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Editorial Board

Perseverance (n.) Constant persistence in a course of action or purpose; steadfast pursuit of an aim, esp. in the face of difficulty or obstacles; enduring.
--Oxford English Dictionary

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up.
--Thomas A. Edison

To Our Readers

As the 2021 Spring semester at the U of M draws to a close, the world has been battling the global pandemic of COVID-19 for over a year. In the course of that time, we have faced new physical, mental, and emotional challenges of all kinds. Much was lost – not only friends and loved ones and a sense of stability and constancy, but also the creative spark that drives innovation, and the momentum that research projects bring. In short, we were forced to adapt to new ways of living, 'seeking,' and 'inquiring.'

While some found that social distancing and working from home brought new opportunities, others were hampered by new distractions and additional demands on their time. Some research was driven by the crisis; other research suffered without a scholarly conversation to drive it. In the face of unexpected obstacles, the world has shown perseverance:

… in developing vaccines to combat COVID-19
… in developing new ways to teach and learn
… in offering kindness and support despite physical separation
… in seeking answers through research… in pursuing justice and placing a spotlight on prejudice and inequity.

The articles included in this volume also reflect this perseverance by examining life and the world, standing resolute (even in the face of danger), and seeking a voice. While some engage with COVID and its effects directly, others examine ways that human beings face adversity and make themselves heard, even in times of hardship. Producing *QuaesitUM* would not be possible without many people who give freely of their time and energy. In particular, Melinda Jones, the Director of the Helen Hardin Honors College, began this journal with me eight years ago. During that time, she has provided unfaltering constancy and stability as we have molded and shaped the journal into what it is today. I have learned a great deal, and consider myself lucky to have had the opportunity to develop this project with her. I am also grateful to

The greatest thanks and congratulations, however, must go to the students themselves. Despite the challenges of the year 2020, they poured their energy into pursuing their research goals. Their efforts are evident in the works included here; their industry in the face of the challenges 2020 brought are inspiring examples of what accomplishments can emerge from the steadfast pursuit of an aim.

In admiration of their perseverance,

Dr. Sage L. Graham

QuaesitUM Editor-in-Chief

Table of Contents

Business and Professional Studies

Humanities

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Publication and Review Process

Sammy Alghalibi earned a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in accounting in Fall 2020. Sammy is currently pursuing a Master of Science in accounting with a concentration of data analytics. He has been involved in the Memphis Institute of Leadership and Education, Beta Alpha Psi, and the Professional Development Center. He has completed an honors thesis on COVID-19's impact in audit, tax and corporate accounting. Sammy has acquired some accounting experience through different internships with Hilton Worldwide, Horne LLP, and FedEx Services. Sammy's long-term plan is to pursue and acquire a CPA license.

Sammy Alghalibi

COVID-19's Impact in Audit, Tax, and Corporate Accounting

Faculty Sponsor

Jeffrey Nevels

Abstract

The nominal disease COVID-19 has forced the accounting workforce to change in ways that will have long lasting effects in the practice of accounting (e.g. maintaining social distancing in a business environment, the movement to online/remote working, the enactment of new tax laws, new methods of building relationships with clientele, the CARES Act, etc.). Those within the tax, audit, corporate, and education sectors of accounting will be affected by the pandemic in many ways. The changes that have occurred will force businesses to give accommodations to accounting professionals long after the pandemic has ended. Due to the safety and concerns of the populous in the context of COVID-19, accountants will have preferences for their work environment depending on their accounting line of service. Prior to COVID-19, businesses had not normally offered these accommodations; the pandemic gives an opportunity to adapt to the current world narrative.

Changes in the Accounting Workforce due to COVID-19

The virus COVID-19 has driven the accounting workforce to shift in ways that will outlive the lifespan of this pandemic. These effects include maintaining social distancing in a business environment, moving to online/remote working, building new tax laws which affects tax service providers, building relationships with current clients, and disclosing the risks that come with a pandemic. COVID-19 also brought about the government's passing of the CARES Act which has implications amongst all sectors of accounting.

Those in the tax services sector of accounting will need to understand the changes that arise with the CARES Act so that they can provide their clients the best tax avoidance advice given the pandemic situation. Those in the audit service sector of accounting will have to understand the different types of risks that arise because of a pandemic. Those in corporate accounting departments will need to be adaptable in the transition to working remotely while not sacrificing the quality of financial reporting. Those in accounting education will need to consider the advantages of teaching and learning virtually while maximizing their long-term effectiveness from the opportunity that COVID-19 presents.

Changes in Tax Law

Due to COVID-19, those whose primary business is in tax services have had to assist their clients in making better tax avoidance decisions and understanding the tax implications of new laws, all while maintaining and growing their client base.

Consider that most businesses have had to make changes to their normal operating procedures to ensure that they stay competitive in their niche markets. Initially it may look like they have made those changes just to remain operational; however, they have tax implications to consider. In an article by Barton (2020), more than 50 of Ernst & Young clients across the manufacturing, hospitality, and consumer products sectors publicly agreed to manufacturing line conversions to help fight COVID-19. Barton notes five areas that businesses would need to consider when doing this conversion: (1) tax implications, (2) cash flow considerations, (3) logistical concerns, (4) risk and law issues, and (5) managing people. The knowledge of tax implications is critical to how these businesses will offset costs. One of the primary things to understand is how the government assists businesses throughout this period; specifically, with the CARES Act that the government has passed.

Consideration of the tax implications of the CARES Act and the grants/loans that come with it is essential when businesses spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to remain competitive. The right tax decisions could save

the businesses thousands of dollars to be even more competitive. The CARES Act stands for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and was passed on March 27th, 2020 (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act had overwhelming support from both parties and was signed into law by President Trump providing a two trillion-dollar economic relief package to protect the masses of America from public health and economic impact of COVID-19 (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act specifically affected American workers, families, and small businesses preserving jobs in American industries (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act includes the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for small businesses which is fully forgivable when seventy-five percent of the PPP loan is used for payroll costs, interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). Fully forgivable means that the PPP amount given to the small businesses do not have to be repaid.

At the Federal level, the funds from the Paycheck Protection Program are tax-free, but they may be subject to local and state taxes (Taherian, 2020). Also, not all the expenses covered by the Paycheck Protection Program are tax deductible. There is even a section in the CARES Act related to expanding the total amount of charitable deductions to twenty-five percent of taxable income. Prior to COVID-19, the limit was ten percent (Taherian, 2020). Another tax implication that occurred due to COVID-19 is the extension of the filing and payment deadlines. Businesses with a deadline of April 15th had their deadlines extended to July 15, and could have their deadline extended to October 15th (Coronavirus Tax Relief: Filing and Payment Deadlines, 2020). This extension is applicable to many tax forms which include and are not limited to the 1065, different variations of the 1120, the 8804, and more (Coronavirus Tax Relief: Filing and Payment Deadlines, 2020). Not every business had their specific tax form extended, so those who use tax information must know all the detail necessary to give sound advice. Understanding how the CARES Act can benefit businesses is imperative for tax firms and tax return preparers to give high quality service.

