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 1:83.

¹⁰ John Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," [Apostles Creed](#), ed. James Richardson, 14, accessed 13 February 2019.

¹¹ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 1:87.

¹² Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 141.

¹³ Ian B. Cowan, *The Scottish Reformation: Church and Society in Sixteenth Century Scotland*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), p. 1.

¹⁴ Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, xiv, p. 4.

¹⁵ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 1:83.

¹⁶ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 1:85.

¹⁷ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 1:91.

¹⁸ "[John Knox: Scottish Religious Leader](#)," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed February 23, 2019.

¹⁹ John Knox, "[A Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God's Truth in England](#)," *Selected Writings of John Knox: Public Epistles, Treatises, and Expositions to the Year 1559*, ed. Kevin Reed (Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1995), p. 9.

²⁰ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 135.

²¹ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 137.

²² John Knox, *The Works of John Knox, no. 4*, ed. David Laing (New York: AMS Press, Inc, 1966), p. 472.

²³ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 145.

²⁴ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 145.

²⁵ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 141.

²⁶ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Scotland*, 2:44.

²⁷ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 137.

²⁸ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 140-1.

²⁹ "John Knox: Scottish Religious Leader," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Knox>, accessed March 2, 2019; Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 190-191.

³⁰ "John Knox: Scottish Religious Leader," *Encyclopædia Britannica*,

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Knox>, accessed February 23, 2019.

³¹ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 293.

³² John Knox, "[The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women 1558](#)," *Selected Writings of John Knox: Public Epistles, Treatises, and Expositions to the Year 1559*, ed. Kevin Reed (Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1995).

³³ John Knox, "The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women 1558."

³⁴ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 191.

³⁵ Calvin, "On God and Political Duty," p. 143.

- ³⁶ Steven Ozment, Carlos Eire, and Ronald K. Rittgers, "Protestant Resistance to Tyranny: The Career of John Knox," in *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2020), p. 419.
- ³⁷ Ozment et al., "Protestant Resistance to Tyranny," p. 421.
- ³⁸ Ozment et al., "Protestant Resistance to Tyranny," p. 421.
- ³⁹ Ozment et al., "Protestant Resistance to Tyranny," p. 419.
- ⁴⁰ Francis Oakley, "Christian obedience and authority, 1520-1550," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 188.
- ⁴¹ John Calvin, *On God and Political Duty*, ed. John T. McNeill (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1956), p. xvii.
- ⁴² Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 193.
- ⁴³ Gabriel Torretta, OP, "Our Lady Reconsidered: John Knox and the Virgin Mary," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 67:2 (2014): pp. 172-3.
- ⁴⁴ Ozment, Eire, and Rittgers, "Protestant Resistance to Tyranny," pp. 429-30.
- ⁴⁵ Scott Dolff, "The Two John Knoxes and the Justification of Non-Revolution: A Response to Dawson's Argument from Covenant," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55:1 (2004), p. 59.
- ⁴⁶ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 216.
- ⁴⁷ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, pp. 221-2.
- ⁴⁸ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 189.
- ⁴⁹ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 189.
- ⁵⁰ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, pp. 239-40.
- ⁵¹ Knox, *History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland*, 2:44.
- ⁵² Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 240.
- ⁵³ John Knox, "[A Letter of Wholesome Counsel, Addressed to His Brethren in Scotland.](#)" *Selected Writings of John Knox: Public Epistles, Treatises, and Expositions to the Year 1559*, ed. Kevin Reed (Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1995).
- ⁵⁴ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 143.
- ⁵⁵ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 143.
- ⁵⁶ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 147.
- ⁵⁷ Alex C. Cheyne, "The Scots Confession of 1560," *Theology Today* 17: 3 (1960): p. 323.
- ⁵⁸ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 139.
- ⁵⁹ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 143.
- ⁶⁰ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 339.
- ⁶¹ John T. McNeill, "John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland, Edited by William Croft Dickinson. 2 Volumes London, Thomas Nelson and Sons; New York, Philosophical Library, 1950. \$15.00," *Theology Today* 8, no. 3 (October 1951): p. 403.
- ⁶² McNeill, "John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland," p. 401.
- ⁶³ McNeill, "John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland," p. 403.
- ⁶⁴ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 254.
- ⁶⁵ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 11.
- ⁶⁶ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 11.
- ⁶⁷ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 13.
- ⁶⁸ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 11.
- ⁶⁹ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 11.
- ⁷⁰ Knox, "The Scots Confession of 1560," p. 11.
- ⁷¹ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 237.
- ⁷² Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 139.
- ⁷³ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 139.
- ⁷⁴ Knox, *The History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland*, 1:147.
- ⁷⁵ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 139.
- ⁷⁶ Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," p. 141.

The Interwoven Nature of the Changing English Aristocracy and their Country Houses, 1700-1890

John Young

Upon visiting the famous Mentmore Towers¹ in Buckinghamshire in 1880, poet Henry James famously remarked that “the house is a huge modern palace, filled with wonderful objects... All of them are precious and many are exquisite.”² Mentmore Towers belonged to the Rothschild family. It was a typical example of a nineteenth-century country house residence of a ‘new’ English aristocracy member, who rose to power and often unsettled those older landed elite families who had established their wealth and displayed their prestige through the country house.

To understand the complicated and interwoven nature of the English aristocracy and the country house, one must first grasp the ancient institution of the country house and the political power tied to it under the feudal system. Country estates were initially established under the feudal system when a monarch would give a tract of land and a title to a family, who then built themselves a seat of power on that land, often known as a country house. Traditionally, the country house was owned and lived in by members of the old “landed gentry” class, referred to in the context of this paper as the “old aristocracy.” This meant that nearly every occupant of English country houses before 1750, save for domestic staff, had a title such as Earl or Duke and belonged to a historic English family. For instance, the Earls of Carlisle lived in “Castle Howard,” on their landed estate, using it as their ancestral seat for generations.³ Under the feudal system, owning a country estate gave members of the old aristocracy incredible political power. John Martin Robinson argues that “For many centuries, from the Middle Ages onwards, the ownership of land was the only sure base of power and influence in England.”⁴ As the sole landowners, landed elites rented out portions of their country estates to feudal villagers to use collected rents as passive income. This gave them tremendous political power over villagers who did not own the land. Unsurprisingly, in *A Plea for a Constitution*, John Austin, Esq. wrote that throughout English history, “A large and important section” of landed elites were either themselves members or connected “by various family relations” to “members of the upper house” of the English government.⁵ As expected, landed elites used their country houses as direct symbols of this political power. David Cannadine and Jeremy Musson suggest that landed elites used their country houses as political “powerhouses,” furnishing rooms such as great halls designed explicitly for rent collection and other political functions in a direct physical manifestation of their political power.⁶ Under this feudal system, since “the only capital” was land, so long as this remained a constant, “the territorial aristocracy were the exclusive masters of the country.”⁷ However, few things in history remain constants. Once Britons became fed up with the prestige, political power, and estate-based laws of the landed old aristocracy, this all started to change through the Reform Act of 1832 and new economic opportunities leading to the rise of the new, untitled aristocracy. As time-shifted, so too did the English aristocracy as a whole, and with it, the uses, forms, and occupants of the country house also shifted.

I seek to answer two broad questions: What were the political, social, and economic changes to the aristocracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and how did they affect the traditional English country house? I answer these questions by intertwining historical developments in the English aristocracy with histories of the changing nature of the country

house through the use of two main forms of primary sources. First, a myriad of period and contemporary sketches, designs, images, floorplans, and descriptions of specific country houses are used to establish the norm for country houses during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and how these norms changed over time. These images and sketches were created either to display the country house to the broader public or act as a manual for those purchasing or constructing country estates. They are found in both contemporary and original magazines and books. Second, books, periodicals, and political pamphlets from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are used to contextualize changes to the aristocracy during this period. These primary sources were often created as part of the nineteenth-century political reform movement or by English commentators to track developments in the English aristocracy. In the context of this paper, these sources were found primarily using the Hathi Trust database. By melding these two distinct types of primary sources together, one can effectively track how changes to the nature of the English aristocracy caused and assisted modifications to the English country house and vice versa.

Historians and researchers have studied the changing nature of the country house and the changing nature of the English aristocracy as individual topics. I add to that work by suggesting that many trends seen in country houses were directly linked to changes within the aristocracy itself. John Martin Robinson argues that the country house gave one “power and influence, economic security, independence, and an established position in society.”⁸ So much so that “anyone who made money by whatever means” always “invested the proceeds in a country estate and country house.”⁹ David Cannadine and Jeremy Musson have argued that the landed elite used their mansions as a “prodigious canvas for further ornamentation” to show their political power and wealth.¹⁰ Regarding the changing nature of the English aristocracy, Cannadine and Musson claim that the “shifting sands of agricultural depression, inflation, and taxation of inherited wealth” led to the downfall of traditional landed families.¹¹ Here I assess changes to the country house through a socioeconomic lens, focusing on the rise of the ‘new’ aristocracy and how their presence transformed it.

This paper shows that changes to the English country house and developments to the English aristocracy were intimately linked. The article discusses how negative attitudes toward the landed elite in the first decades of the nineteenth-century set the stage for the Reform Act of 1832, which shifted political power from solely landed elites, forcing them to share power with the ordinary people. This meant that by the mid-nineteenth century, country houses were no longer used as the political power bases they had once been. Second, starting in the early eighteenth century, new economic opportunities led to an increase in “new” and untitled members of the aristocracy occupying country houses for the first time. I further explore the rise of this “new” aristocracy as an important development in the third section. Here, I show that by the mid-to-late nineteenth century, these families altered the country house to suit their own specific needs and lifestyles by creating more personal and private spaces to display their wealth. The paper concludes with a discussion of how the rise of the new aristocracy led to either indifference or emulation from the old aristocracy in the late nineteenth century. We see some members of the old aristocracy attempting to remodel their country houses in accordance with the tastes of the new aristocracy, often leading to financial ruin.

A Political Shift

The Reform Act of 1832 caused the political power of landed elite families to dwindle by affecting the institution of the country house that, as seen above, was a mainstay of the old aristocracy’s political power. This, in turn, caused families to use the country house in more ceremonial ways and less as a physical manifestation of political power for conducting

governance. We can observe this in changes made to the interiors of houses and a decrease in country houses with feudal lands attached to them. Ultimately, the Reform Act of 1832 was passed as a part of declining attitudes by the ordinary people towards the prestige, political power, and estate-based laws of landed elites in the early nineteenth century.