When tax services are provided, most would expect there to be a strong personal relationship between the tax accountant and the client. Due to COVID-19. there are far fewer face-to-face interactions. Firms with offices that employ hundreds of people are not able to keep offices open. Most firms offered their workers the opportunity to work from home, and later mandated working from home (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). State governments began to enforce mandates to close businesses that were deemed as non-essential to sustaining life (Levy et al., 2020), including CPAs and their firms.

The CPA Practice Advisor, a magazine for CPA related news, states that many offices had to create pickup/drop-off stations or car-side services to cater to clients who are not familiar with or able to access electronic documents (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). Clients began to communicate with their tax firms through many means: mail, courier services, emails, telephone calls, and virtual meetings through different services (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). Several web conferencing tools were commonly used; Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meets became the new normal for firms as they established ways for employees to collaborate with each other. The longevity of a tax firm may depend on its ability to handle working remotely, maintain strong client relationships, and understand the tax implications of the CARES Act.

COVID-19 has also created a scenario for tax service providers that can be beneficial. Many companies are looking to their tax advisors for help to navigate the rapidly changing environment concerning COVID-19; if they are prepared to handle the changes that COVID-19 has forced them to undertake, they can come out on top of this as a better, stronger accounting firm.

Changes in Audit Regulations

Changes in audit services are a similar because they are affected by the same state mandates that encourage CPAs and their firms to work from home. Audit and attest services are impacted differently from tax services, and prior completed engagements and risk assessments may not address a worldwide pandemic such as COVID-19 (Ference et al., 2020). If a company's year-end statements to changes in tax services are after the date that COVID-19 became a national emergency, there may be a need for more scrutiny from the auditor's point of view. Clients will need to have more judgement and estimation of the recognition of revenue and asset valuations that may be impacted by COVID-19. Reports may need modifications because they have not accounted for the pandemic.

Audit firms will have to include additional disclosures concerning the impact of the Coronavirus; this can be through ongoing concerns, risks, uncertainties, and estimations (Ference et al., 2020). The industry that a client operates in may have been impacted by COVID-19; this could be the specific market industry, geographical location, customer financial ability to purchase/finance, and the suppliers of that specific entity (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). If an audit client is concerned, the auditor should release an opinion reflecting that.

Failure on the part of an audit firm to address significant issues created by the pandemic (resulting in financial statement errors) will open the firm to charges of neglect. As an example, consider a scenario where inventory needs to be counted. COVID-19 may restrict the client from conducting inventory counts and the auditor may not be able to travel to perform physical inventory verification. In these situations, the auditors must be resilient and overcome such obstacles. They may be able to reschedule for physical counts or maybe even consider the use of technology to conduct the count (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020).

There is a potential increase of fraud risk because of COVID-19, and auditors need to understand those opportunities for fraud. Consider industries that had to transition employees to working remotely and or those who had to lay off large numbers of workers such as the tourism industry. The combination of layoffs and remaining employees working remotely increases the risk of a breakdown in internal controls (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). Auditors should prepare for these kinds of scenarios and be aware of opportunities that might lead to fraud.

Internal controls need to be tested to the fullest extent possible by the auditor. Working remotely accompanied by social distancing can make it harder for the auditor to complete testing of the internal controls. Not only will the auditor have to maintain social distancing, they may also have to work from their home instead of going to the audit location. The auditor could push for more substantive testing and understand the extent of further audit procedures in relation to the testing of internal controls. Also, asset impair- ment can occur because of COVID-19. Impacts of business, production, and supply chain disruptions can force the auditor to reconsider testing a company's assets for asset impairments. That can also be the case for a change in cashflows and market volatility (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). Asset impairment can occur to goodwill, indefinite-lived intangible assets and long-lived assets; the professional auditor must determine how to properly test for impairment considering the impact of COVID-19.

In internal auditing, the auditor will have to be able to understand the collaboration with risk management and compliance alongside the response to the pandemic. New operational models and business practices can create time sensitive risks that need to be prioritized in a hierarchy of importance. An internal auditor can also try to look at the strength of data. With the shift to virtual work environments because of COVID-19, understanding the way data is connected will not only increase insights and assurance, but it will also give a good understanding to any business interruption (Maali et al., 2020).

The internal auditor must maximize accessibility to data and records while knowing how online collaboration tools can analytically affect the end of projects. The potential impact of COVID-19 needs to be communicated by the auditor to different departments, management, and the board of directors.

Clear and detailed communication from the perspective of an internal auditor to management can be critical in communicating new risks that arise and how to address those risks. If audit plans are changed, limited, or adapted due to COVID-19, that needs to be understood, communicated, and executed by the auditor (Maali et al., 2020). For internal auditors, they may find that they have excess time in the short term due to the inability to conduct certain testing because of COVID-19. PricewaterhouseCoopers suggest that they work on long-term goals such as automating and digitizing workflows, digital upscaling and training, methodology transformation of technology and data, and strategic transformations to reduce costs and improve compliance for Sarbanes Oxley (Maali et al., 2020). PricewaterhouseCoopers has a valuable insight as to how internal audit should be used:

> The times are difficult, but internal audit's potential contribution is enormous: helping to provide a trusted risk perspective during these weeks and months when critical risks are both rising and changing quickly. (Maali et al., 2020)

Without the auditor's opinions, those who read the report may not know all the risks. The auditor also must consider the scope of limitations that may occur in their testing of controls. COVID-19 brings changes to the operations of a company; this may lead the auditor to test for things outside of their normal scope. The Journal of Accountancy states that the auditor should focus on whether one of these criteria exists: not confined to specific elements, accounts, or items in the financial statements; confined but also represent a material portion of the financial statements; and or fundamental to user's understanding of financial statements with disclosures (Maali et al., 2020). The International Federation of Accountants says the documentation that the auditor gathers that provides an image of the auditor's professional judgment and is vital to enforcing the quality of the auditor's opinion. Especially during a pandemic, it is essential to have a basis for the auditor's subjective judgements (Arnold, 2020).

Just like those providing tax services, auditors too will have to adapt with the change from working remotely in the terms of client relationships. Auditors will have to make sure that they are able to communicate effectively with their clients including the internal audit team. Auditors should understand the risks of participating in an engagement before it is accepted, and then

have the ability to fully commit to an engagement while knowing how limited their decisions can be depending on the state of the pandemic. Accounting firms should prepare their auditors to have the technological capabilities to work remotely, communicate effectively between other auditors and the clients, and to have that sense a teamwork; so that the auditors are prepared to complete their engagements in a quality manner (Mackintosh, 2020).