Declining attitudes of the ordinary people towards the landed aristocracy set the stage for the Reform Act of 1832 to cause a shift in political power that affected the country house. Many people increasingly started to dislike the claims of prestige and superiority made by the landed aristocracy. Nineteenth-century author, William Mitchell, penned an article in the *Yorkshire Tribune* entitled “Our Aristocracy,” where he claimed that the landed elite imagined themselves as “shrouded in the darkness of the Middle Ages.” And that their claims of descent from nobility was one of the most “incomprehensible absurdities” of modern times.¹² Mitchell claimed that the old aristocracy should be replaced with “an aristocracy of merit” that exuded “patriotism, devotion, and capacity”, not claims to noble birth.¹³ Mitchell’s words illustrate people’s frustration with the idea that traditional landed elites were somehow better than ordinary people because they were born with a specific name. This was not the only thing people began to dislike about landed elites, and their political power also angered many.

At the same time, many English people also became disenfranchised with the political power and overwhelming legislative participation of the landed elites. A series of translated works by French authors in 1844 talking about the English nobility includes essays with titles such as “The great Proprietors, having the control of legislation, devised laws which tended to their aggrandisement” and “Additional Acts Parliament passed” to “exempt themselves from taxation.”¹⁴ The same authors expressed their hope that the aristocracy might “resign their noxious privileges.”¹⁵ These authors demonstrate the widely-held attitude that people were tired of landed elites’ political power. Other than political power and claims of nobility, many people increasingly started to attack the very rules that had allowed landed elites to keep their country houses for so long.

As part of declining attitudes towards the landed elite class, English people attacked the estate-based laws of landed elites. This included the laws of entail¹⁶ and primogeniture.¹⁷ Primogeniture was designed to “preserve large estates in aristocratic England”¹⁸ while entail “supported a landed aristocracy” by ensuring that estates stayed within the same family for generations. In 1844, French authors published a series of translated essays entitled “The Aristocracy of Britain and the Laws of Entail and Primogeniture,” where they claimed that “not only the law of entail but the law of primogeniture” should be “abolished,” and that the abolition of these laws would “turn the scale of legal right.”¹⁹ Without these laws, landed elites’ ability to keep their estates and use them for political power would be in danger. So, those who increasingly disliked the aristocracy attacked these laws in the hopes of disenfranchising the landed aristocracy from their large estates. Ultimately, these attacks provided the context of the Reform Act of 1832. This catalyst directly caused the political shift away from landed elites and changed how they used the country house.

The Reform Act of 1832 was the catalyst that took political power away from landed elites through the disenfranchisement of ‘rotten boroughs’ and its damage to the feudal system. In 1847, Auguste Laugel wrote in *England, Political and Social*, that after the passage of the Reform Act, “the lords have felt their political power slipping slowly from them.”²⁰ To accomplish this, the Reform Act disenfranchised 56 boroughs known as “rotten boroughs.”²¹ Laugel remarked that post-Reform Act, “a great lord” could no longer give rotten boroughs “to a poor relative or sell to a rich one.”²² This loss damaged the ability of landed elites to control who represented them in Parliament, as they no longer “governed the house of commons indirectly” by sending their “creatures” there as elected members.²³ The Reform

Act also increased who could vote in elections by expanding property ownership to “tenant farmers and shopkeepers.”²⁴ Land ownership had been “the only sure base of power and influence in England,” as it ensured voting rights before 1832. As a result, many people who had become directly opposed to the prestige, political power, and estate-based laws of the landed elite class in the mid-nineteenth century were now able to vote for their demise in the Reform era.²⁵ This damaged the feudal system, as due in part to the Reform Act, many tenant farmers and shopkeepers who lived on feudal estates found themselves now in the ownership of their lands. Since much of the political power of landed elites was drawn from the feudal system, many landed elites found themselves losing their political power. The effects of this directly correlated to their uses of the country house.

After the landed elite class lost their political monopoly, most country houses no longer had feudal towns attached to their grounds, which had been directly tied to the political power of the old landed aristocracy. Before the Reform Act, most landed elites used their country houses to collect rent from peasants living on their land. Since the Reform Act gave “tenant farmers and shopkeepers” ownership of their property, many of these peasants suddenly found themselves free of feudal bonds. In 1847, Auguste Laugel wrote that Parliament had “facilitated as much as possible the complete enfranchisement of ancient village tenures,” meaning that many feudal villages were now on common land.²⁶ This made practices like tenant farming in feudal villages “a relic of ancient servitude.”²⁷ It was increasingly impractical for landed elites to rent out their lands to feudal peasants. Parliament also adjusted tax ratios to hurt those owning large feudal style estates, further decreasing the profitability of feudal lands.²⁸ This led to many older country houses no longer using their land in a feudal sense. In 1870, William Wilkinson wrote *Practical Treatise on House-building*, a book with dozens of old country houses that no longer contained any sort of feudal villages or tenures on their grounds.²⁹ Country houses built post-Reform Act rarely included the attachment of feudal lands. Ernest Newton’s 1882 book *Sketches for Country Residences* lacks examples of houses built post-Reform Act with feudal lands attached to them.³⁰ The cessation of country houses being used for feudal land ownership also had implications extending into the interiors of the homes.

Because many landed elites lost the majority of their political power after the Reform Act of 1832, they increasingly used their country houses for ceremonial purposes instead of symbols of political power. Landed elites once used rooms like “great halls” and “state dining rooms” to exude political power in their country houses. Seventeenth-century houses including “Stokesay Castle” in Shropshire and “Birtsmorton Court” in Worcestershire all contained rooms and features distinctly related to political power, such as moats, parapets, and great halls for receiving feudal vassals.³¹ “East Barsham Manor,” another typical pre-political shift country house, was built entirely around a “great hall” that took up over half of the house’s lower floor, a feature which would have explicitly been used under the feudal system for practices such as directly governing tenants.³² Houses like Barsham were specifically built and designed to govern and show off one’s political prestige. Country houses remodeled and built post-Reform Act were used more ceremonially. In the 1880s, architect J.J. Stevenson claimed that the “great hall and single chamber of the middle ages, with which even kings were content” had been replaced by “public rooms,” not designed for political power.³³ Architect William Wilkinson’s 1880 description of the country house of the landed noble “Honourable Lord Southampton” include rooms such as a “parlour,” “sitting room,” and “office,” where once there would have been a great hall or medieval style dining room for feasting vassals and subjects.³⁴ Wilkinson describes a total of forty-five “recently erected” country houses, none of which contain rooms designed for direct political power in the feudal sense.³⁵ Since landed

elites had lost much of their political power, there was little point in continuing their country houses as bases for their political influence and prestige.

More Opportunities, More People

Starting in the first decades of the 1700s and extending until the mid-nineteenth century, a series of economic changes and opportunities created a ‘new’ class of English gentry known as the ‘new aristocracy.’ The new aristocracy affected the country house by investing the fortunes that they had accrued in country houses and estates. For the first time in English history, untitled persons who did not belong to historic English families occupied and built country houses. The economic changes which fostered the rise of the “new aristocracy” were most often the Industrial Revolution, the proliferation of the African slave trade in the 1700s, and Britain’s abolishment of slavery in 1833. As seen above, before 1750, country houses were almost exclusively under the hold of titled members of the old aristocracy who had received their estates under the feudal system. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, works including William Wilkinson’s 1870 book *Sketches of English Country Houses* depicted increasing numbers of country houses owned by untitled people.³⁶ These untitled people were the ‘new aristocracy.’

The untitled nature of the new aristocracy made them a distinct group from the old landed gentry. By 1874, author Auguste Laugel called the new aristocracy “the aristocracy of money,” citing them as a different group from the “aristocracy of birth,” which had traditionally occupied country houses.³⁷ Indeed, the new aristocracy was an aristocracy based on wealth, not a title. While members of the old aristocracy were born into wealthy and landed families, many members of the new aristocracy came from humble backgrounds, making their fortunes in their lifetime. One of the main ways that members of the new aristocracy secured their fortunes was through the Industrial Revolution.

Britain’s nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution was a critical economic change that assisted in the rise of the new aristocracy and their proliferation into country houses. In 1874, century commentator Auguste Laugel remarked that “In modern times, machinery, industry have created new wealth.”³⁸ Laugel wrote that the Industrial Revolution produced “fortunate parvenus” who would have never become members of the aristocratic class “50 years ago.”³⁹ Surveys of English Country houses such as *Beautiful Britain* detail many examples of country houses bought or built by members of the new aristocracy who secured their fortunes in the Industrial Revolution. Taplow Court was bought by “Mr Pascoe Grenfell,” who was “of the great firm of tin and copper dealers.”⁴⁰ Grenfell, who was not a member of the old landed gentry, bought Taplow Court from the Earl of Orkney after Grenfell made his fortune during the Industrial Revolution.⁴¹ Titans of industry like Grenfell were not the only members of the new aristocracy who minted their fortunes due to the Industrial Revolution. Many members of the new aristocracy were bankers or merchants who owed their wealth to the Industrial Revolution.

As part of the Industrial Revolution, members of the new aristocracy rose to fortune as bankers, merchants, or businessmen. They then purchased or built country houses, affecting the nature of those who lived in country houses. “Tring House” was bought by an unnamed “head of a prominent banking family” in 1804.⁴² The Rothschild family earned enough money from banking to build lavish country residences, including Mentmore Towers and Waddesdon Manor.⁴³ David Mlinaric and Derry Moore argue in *Great English Interiors* that there was a “rapidly expanding and very successful merchant class in London” in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁴⁴ As part of this, the Dutch merchant Vanneck family built and occupied “Heveningham Hall” in 1777.⁴⁵ Although originally from the Netherlands, the

Vanneck family emigrated to England, made their fortune as merchants, and became members of the ‘new’ aristocracy, using their newfound wealth to build and occupy a lavish country estate. While members of the new aristocracy like the Rothschilds and the Vannecks made the fortunes that put them in country houses as hard-working business people, other members of the new aristocracy turned to more sinister forms of income.

Profits from the proliferation of the African slave trade in the eighteenth century increasingly allowed many members of the new aristocracy to build and occupy country houses. In their book *Slavery and the British Country House*, Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann argue that “wealth deriving from the trade in and labour of enslaved Africans did affect the erection, renovation and occupation of a significant number of Britain’s stately homes.”⁴⁶ Dresser and Hann acknowledge that some members of the older landed classes could increase their declining fortunes through slavery. Still, it was mainly the New Aristocracy who solely used slavery-derived profits to elevate themselves into country estates for the first time. “Jones Views,” an 1829 manuscript of English country houses, describes “Allerton Hall” as being purchased by “two opulent merchants” named James and John Hardman in the 1740s.⁴⁷ Searching the “Slave Voyages” database shows that James and John Hardman were not truly “opulent merchants,” but owners of slave voyages.⁴⁸ At least two slave voyages originating in Liverpool, the site of Allerton, were owned by “John Hardman” and conveniently took place a few years before the Hardman family bought Allerton Hall.⁴⁹ The Hardman family had no landed title, used profits from slave voyages to procure enough wealth to purchase and live in Allerton Hall. Hugh Pringle built “Summer Hill,” a country house seen on an eighteenth-century map of Liverpool,⁵⁰ after over profits from owning 14 confirmed slave voyages.⁵¹ Pringle and the Hardman’s would not have been members of the new aristocracy without profits from African Slavery. They used their payout to purchase and live in country houses, transforming who lived in country estates. After Britain abolished slavery in 1833, even more members of the new aristocracy used slave money to build and purchase country houses.