Still, even in the times of a pandemic, an auditor must be ethical. Not every risk and potential misstatement is related to COVID-19; it would be easy for any auditor to say it is when it truly is not. Regardless of the current scenario, the auditor's ethics are the foundation for their work. For reference, the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants state that the fundamental principles are integrity, objectivity, professional competence, due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior (Thomadakis, 2020). By maintaining these pillars of ethical value, an auditor will be better equipped to form a quality opinion for their customer even during the current pandemic.

Changes in Corporate Accounting

Corporate accounting and its financial reporting need to be prepared in accordance with GAAP to ensure reliability of the financial statements. As with the other accounting areas, there has been a shift from in person to remote working.

Deloitte offers a chart that mentions direct, indirect, and longer-term impacts that comes along with a pandemic (Koster & Igoe, 2020). These potential impacts will affect those who work in the corporate accounting divisions of major companies in many ways. COVID-19 has direct impacts to profitability, liquidity, credit quality, and supply chain; indirect impacts to the financial markets, prices, idle capacity, shifts in demand; longer term impacts in digital infrastructure, flexible working models, increased uncertainty, and change in business models (Koster & Igoe, 2020).

There are several companies that have had to lay off their employees in their internal corporate accounting departments because of COVID-19. For example, when the hospitality and tourism industry was crippled due to COVID-19, companies within those industries had to adapt to a major loss of revenue. Hilton Hotels, for example, became the world's most valuable hotel brand in 2019 and has been impacted severely by COVID-19, laying off 2,100 employees (one-fifth of their corporate workforce) to boost liquidity and reduce corporate expenditures (Clarke, 2020). This has resulted in 2,100 employees being laid off to boost liquidity and reduce corporate expenditures, to offset the loss of revenue because of COVID-19. The 2,100 employees that were laid off amounted to one-fifth of their corporate workforce (Clarke, 2020).

Employees who remain in a company's corporate accounting department must do the work that was done by previous workers who were laid off or furloughed which may require restructuring of the corporate accounting division just to finish all the work that needs to be done monthly. This may be viewed as providing more experience and skills to learn for the accountants that remain, but those that have lost their jobs will have to seek work elsewhere during the crisis.

The unemployment rate during COVID-19 in the United States has soared to astronomical numbers. According to the Bureau of Labor, civilian unemployment in April 2020 was nearly fifteen percent and was a record high for the past two decades (Civilian unemployment rate, 2020).

With such a sporadically high unemployment rate, those in corporate accounting who have found themselves jobless must search for work during the employment crisis. Because of this, those at CPA Practice Advisor recommend that accountants who have been affected by COVID-19 career- wise should embrace the skills of the future (DiGennaro, 2020). They should reassess their long-term goals in accounting and consider what they can do to become competitive. This may include going back to school to acquire a master's degree to become CPA eligible, studying and taking the four CPA exams, or learning new skills in data analytics that are applicable to the constantly evolving corporate accounting field. Some may consider the switch from public accounting to private accounting or vice versa; the job market for accounting that has been affected by COVID-19 will learn to readjust itself.

Those in corporate accounting who have kept their jobs have had to adapt to working from home. This means that financial reporting needs to be done in an environment outside of the office without a sacrifice in quality. Communication is one key to ensuring that there is no sacrifice in quality of financial reporting when working from home. That means that employees should be mindful of how to communicate virtually; this involves tactfully deciding how to relay information to other employees formally and informally in the virtual environment. Each person in a company's corporate accounting division needs to have the proper technological access and knowledge to complete their portion of the company's financial reporting with competence. If a company previously did not have technological capabilities for their employees to do their work remotely, they needed to adjust to accomplish financial reporting given the government mandates.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an opportunity for many corporate accounting departments across the world. That opportunity is to reevaluate their current method of financial reporting when it comes to the employee's method of working and financial reporting. Companies should

consider the process that their business must go through when processing accounting transactions and preparing financial documents through the cloud environment (Johnson, 2020). This transition to working from home may have been more efficient for some employees to complete financial reporting than previous methods, because of improvements to their reporting methodology was found upon review of the task at hand. For example, if a team reviews their current methods of financial reporting and finds a new way to conduct them more efficiently using the cloud environment, their financial reporting process will have improved. However, that may not be the case for many accounting departments who are not familiar with the new innovative tools used in remote working. The shift to remote working can influence businesses to maintain more virtually efficient standards of financial reporting for their corporate accounting departments.

Many companies are taking advantage of the change in working remotely by allowing their workers to work from home permanently. One example of a company who has made this change is Microsoft. Microsoft is allowing their managers to approve employees to work from home permanently; in doing so, they give up their office space and must work in assigned locations if they go to the office (Keane, 2020). In providing this option, Microsoft can save on office lease expenses and cater to their employee's desire to work from home. Microsoft also allows those that choose to remain working in the office environment to work fifty percent of their time at home if needed (Keane, 2020). Microsoft is just one of the many companies that is making the switch to working remotely widely available for their employees. This significantly affects those in corporate accounting as they are given opportunities (and face challenges) to conduct financial reporting differently than from before the pandemic, where remote work opportunities were not as widely available.

Though remote working is becoming the new normal, investors still need strong information on the financial status of a company through the financial statements formulated by corporate accounting departments that support the company. Disclosures themselves will be imperative to relaying information related to COVID-19 to investors. Whether mandatory or voluntary, these disclosures are essential in communication between management and stakeholders of a company. This could be corporate disclosures that quantify cash flows, earnings, or forecasted future performance and risk (Larcker et al., 2020). The guidance that is provided by the managers of the corporate accounting sectors of a business can become vital to determining the extent to which COVID-19 has affected their financial statements. The decision by managers to share information can be highly influential to the perceived value of that company; corporate accountants have the respon-

sibility to arm the senior management with quality information for key decision-making scenarios. Accounting Today states that financial statement disclosures will be related to the preparedness and response going forward given the situation with the pandemic (Mackintosh, 2020). Just consider the sheer number of disclosures that will be mentioned about the pandemic by different companies across different industries. As the pandemic grows within the United States, disclosures related to COVID-19 became more prevalent in the beginning of 2020. The Stanford Closer Look Series dives into this specific situation. They found that in January to May 2020, the percentage of companies that disclose COVID-19 cumulatively rises from zero percent to nearly one hundred percent (Larcker et al., 2020).