After Britain abolished slavery in 1833, some members of the new aristocracy used the massive payouts that they received to both construct and remodel country houses. When Britain abolished slavery, they gave some £20,000,000 in restitution to the owners of registered slaves. Many who received payouts quickly became members of the new aristocracy and invested their fortunes in country houses.⁵² Using University College London’s “Legacies of British Slave Ownership” Database, one finds numerous examples of this. The untitled Andrew Arcedeckne was awarded around 8,300 pounds from two large plantation claims in 1835.⁵³ In today’s money, Arcedeckne received a sum of over 1 million pounds.⁵⁴ In the same year that he received this sum, Arcedeckne greatly “enlarged” his house “Gleivering Hall” from a modest home to a small palace.⁵⁵ William John Bankes, another untitled slave owner, made claims to receive a payout from a plantation at St. Kitts.⁵⁶ It is unclear how much money Bankes personally received from this claim. Still, it is likely not a coincidence that Bankes commissioned an architect to overhaul his house, “Kingston Lacy, completely,” only two years after slavery had been abolished and he had submitted his claim.⁵⁷ Arcedeckne, Bankes, and many others were not titled members of the old aristocracy. Yet, they used their slavery payouts to rise to wealth and engage in constructing and remodelling luxurious country houses.

Whether they made their fortunes through the Industrial Revolution, slave voyages or slavery payouts, new economic opportunities in the mid-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries allowed members of the new aristocracy to amass their fortunes. These untitled members of the new aristocracy then affected the country house by increasingly building and occupying country houses, which had never before been seen in Britain’s history. These

families were different from the traditional members of the aristocracy - they had no titles and often rose to wealth in a single generation.

New People, New Wants

The rise of the ‘new aristocracy’ by the mid-nineteenth century and their subsequent proliferation into the country house was an important aristocratic development. By the late nineteenth century, these members of the new aristocracy transformed the country house by increasing spending on country house luxuries such as servants, transforming domestic spaces, remodeling or tearing down older country houses, turning interior rooms into private family spaces, and collecting more fine art to display in their mansions. It must be mentioned that many of the new aristocracy’s changes to the country house, including in the domestic sphere, influenced and were influenced by changes brought about by the burgeoning Victorian middle class, as many members of the new aristocracy who gained considerable purchasing power likely brought their middle-class sensibilities about family and space into the great houses they bought and constructed. In *The Country House Past, Present, Future*, David Cannadine and Jeremy Musson argue that “the mansions of the landed class” were a “prodigious canvas for further ornamentation.”⁵⁸ As such, by the mid-nineteenth century, the new aristocracy had altered their country houses to fit their specific lifestyles and needs by forming more private and personal spaces to display their wealth. To fully grasp how the new aristocracy could accomplish these changes, one must first understand the increased levels of wealth that the new aristocracy enjoyed compared to their older landed counterparts.

Members of the new aristocracy both had and spent more money than their older landed counterparts, which allowed them to accomplish their alterations to the country house. In his 1897 memoir *Bric-a-Brac*, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild remarked that members of the new aristocracy often had “greater means in their command” than older landed families.⁵⁹ In 1847, Auguste Laugel contemplated in *England, Political and Social*, that “the union of aristocracy and wealth has become even more intimate in our days,” implying that the proliferation of a wealthier New Aristocracy made the term “aristocracy” synonymous with “wealth” instead of with landed titles.⁶⁰ Both Laugel and Rothschild recognized that, as a whole, the new aristocracy was much wealthier than the aristocracy of old. Laugel went on to comment that by the mid-nineteenth century, “however noble one may be, one must be rich.”⁶¹ Because members of the new aristocracy enjoyed much greater wealth than many of their landed counterparts, they could spend their money on transformations of their country houses. In accordance with this, members of the new aristocracy increased spending on servants and other domestic luxuries.

The new aristocracy transformed their country houses through increased spending on domestic ‘luxuries’ like servants. Domestic servants had always played a significant role in the country house -- the 17th century household of “the Right Honourable Richard, Earl of Dorset,” a member of the old aristocracy, had a small army of around fifty staff.⁶² However, statistics from 1835 provided by the London Statistical Society suggest an increase in spending of sixty-one million pounds on luxury items like carriages and domestic servants by members of the new aristocracy. Domestic servants increased in number by 18,037 between 1820-1832.⁶³ It was members of the new aristocracy who were responsible for this increase in spending. This spending increase took place during economic changes like the Industrial Revolution, which helped many members of the new aristocracy rise to power. The new aristocracy also had considerably more cash flow than other members of the gentry. Thus, it is not a stretch to conclude that members of the new aristocracy were responsible for increased spending on luxuries and servants, as seen in reports from the London Statistical Society. As

further proof that the new aristocracy increased spending on luxuries like servants, it must be considered that the new aristocracy often enlarged and stratified domestic spaces in their country houses.

Because they spent more money on domestic luxuries like servants, the new aristocracy transformed and enlarged the domestic spaces of their country houses. John Martin Robinson argues that the country house usually included “separate and increasingly elaborate servants’ quarters by the mid-nineteenth century.” Still, he fails to connect that it was primarily members of the new aristocracy and their increased spending on servants who made these changes.⁶⁴ Henry Portman, a member of the new aristocracy, enlarged the servants’ quarters at Bryanston house in the mid-nineteenth century to be “very spacious and convenient”. He also had his domestic spaces “contained in a separate building on the west side of the house” attached only by an enclosed passage.⁶⁵ By 1870, armaments inventor William Armstrong transformed the domestic spaces of his home Craggside into a separate building with three floors and domestic rooms such as a “still room,” designed for beverage distillations.⁶⁶ These men are two typical examples of many. Members of the new aristocracy like Portman and Armstrong caused architect J.J. Stevenson to claim in 1880 that country houses must now have “a complicated arrangement of servants.”⁶⁷ Because of their wealth and the increased capital they spent on servants, the new aristocracy completely overhauled the domestic spaces inside their country homes. This trend extended into the country house as a whole.

Members of the new aristocracy like Henry Portman and William Armstrong often tore down and rebuilt ancient country houses to be much larger. In *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry*, engraver William Watts described how Henry Portman gutted and enlarged “Bryanston House” after his grandfather bought it from a member of the old landed gentry.⁶⁸ Portman had Bryanston House “entirely new built of freestone,” within viewing distance of the site of the ancient mansion.⁶⁹ Portman rebuilt Bryanston to be “one hundred and twelve feet by one hundred,” considerably more significant than its predecessor.⁷⁰ Between 1870 and 1885, William Armstrong enlarged his country house “Craggside” from a “humble shooting lodge” into a grand country residence.⁷¹ In his 1865 book *The Gentleman’s House*, a book designed to assist the new aristocracy in constructing and managing their country houses, Robert Kerr wrote an entire section devoted to the proper ways to enlarge older country homes.⁷² Kerr included chapters on how to “rearrange a whole plan” and how to “enlarge principal rooms inwards.”⁷³ After transforming the domestic spaces and the plans of their country houses, members of the new aristocracy like Portman and Armstrong turned the interiors of their country homes into increasingly private, family-oriented spaces.

The new aristocracy made the interior spaces of their country houses more private oriented towards the family. Where one might have found great halls and chamber bedrooms in the past, the country houses of the new aristocracy often included uniquely family-oriented spaces such as a “morning room” or a “garden room.”⁷⁴ Here, the influence of the middle class is most apparent, as many sought to add rooms such as a “wash house, brewhouse, scullery and ‘offices’” to their homes.⁷⁵ In his remodeling of the lavish Bryanston House, Henry Portman included a “music room, twenty-five feet by forty,” and a “library.”⁷⁶ At Craggside, William Armstrong implemented a study and a “garden alcove room.”⁷⁷ The country house became a sanctuary where a family lived, not the seat of a great Lord. In *The Gentleman’s House*, Robert Kerr devoted sections to private and family-oriented rooms like the “music room” and the “private theatre.”⁷⁸ Kerr even provided sections for how to dismantle rooms that had now gone out of taste.⁷⁹ While rooms such as the “state dining room” still existed in many of their houses, as a whole, the new aristocracy placed much more emphasis on privacy and family than the old aristocracy in the interior spaces of their country residences.⁸⁰ This

meant that members of the new aristocracy began to collect more fine art for private display in their country houses.

The new aristocracy increasingly used the country house as canvases to display fine art that they collected. Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, a member of the new aristocracy and avid art collector, claimed in his 1897 memoir *Bric-a-Brac* that the “mania for old art has shifted from the descendants of the old to the founders of the new families.”⁸¹ Like Rothschild, members of the new aristocracy spent small fortunes on art to display in their country residences, like Rothschild’s Waddesdon Manor. In *Bric-a-Brac*, Rothschild remembers the purchase of dozens of artworks for his country estate. When recalling his purchase of some “Bouchers,” Rothschild remembered that his “heart fluttered wildly,” as he “already saw the Bouchers on my wall.”⁸² Cannadine and Musson argue that country houses often acted as “vessels for the display of collections” but do not conclude that it was explicitly the new aristocracy who treated the country house in this way.⁸³ As proof that it was the new aristocracy, Rothschild claimed that because the new aristocracy had “greater means in their command,” they often purchased their art from members of the old aristocracy, who sold the art as a “means of replenishing depleted fortunes.”⁸⁴ Thus, members of the new aristocracy, like Ferdinand de Rothschild, transformed their country houses into private places to display their art.

Emulation or Indifference?

By the late-nineteenth century, the ‘old’ aristocracy responded to the rise of the ‘new aristocracy’ and their subsequent transformations of the English country house with either disapproval or emulation. Those in the old aristocracy who disapproved saw the ‘new aristocracy’ as nothing more than wealthy upstarts and viewed their transformations to the country house as vain luxuries. Members of the old aristocracy who sought to emulate the trends set by the new aristocracy in their country houses often remodeled or changed their own homes. This emulation often led to bankruptcy because most members of the old aristocracy lacked the funds possessed by the new aristocracy.