Cash-flow estimates made by corporate accounting teams will have to discuss the different variables that affect their future cash-flows. COVID-19 brings unpredictable variables to the cash flow estimation process. The degree to which government mandates impact a business and how it affects the financial statements need to be understood by those in corporate accounting, and they must convey this information in their financial reporting methods. Good faith estimates that are made for cash-flows and asset valuation could result in material asset impairments, which may not be reversable in future periods (COVID-19 Accounting Considerations, 2020). Because of how COVID-19 has affected the entire market, contracts may need to be renegotiated, amended, or outright broken. This will affect those in corporate accounting because the decisions made on contracts may affect compensation arrangements when it comes to leases, employees, financial assets, and liabilities (COVID-19 Accounting Considerations, 2020). The use of United States' GAAP in relation to COVID-19 will be the catalyst for high quality financial reporting in the corporate accounting practices of companies in America (Financial Reporting Considerations Related to COVID-19 and an Economic Downturn, 2020). All available present information should be used in determining the extent to which COVID-19 affects the financial statements, and the use of GAAP with that information is important for quality, timely financial reporting.

Changes in Accounting Education

Those working in accounting education have been impacted by COVID-19 just as much as other sectors of accounting. COVID-19 has given researchers a great opportunity to analyze the effects that a pandemic can have on financial reporting and accounting methodology. The switch to learning remotely and teaching in the virtual environment is becoming more prevalent across schools worldwide.

As colleges have started to change how classes are conducted, accounting professors will have to adhere to new standards that are implemented. Social distancing, remote/online classes, in person class limits, and communication via email/learning software still are things that accounting professors must make adjustments for. Primarily due to government mandates striving to reduce the spread of COVID-19, colleges across America have had to offer their accounting courses virtually. This presents a challenge for professors who have previously never offered their teachings virtually. This includes those who have been teaching in-person accounting courses for decades and now must offer their courses online. The accounting professors who have not adapted to these changes will find themselves in a predicament where they are unable to teach their course material effectively. Professors who are inexperienced with online teaching will need to transition their accounting material to the virtual environment. They could teach their material online by creating videos tailored to the students learning the material. Accounting professors could also decide to teach their classes through hosting virtual meetings that would present the course material through video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Skype, Google Meets, and Cisco Webex.

There are pros and cons for both students and professors in accounting education when it comes to working remotely. Both the students and professor have more control over their learning because online learning and teaching accommodates everyone's own schedule. Accounting students with jobs can do their class work as their work schedule allows. Whether it is 3:00 AM in the morning or 9:00 PM at night, online courses let accounting students learn whenever they want to. Likewise, accounting professors can create and upload assignments whenever they wish. This saves a lot of time on both ends and is especially helpful for those accounting students who plan on taking an internship to gain experience and work towards their accounting degree. Online teaching is also cost effective as it saves money on the commute of both the accounting students and professors, the universities do not have to provide certain amenities to a larger amount of people, and the informational courses created can be used in future semesters for future generations (Tran, 2020).

There is a downside to teaching and learning remotely, though. Not every professor's strong suit is online; accounting professors may not teach well when in the virtual environment. At the same time, accounting students may not learn as well online as in person. There is a connection that occurs when learning in person compared to learning online which may influence the potential decision for students to pursue an accounting degree.

Bay View Analytics conducted a study on six hundred different institutions with eight hundred higher education faculty administrators on Perspectives: COVID-19, and the future of higher education. This study was made to determine whether the shift to teaching/learning remotely is disruptive to the industry. The survey found that fifty-six percent of faculty members reported using teaching methodology that they were never using in the past, forty-eight percent of faculty members reduced the expectation for the amount of work for students to complete, and thirty-two percent lowered their expectation for the student's quality of work (How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19, 2020). The results of this survey highlight some of the changes that have been occurring in accounting education due to COVID-19.

Roger CPA interviewed Dr. Veronica Paz about her specific experience with the transition to teaching remotely. Dr. Veronica Paz is a well-qualified associate professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and holds CPA, CITP, CFF, and CGMA licenses. In her experience, the transition to teaching accounting material remotely has been a smooth transition; this is primarily because her curriculum was online before COVID-19 (How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19, 2020).

Dr. Paz teaches entry level undergraduate and upper level graduate accounting courses and has several suggestions for other accounting professors making this transition. She suggests that those struggling with the transition to remote teachings should embrace technology, communicate with the students, go paperless, and become creative with their curriculum ("How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19," 2020).

What this means is that accounting professors should create videos that their students will use to learn accounting material, consider surveying students on feedback to improve the learning process, using the cloud for grading and uploading assignments, and creating content for each student's learning style. Every accounting professor will likely use what they have used in this transitional period to offer virtual classes after the pandemic is over.

With many changes in accounting due to COVID-19 occurring, the current state of affairs is an opportunity for accounting educators to study/research the changes to better understand why they are occurring and how they will continue in the future for those pursuing a career in accounting. Not only has the shift to working from home became normal, but this is a great time to research how that may affect those in the accounting career. There are tremendous opportunities to shape the future of accounting as a profession. As an example, the CARES Act is a two trillion-dollar bill that is over eight

hundred pages long, with implications for the coming years ("The $2 trillion CARES Act, a response to COVID-19, is equivalent to 45% of all 2019 federal spending," 2020). As mentioned before, the CARES Act has tax and audit implications that need to be considered. Given that, those in accounting education are given ample opportunity to research how accounting firms, accounting methodology, and companies' financial statements are affected by the CARES Act and COVID-19.

Colleges that offer accounting degrees understand that this shift to learning and teaching remotely has not been as smooth for everyone. Several colleges have offered accommodations for students who have not been adapting to the transition, including accounting students. One such example is the University of Memphis's Credit/No Credit option for classes in the Spring 2020 semester. Choosing to take advanced courses when there is a Credit/No Credit grade option (instead of the normal letter grades) allows students to meet requirements for the degree while also protecting their GPA from possible low letter grades. Although this is a temporary advantage for students, this will not be a permanent solution to the challenges that remote learning brings. As students adapt to learning virtually, this offer may not be given by universities in the future.

The need for accounting students to learn virtually will become normal in the future for aspiring accountants. COVID-19 brings a myriad of opportunities to conduct research into teaching methodology. Degrees will be earned in the virtual environment and accounting professors of the future will understand the necessity of teaching virtually. Because of COVID-19, the way that accounting is taught will include the virtual environment as a permanent alternative.

Conclusion

COVID-19 is a pandemic that is changing the way the world operates, including those in the accounting workforce. Working remotely will be something that stays long after this pandemic ends. The switch to using technological tools such as cloud-based technology like Dropbox, and web conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams, will become a part of the normal culture in accounting. The COVID-19 pandemic brings both an obstacle and an opportunity to the accounting workforce. With the release of the CARES Act, there are opportunities for firms to discover the tax implications related to the two trillion-dollar bill, and how to assist their current and new clients in making tax decisions during this tough time.

Those in the audit line of service will now have to include the risks that come from the COVID-19 pandemic and must adjust their current engage-

ments as needed. Adjusting to financial reporting in the virtual environment and learning new skills to become more competitive in the industry. The number of disclosures that are related to the pandemic is increasing and must be included in financial reporting. The students and professors in accounting education have had to adjust to teaching and learning remotely and will need to stay abreast of new laws/bills that will be passed due to COVID-19. These will all become embedded in industry standard as assessments of risk and the impact of new regulations are evaluated and understood. Going forward, companies and firms will have to understand the changes that occurred because of COVID-19 and offer their employees accommodations that reflect the new normal. In conclusion, the pandemic has created new variables to be considered for accounting purposes and has changed the way accounting information is shared.

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Dakota Averett previously served as a research assistant in the Department of Economics at the University of Memphis while earning his B.A. in Economics. Dakota completed an honors thesis examining the relationships between student major choice, faculty salary, and department hiring, which was expanded for this publication. After graduating in May of 2020, Dakota began work on an M.A. in Economics, also at the UofM, and is expected to graduate in December of 2021.

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Dakota F. Averett

Effects of Changes in Student Major Choice on Faculty
Salary and Department Hiring

Faculty Sponsor

Dr. Jamein Cunningham

Abstract

Since the Great Recession, student major choices have shifted from majors such as English and humanities to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas, especially computer science and health areas. This research seeks to examine the effects of changes in student major choice on faculty salary and hiring practices in corresponding departments. Using data from the University of Memphis, analysis is performed in two parts. The first part examines 32 majors to determine the relationship between student enrollment and average faculty salary. The second part examines the relationship between changes in student enrollment and changes in total teaching faculty in corresponding departments. This research finds virtually no correlation between enrollment and faculty salary, and very slight negative correlation between enrollment and number of teaching faculty.

Introduction

Since the Great Recession, there has been a significant shift in postsecondary student decisions regarding academic major. Student major choices have shifted from fields such as English and the humanities to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas, especially computer science and health areas. Many of these students were motivated by their memories (or the memories of their parents) of the recession to gain an education that will lead to a steady and stable flow of income after graduation and believe that choosing a major in a STEM area will lead to a greater chance of securing such employment. This shift towards STEM majors has been well-documented and raises the question of how universities are responding after such a dramatic change. More specifically, how do universities make choices about the allocation of labor and wage levels in response to these changes in demand? As students move towards STEM, do universities hire more professors in STEM areas, or just increase the student-to-faculty ratio? How do they alter the salaries of faculty in fields with changing levels of student demand? This research sets to explore these questions and develop explanations, using data and evidence from the University of Memphis.

Literature Review

This research has two main branches: the effect of student major choice on faculty salary, and the effect of student major choice on department hiring. This section will first examine how students make major choices, and therefore the driving force of these changes in demand.

Changes in Student Demand

Since the 2008-2009 academic year, student major choices have shifted from English and humanities to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas, especially computer science and health areas. According to data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (Department of Education, 2020b), English language and literature majors have declined by 27.2% from the 2008-2009 academic year to the 2017-2018 academic year, the largest drop for any major area tracked by the center. Given that college enrollment has increased 26.7% in that same time, this decline is quite dramatic. In that same timeframe, enrollment in STEM programs increased dramatically: health professions and related programs saw the largest increase at 119.5%, followed by computer and information science at 106.6%, engineering at 78.3%, and mathematics and statistics at 66.5%. This data is summarized in Table 1. Given this data, it is clear that students are moving towards STEM majors at high rates.

Blom, Cadena, and Keys (2015) examined how major choices change when people are exposed to different economics conditions. The authors examined field-of-study questions available in the 2009 American Community Survey, which produced a roughly 1% cross-sectional sample of the United States in which holders of bachelor's degrees reported their field of study and age. The authors combined data from the five annual surveys from 2009-2013 and were able to calculate the distribution of college majors for cohorts turning age 20 from 1960-2011. This initial analysis served to determine whether major choices change over the business cycle. The authors then supplemented cyclicality estimates with characteristics of majors from the 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond survey (Department of Education, 2020a). They then combined these two data sources by creating a standardized list of 38 major categories to use in the analysis. The authors found that birth cohorts exposed to higher unemployment rates during typical schooling years selected majors that earn higher wages, have better employment prospects, and more often lead to work in a related field. Furthermore, the authors found that recessions encourage women to enter male-dominated fields, and students of both genders pursue more difficult majors, such as STEM fields. The authors suggest that these findings show that the economic environment changes how students select majors.

Russel Weinstein (2017) examined how local labor markets at the time of a student's college career can drive their major decisions. He examined four shocks (the dot-com crash, the fracking boom, the 2008 financial crisis, and the shock making Delaware a financial headquarters) and analyzed how students in a majorly affected area reacted regarding their major of choice. He used university-level data tracking bachelor's degrees attained by discipline; for major economic events, he used IPEDS to obtain total degrees awarded. Weinstein determined that economic shocks and their corresponding local labor markets did influence students when choosing a major, but these effects varied in timing, longevity, and intensity.

This data and prior research suggest that students are influenced by economic conditions when making decisions regarding academic majors, and move towards STEM majors during and following periods of economic downturn. Blom, Cadena, and Keys (2015) showed that birth cohorts exposed to higher unemployment rates during schooling years tend to choose more difficult majors, such as those in STEM areas. Weinstein (2017) found that local labor market conditions influence students when choosing a major, but this influence is not consistent. This research shows the cause of the shift towards STEM majors since the 2008-2009 academic year.

Changes in Department Size

Johnson and Turner (2009) examined how faculty resources are allocated in higher education. Using data from the National Research Council (NRC), the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS-IPEDS), the authors examined the ratio of undergraduates to faculty at 132 institutions. Johnson and Turner concluded that core social sciences such as economics and political science exhibited higher student demand per faculty ratio as opposed to sciences and humanities. They make the claim that this is due to political forces within institutions that prefer certain disciplines rather than an appropriate allocation of resources.

Becker, Greene, and Siedfried (2011) specifically examined faculty size in relation to undergraduate and Ph.D. students. They used a regression analysis of the economics departments of 42 institutions over 14 years. They primarily used data from the American Economic Association (AEA). The number of undergraduates was obtained from the AEA's Universal Academic Questionnaire. Ph.D. data was obtained from the governmentally sponsored Survey of Earned Doctorates. Their data ranges from 1990-2006 (except for the 1998-1999 academic year).1 They conclude that bachelor granting institutions get a new faculty member for every increase of 10 undergraduate students and Ph.D. granting institutions obtaining a new faculty member at a one-to-one basis. However, this is less likely to occur in both bachelor granting and Ph.D. granting institutions when only presented with long term data and no short-term, current demand. Thus, furthering the idea that faculty size and student demand is based on political drive of the institution.