Some members of the old aristocracy were unconcerned with the rise of the new aristocracy, whom they viewed disapprovingly as nothing more than wealthy upstarts. In his 1874 book *England, Political and Social*, Auguste Laugel wrote on reactions of the old aristocracy to the rise of the new aristocracy, wherein he claimed there was “no hostility between hereditary wealth and parvenu wealth,”⁸⁵ because to the old landed gentry, the new aristocracy was simply “bourgeois wealth.”⁸⁶ To many in the old landed class, the new aristocracy had money but little else. Laugel conceded that the new aristocracy was as “rich as” or even “richer than” the “descendants of the old families.” However, many members of the old aristocracy still felt that their titles and ancient family names put them above the new aristocracy, as no amount of up-jumped wealth could hope to match generations of inherited history.⁸⁷ Many members of the old landed class, “when the real sovereign is the richest man when the old races have become the vassals of speculators when those who give their lives are replaced by those who buy the lives of others, the English ideal will become dimmed and finally extinct.”⁸⁸ Those who disapproved or were indifferent to the rise of the new aristocracy also looked down upon their transformations to the English country house, which they saw as excess luxury.

Those in the old gentry who disapproved of the rise of the new aristocracy felt that the country house trends set by the new aristocracy were excessively luxurious. In the mind of Auguste Laugel, to the old aristocracy, the new aristocracy was “imprisoned within mansions of stone” and “vainly set its wits to work to create new enchantments.” Laugel then remarked that the new aristocracy “adorns its habitations, makes comfortable and easy, perhaps too easy

and too uniform. Thick carpets deaden the footfall, a thousand nothings, at first superfluous, become indispensable. But high art rarely lights with rays these artificial lives, this domestic pomp, this humdrum luxury.”⁸⁹ In the minds of some of the old aristocracy, art collection and increased luxury, both country house trends set by the new aristocracy were viewed negatively. Indeed, to many old aristocracy members, the new aristocracy's changes to English country houses were artificial, excessive, and superfluous. However, not all families in the old aristocracy had such opposing viewpoints of the new aristocracy -- some attempted to emulate the very trends which their fellow landed gentry disapproved.

Other members of the old aristocracy attempted to revamp their own country houses in the nineteenth century to emulate those of the new aristocracy, usually leading to financial ruin. Cannadine and Musson argue that the “shifting sands of agricultural depression, inflation, and taxation of inherited wealth--along with the rising cost of staff wages” caused families in the old aristocracy to end in financial ruin. Still, they overlook that these people often attempted to emulate the precedents set by the new aristocracy.⁹⁰ Members of the old aristocracy, like the 6th Duke of Devonshire, built the “Sculpture Gallery at Chatsworth” to keep up with the increased art collection of the new aristocracy.⁹¹ While this worked for him, many in the old aristocracy who attempted emulation ended in financial frustration. Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild remembered the “Duke of Buckingham,” whose “reckless extravagance had brought him into the bankruptcy court.”⁹² The duke’s “wish to be without rivals” (members of the new aristocracy) led to his downfall. Rothschild recalled, “Many an impoverished landlord” attempted to “indulge in the fashionable amusements of the day” to emulate the country houses and lifestyles of members of the new aristocracy and ultimately bankrupted themselves.⁹³ Most of those in the old aristocracy simply lacked the funds required for such extravagance.

Most members of the old aristocracy were unsuccessful in their attempted emulations of the new aristocracy and their country houses because of budgetary deficits. Rothery and Stobart suggest that it was the “careful management of spending” and eschewing “ruinously lavish lifestyles” that prevented older aristocratic families from “the burden of debt.”⁹⁴ Most members of the old aristocracy who attempted to emulate the ostentatious nature of the new aristocracy certainly did not engage in “careful management of spending.”⁹⁵ As seen before, the new aristocracy had considerably “greater means in their command” than the old aristocracy, and many of their transformations to the country house revolved around this increased wealth.⁹⁶ Because many members of the new aristocracy owed their fortunes to economic success and not hereditary wealth, they were the only ones able to afford such lavish changes to their country houses. When members of the old aristocracy, with their smaller budgets, attempted to emulate these extravagant changes, they often found themselves in financial ruin.

Conclusion

From the early-eighteenth to the late-nineteenth century, changes to the English country house closely paralleled developments to the English aristocracy. The Reform Act of 1832 seriously crippled the political power of the old aristocracy, enfranchising for the first time many who had lived on feudal land attached to country houses. Because of this, starting in the mid-nineteenth century, the country house was used less as a physical manifestation of feudal-era political power and more in a ceremonial, personal context. Rooms once used for political power through practices such as tenant rent collection like the great hall went out of style, and country houses were less often attached to feudal lands. Beginning in the early-eighteenth century, the proliferation of the African slave trade, the Industrial Revolution, and Britain’s

1833 abolishment of slavery led to the rise of new, untitled members of the aristocracy. For the first time in English history, these members of the ‘new aristocracy’ started to occupy English country houses. Families like the Rothschilds, Grenfells, and Hardmans all rose to be members of the new aristocracy and invested in luxurious country houses.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the rise of the new aristocracy and their spread into country houses was in and of itself an aristocratic development. These members of the new aristocracy tailored their country houses to their exact wants and needs, sometimes mirroring the middle classes. Increased wealth allowed the new aristocracy to increase spending on luxuries and servants, remodel and enlarge country houses, and create private family-oriented spaces to display their fine art. At the same time, the old aristocracy responded to this rise of the new aristocracy and their changes to the country house with either contempt or emulation. Some members of the old aristocracy felt like the new aristocracy was nothing more than the wealthy bourgeoisie and thought their changes to the country house were excess and superfluous. Other members of the old aristocracy sought to emulate the flashy changes to the country house brought about by the new aristocracy. This often led to financial ruin, as most members of the old aristocracy lacked the funds that had allowed the new aristocracy to accomplish their transformations to the English country house as a whole.