Bound and Turner (2006) examined how student demand and crowding in institutions affects graduation rates. They primarily used census data and IPEDS, as well as the HEGIS-IPEDS. They estimate that a state-wide increase of 10% in college population causes a 4% decline in degree completion. This mainly affects public institutions due to their inability to increase the resources needed for a higher demand of students. While it is not major-specific, this result is significant because it highlights the fact that some institutions may not be able to keep up with the demand of students through hiring new faculty.

Much of the prior research suggests that the allocation of faculty in higher education institutions is not to pursue efficiency but is more often influenced by internal political forces as well as internal and external financial restrictions. It is also worth noting that there is a general increase in the hiring of adjunct faculty as student demands increase, because universities can increase class offerings at a lower cost than if they were to hire more tenure-track professors, which can substantially benefit students.

Changes in Faculty Salaries

Johnson and Turner (2009) also looked at salary and student demand in their research. For salary data in specific fields, they used the Faculty Salary Survey by Oklahoma State University (which only covers National Associate State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.) They noted that there wasn't complete overlap between the NRC data they obtained and the OSU data but assumed that the relative relationship of salaries between the two data sources would vary a negligible amount. They found that higher paid departments have a higher student-to-faculty ratio. They found it important to note that faculty salary expenditures per student were lower in the higher paid disciplines.

Goolsbee and Syverson (2019) directly measured monopsony power in different higher education institutions, also primarily using IPEDS data. They found that higher quality (measured using the Carnegie standard) institutions and larger institutions had more monopsonic power, with no difference regarding geographic region or gender of the prospective faculty. They also found that institutions generally had much more monopsonic power over tenure track faculty when compared to their non-tenure track counterparts because of issues regarding mobility. The authors could not conclude how the faculty member's salary was affected by the monopsonic power. It could be that if the market were perfectly competitive, schools would have to give raises or risk losing faculty. However, given that faculty have mobility issues and there are often few universities in a local area, these universities do not have to give faculty raises in response to changes in student demand.

This research shows that departments with a high student-faculty ratio have higher salaries, and the opposite is true for departments with low student-faculty ratios. It is also true that universities have power over their tenure and tenure-track faculty because mobility is an issue for these professors. While this power could be modeled to show that this would prevent faculty from getting raises, this has not been proven. Other factors also affect professor salaries, a main influence being seniority within the department.

Summary of Prior Research

Student demand is driven by many factors, but the most relevant seems to be the state of the economy at the time. The allocation of faculty in higher education institutions is not to pursue efficiency but is more often influenced by internal political forces as well as internal and external financial restrictions. Departments with a high student-faculty ratio have higher salaries,

and the opposite is true for departments with low student-faculty ratios.

Insights from Economic Theory

Consider a labor market for computer science and English professors. Initially, the markets are identical, with both types of professors requiring the same training, a Ph.D., and are engaging in the same work activities, teaching and research. Initially, demand and supply of both are equal, so both markets bring about the same wage W_0, and the quantity of professors hired by the university are represented by Q_{0C} and Q_{0E}.

As has occurred in the years since the recession, suppose that the demand for computer science professors increases, and the demand for English professors decreases. Initially, this causes an excess demand for computer science professors of $Q_{1C}-Q_{0C}$, and an excess supply of English professors of $Q_{0E}-Q_{1E}$. In this situation, there are three ways that the university can respond to these changes in demands: 1) let the market work, 2) keep all wages constant, and 3) raise all wages. The following models assume that universities can freely raise and lower faculty salaries and freely hire and fire professors.

Letting the market work means to increase wages when demand increases and decrease wages when demand decreases. In this situation, demand for computer science increases and shifts from D_{0C} to D_{1C}. This causes the university to increase the wage from W_0 to W_{1C}, and the quantity of computer science professors to increase from Q_{0C} to Q_{2C}. Demand for English professors decreases and shifts the demand curve from D_{0E} to D_{1E}. This causes the university to decrease the wage from W_0 to W_{1E}, and the quantity of English professors to decrease from Q_{0E} to Q_{2E}.

A second possibility is choosing to keep wages constant in the face of changing demands. If this were to occur, then in this situation demand for computer science increases and shifts from D_{0C} to D_{1C}, but because wages are kept at W_0, the quantity demanded is Q_{1C} and the quantity supplied is Q_{0C}. This leads to an excess demand of computer science professors of $Q_{1C}-Q_{0C}$. Demand for English professors decreases and shifts the demand curve from D_{0E} to D_{1E}. The wage again stays constant at W_0 so that the quantity demanded is Q_{1E}. and the quantity supplied is Q_{0E}, leading to an excess supply of English professors of $Q_{0E}-Q_{1E}$.

Thirdly, universities could respond to these excesses by lowering hiring standards for computer science professors and raising hiring standard for English professors, and the quality of these professors would reflect this change. Additionally, faculty size and course offerings would not change to accommodate these changes in student demand. A university may also

choose to raise the wages of all professors when demand increases for one type of professor. In this situation, demand for computer science increases and shifts from D_{0C} to D_{1C}, and once again causes the equilibrium wage to increase from W_0 to W_{1C}, and the quantity of computer science professors to increase from Q_{0C} to Q_{2C}. Demand for English decreases and shifts the demand curve from D_{0E} to D_{1E}, but now the wage increases from W_0 to W_{1C}, so that the quantity demanded is Q_{3E} and the quantity supplied is Q_{4E}, which exacerbates the surplus of English professors shown in the previous situation, raising it to $Q_{4E} - Q_{3E}$. Universities would respond by hiring fewer English professors and reducing course offerings, while also raising the hiring standards for English professors, again increasing average quality.

When student demand changes, the preceding situations are the ways that a university may respond in the form of faculty salaries and hiring. These situations assume that universities can freely raise and lower faculty salaries and freely hire and fire professors. According to economics theory, it is likely that in response to an increase in student demand in an area, faculty hiring will increase. Salaries of faculty in this area will also likely increase. In areas where student demand decreases, it is likely that departments will shrink, and there will be decreases in salary.

Method

Three datasets were used while conducting this research. The first two datasets were requested and obtained from the University of Memphis Office of Institutional Research. The third dataset was obtained online, in part from the University of Memphis website (Office of Institutional Research, 2019), and in part from an article published by the Memphis Business Journal ("University of Memphis 2014 salaries database").