¹ [For an aerial video of Mentmore Towers](#)

² Percy Lubbock, *The Letters of Henry James*, Vol. 1 (London, England: Macmillan, 1920), p. 76.

³ David Cannadine and Jeremy Musson, *The Country House Past, Present, Future: Great Houses of the British Isles* (New York City, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2018), pp. 42-3.

⁴ John Martin Robinson, “The Function, Planning, & Social Use of the English Country House.” In *The English Country House from the Archives of Country Life*, ed. Mary Miers (New York, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2009), p. 73.

⁵ John Austin, *A Plea for the Constitution* (London: J. Murray, 1859), p. 12.

⁶ Austin, *A Plea for the Constitution* (1859), p. 81.

⁷ Auguste Laugel, *England. Political and Social*. Trans. Professor James Morgan Hart (New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1874), p. 90.

⁸ Robinson, “The Function, Planning, & Social Use of the English Country House,” p. 73.

⁹ Robinson, “The Function, Planning, & Social Use of the English Country House,” p. 73.

¹⁰ David Cannadine and Jeremy Musson, *The Country House Past, Present, Future: Great Houses of the British Isles*, p. 132.

¹¹ Cannadine and Musson, *The Country House*, p. 356.

¹² William Mitchell, “[Our Aristocracy.](#)” *The Yorkshire Tribune*, September 1886, pp. 193-4.

¹³ Mitchell, “[Our Aristocracy.](#)” 1886, p. 196.

¹⁴ Passy, “[The Great Proprietors, having control of legislation, devised laws which tended to their own aggrandisement.](#)” “[Additional Acts of Parliament passed by the owners of the soil, assembled in Parliament, to exempt themselves from taxation.](#)” in *The Aristocracy of Britain and the Laws of Entail and Primogeniture, Judged by Recent French Writers; Being Selections from the Works of Passy, Beaumont, O'Connor, Sismondi, Buret, Guizot, Constant, Dupin, Say, Blanqui, and Mignet: Showing the Advantage of the Law of Equal Succession. With Explanatory and Statistical Notes.*, trans. Anonymous (London: G. & J. Dyer, 1844), p. i-ii.

¹⁵ Passy, “[The Great Proprietors.](#)” (1844), p. i.

¹⁶ “Entail” meant that a tract of land that was given to a landed family would be granted “forever to his direct descendants.” In the case of no descendants, the land would return to the crown. (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “[Entail.](#)” Britannica (Encyclopedia Britannica, July 20, 1998).)

¹⁷ According to the Encyclopedia of North Carolina, “primogeniture” meant that the oldest son was always “heir to a family estate,” regardless of income or any external factors. Donna J. Spindle, “[Primogeniture.](#)” NCPedia (State Library of North Carolina, 2006).

¹⁸ Spindle, “[Primogeniture.](#)” (2006).

- ¹⁹ Gustave de Beaumont, “Not only the Law of Entail, but the Law of Primogeniture, must be abolished,” “Effect of the abolition of the Law of Primogeniture, so as to turn the scale of legal right,” in *The Aristocracy of Britain and the Laws of Entail and Primogeniture, Judged by Recent French Writers; Being Selections from the Works of Passy, Beaumont, O'Connor, Sismondi, Buret, Guizot, Constant, Dupin, Say, Blanqui, and Mignet: Showing the Advantage of the Law of Equal Succession. With Explanatory and Statistical Notes*, p. iv.
- ²⁰ Laugel, *England, Political and Social*, pp. 113-4.
- ²¹ “Rotten boroughs” were boroughs with parliamentary representation that had been established during the medieval period. With urbanization in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the only people left living in these places were landed elites. Landed elites would purchase these boroughs and control who was elected to represent said borough in parliament. (“[The Reform Act of 1832](#),” UK Parliament (UK Parliament), accessed February 21, 2021).
- ²² Laugel, *England, Political and Social*, pp. 113-4.
- ²³ Laugel, *England, Political and Social*, p. 136.
- ²⁴ “The Reform Act of 1832,” UK Parliament.
- ²⁵ John Martin Robinson, “The Function, Planning, & Social Use of the English Country House,” p. 73.
- ²⁶ Laugel, *England, Political and Social*, p. 99.
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- ²⁸ Laugel, *England, Political and Social*, p. 99.
- ²⁹ William Wilkinson, *English Country Houses: Forty-Five Views and Plans of Recently Erected Mansions, Private Residences, Parsonage-Houses, Farm-Houses, Lodges, and Cottages: with a Practical Treatise on House-Building*. (London: James Parker and Co., 1870).
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- ⁴⁶ Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann, “[Slavery and the British Country House](#),” in *Slavery and the British Country House*, ed. Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann (Swindon, England: English Heritage, 2013), p. 14.
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