The first dataset included the number of students with declared majors in various fields of study, with values for each fall semester from 2007 to 2019. This dataset was edited before analysis. Firstly, the values for the year 2007 were omitted with the goal of better aligning with the dataset of faculty salaries, which ranged only from 2008 to 2019. Concentrations within majors were counted as a single major. For example, an English major with a concentration in linguistics and an English major with a concentration in literature would both simply be counted as an English majors. Additionally, several specific majors were removed from this dataset. These included Academic Focuses, which are categories (Business, Humanities, STEM, Social Sciences, etc.) that first-year students are grouped into before declaring a specific major. Undecided students and students listed as having no major were also omitted. Majors that did not have a positive number of students

enrolled for each fall semester from 2008 to 2019 were also omitted, with two exceptions: Foreign/World Languages and Literatures and Management/Business Information.

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures experienced a name change to the Department of World Languages and Literatures (which also changed the name of the major). Therefore, the number of students listed as having majors with either of those names in any given fall semester were combined into one value. Similarly, the Management Information Systems department and major were renamed as Business Information Technology, so those values were also combined. There were two sets of majors that shared a department which were combined into one value to, again, better align with the dataset of faculty salaries. The Economics (B.A.) and Business Economics (B.B.A.) majors were combined, because they are both under the Economics department, and the Computer Engineering and Electrical Engineering majors were combined for the same reason. Majors that did not have a clear corresponding department were omitted, including majors such as Professional Studies, Individual Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies. After these edits and omissions, there were 32 majors that were usable for analysis. This dataset can be found in the appendix in Table 2, with ΔE indicating the percent change in student enrollment in the corresponding major from 2008 to 2019.

The second dataset included the average salary for faculty members in corresponding departments with the titles of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor with unique values for each position and each year from 2008 to 2019. An abbreviated version of this dataset, edited to show one combined average salary for all four positions for each department, can be found as Figure 2 in the appendix, with ΔS indicating the percent change in average salary from 2008 to 2019.

The third dataset included the name, title, department, and salary of every faculty member at the University of Memphis. For the year 2014, this data was obtained from the website of the Memphis Business Journal ("University of Memphis 2014 salaries", 2014). The Memphis Business Journal continued to publish similar data for the years following 2014, but future publications contained data that was inconsistent and incomplete for some departments. Because of this, the same data for the year 2019 was obtained online from the University of Memphis website (Office of Institutional Research, 2019), which did not contain the same data for the year 2014. Using this data, values for total faculty in each department were derived. These totals included the following positions: Chair, Professor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Holder of the Chair of Excellence, Instructor, Lecturer,

Senior Lecturer, and visiting faculty holding the preceding positions. Note that staff positions such as Administrative Assistants and positions with no teaching obligations were not included. This dataset can be found as Table 2 in the appendix, with ΔC indicating the percent change in total faculty from 2014 to 2019 and ΔE* indicating the percent change in student enrollment in the major of the corresponding department from 2014 to 2019, which was derived from the first dataset.

The analysis portion of this research will be conducted in two parts. The first part will examine the relationship between student major choice and faculty salary in corresponding departments. This will use the student major enrollment dataset and the average faculty salary dataset, along with the corresponding percentage change values for student major enrollment and average faculty salary, ΔE and ΔC, respectively. This will include data from the years 2008 to 2019 and will produce a linear regression as well as the correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination, in order to estimate the effect of student major choice on faculty salary.

The second part of this analysis will examine the relationship between student major choice and department hiring practices. This will use the student major enrollment dataset and the total faculty dataset, along with the corresponding percentage change values for student major enrollment and total faculty, ΔE* and ΔS, respectively. This will include data from the years 2014 to 2019 and will also produce a linear regression, correlation coefficient, and coefficient of determination in pursuit of similar information as the first part of this analysis.

Results

For the first part of the analysis, the percent change in student enrollment in each of 32 majors from 2008 to 2019 was compared with the percent change average faculty salary for the positions of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor in each of 32 corresponding departments, also from 2008 to 2019. A linear regression of these variables yields the equation

$$a=0.0059\varepsilon +0.2026$$

where a is the percent change in average faculty salary and ε is the percent change in student enrollment in the corresponding major from 2008 to 2019. This relationship has a correlation coefficient of $r= 0.0594$ and a coefficient of determination $r^2 = 0.0035$.

For the second part of the analysis, the percent change in student enrollment in each of the same 32 majors, this times from 2014 to 2019, was compared with the percent change in total faculty in each of the same 32 corresponding departments, also from 2014 to 2019. A linear regression of these variables yields the equation

$$\beta = -0.4288\varepsilon^* + 0.2916$$

where β is the percent change in total faculty and ε^* is the percent change in student enrollment in the corresponding major from 2014 to 2019. This relationship has a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.2120$ and a coefficient of determination $r^2 = 0.0449$.

Discussion

The results of the first part of the analysis indicate that there is virtually no correlation between changes in student major choice and faculty salaries in corresponding departments. This indicates that changes in average faculty salary for individual departments is completely dependent on other factors. This lack of correlation supports the findings of the earlier mentioned research by Goolsbee and Syverson (2019), which found that when there are one or few universities in a local area, which is the case with the University of Memphis, universities do not have to give faculty raises in response to changes in student demand.

The results of the second part of the analysis indicate that there may be a very slight negative correlation between changes in student major choice and hiring practices of corresponding departments. This indicates that departments tend to increase the student-to-faculty ratio in the face of an increase in student enrollment in the corresponding major rather than hire more teaching faculty. This lack of correlation supports the findings of the previously mentioned research of Becker, Greene, and Siedfried (2011), which suggested that faculty size is based on political drive of the institution rather than student demand. Additionally, Johnson and Turner (2009) concluded that number of faculty in a given department is due to political forces within institutions that prefer certain disciplines over others, rather than an appropriate allocation of resources, a notion which is also supported by these results.

This research could be expanded in two ways. First, the dataset could be improved by collecting data for several more universities, and over a longer span of time. This would not only reveal longer-term trends but would show if multiple universities experience similar effects as students move towards specific majors. Second, separate analyses for different teaching positions

(Professor, Instructor, etc.) could reveal relationships that are not apparent when grouping all teaching positions together, because departments face less hurdles when hiring for some positions than for others. Combining these expansions could produce results that reveal more about the relationship between student enrollment and the number of teaching faculty and their salaries.

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Appendix

Field of Study	2007-08	2017-18
Agriculture and natural resources	24,125	39,314
Architecture and related services	9,809	8,464
Area, ethnic, cultural, gender, and group studies	8,453	7,717
Biological and biomedical sciences	79,869	118,663
Business	335,495	386,201
Communication, journalism, and related programs	76,400	92,290
Communications technologies	4,654	4,231
Computer and information sciences	38,523	79,598
Education	102,849	82,621
Engineering	68,404	121,956
Engineering technologies	15,278	18,727
English language and literature/letters	55,001	40,002
Family and consumer sciences/human sciences	21,880	24,349
Foreign languages, literatures, and linguistics	20,976	16,958
Health professions and related programs	111,548	244,909
Homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting	40,297	58,114
Legal professions and studies	3,771	4,239
Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities	46,882	44,262
Mathematics and statistics	15,169	25,256
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	34,172	51,909
Parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies	29,908	53,883
Philosophy and religious studies	12,259	9,603
Physical sciences and science technologies	22,164	31,542
Psychology	92,562	116,432
Public administration and social services	23,523	35,629
Social sciences and history	167,321	159,967
Theology and religious vocations	8,992	9,521
Transportation and materials moving	5,202	4,924
Visual and performing arts	87,731	88,582
Total	1,563,734	1,980,644

Table 1: Bachelor's Degrees Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions by Field of Study
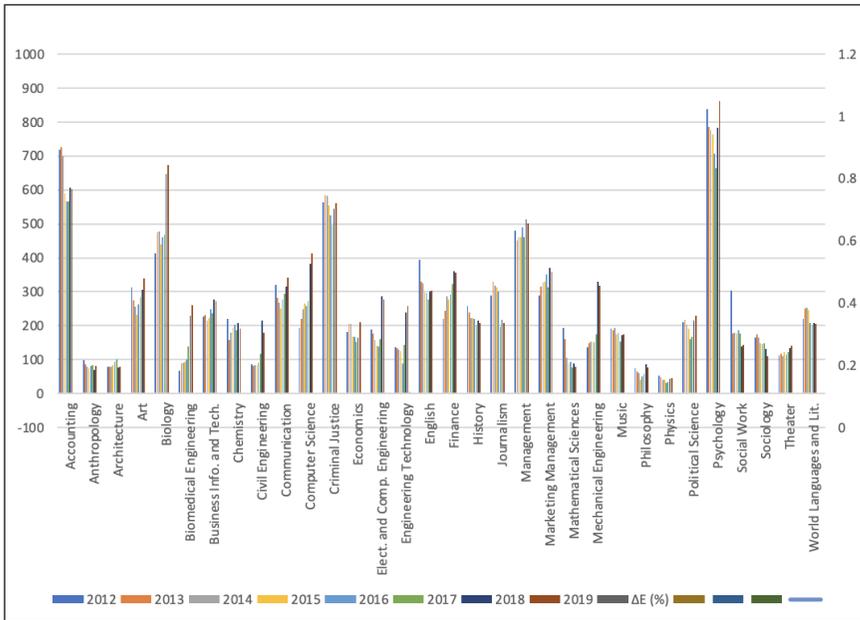
Figure 1: Enrolled Students by Major
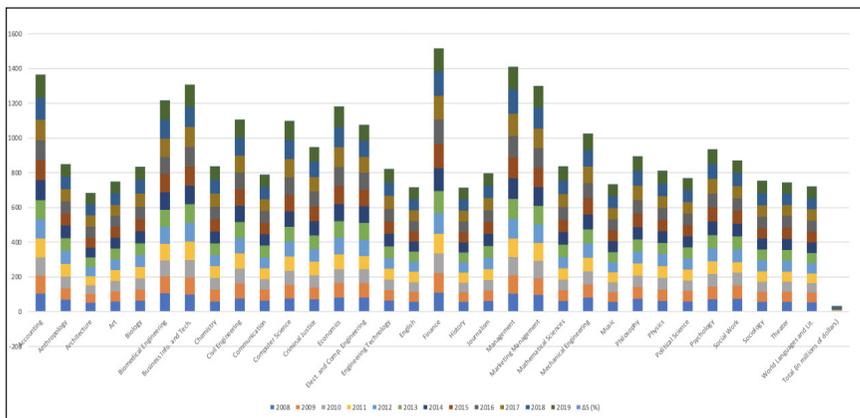
Figure 2: Average Faculty Salary by Department (in thousands of dollars)

Department	2014	2019	ΔC (%)	ΔE* (%)
Accounting	16	18	12.50%	-14.0%
Anthropology	6	11	83.33%	5.1%
Architecture	8	8	0.00%	0.0%
Art	23	24	4.35%	32.5%
Biology	28	33	17.86%	40.8%
Biomedical Engineering	9	6	-33.33%	190.0%
Business Info. and Tech.	14	12	-14.29%	27.0%
Chemistry	15	18	20.00%	7.3%
Civil Engineering	11	13	18.18%	115.7%
Communication	18	18	0.00%	28.1%
Computer Science	16	22	37.50%	66.1%
Criminal Justice	8	13	62.50%	-3.6%
Economics	11	12	9.09%	2.4%
Elect. and Comp. Engineering	11	11	0.00%	75.9%
Engineering Technology	7	9	28.57%	99.2%
English	47	56	19.15%	-6.7%
Finance	13	14	7.69%	24.8%
History	26	28	7.69%	-6.7%
Journalism	13	17	30.77%	-34.1%
Management	15	14	-6.67%	8.9%
Marketing Management	21	18	-14.29%	9.5%
Mathematical Sciences	37	39	5.41%	-24.5%
Mechanical Engineering	10	12	20.00%	108.6%
Music	41	44	7.32%	-10.3%
Philosophy	15	14	-6.67%	28.3%
Physics	11	11	0.00%	9.8%
Political Science	12	13	8.33%	13.4%
Psychology	26	30	15.38%	11.1%
Social Work	10	17	70.00%	-20.1%
Sociology	16	14	-12.50%	-34.3%
Theater	13	14	7.69%	27.9%
World Languages and Lit.	31	31	0.00%	-18.9%
Total	558	614	10.04%	14.3%

Table 2: Count of Faculty by Department

Rachel Layton grew up in both Northern Mississippi and Cologne, Germany before moving permanetly to Memphis in 2014. She graduated from the University of Memphis in May of 2020 with degrees in both German Langauge and English Literature. She will be attending the University of Missouri, Kansas City's MFA in creative fiction writing program in the Fall of 2021. She has previously been published in Memphis Magazine, Minerva Rising, and Crash Test Magazine.

Rachel's paper received a *QuaesitUM* outstanding paper award.

Rachel Layton

"Being Human and Living": How HIV/AIDS Established a
Vocal and Visible Queer Identity Within Queer Poetry
Leading into the 21st Century

Faculty Sponsor

Dr. Don Rodriges

Abstract

This paper examines how the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s–1990s affected the ways in which queer poets wrote about queer identity. Firstly, it outlines the trends of queer poetry prior to the AIDS crisis and how those trends developed once the AIDS crisis worsened. It then discusses the theoretical approaches of Lee Edelman and José Muñoz, arguing on Muñoz's side that queerness focuses on futurity. The themes of urgency, honesty, and the lived queer experience are all discussed alongside the works of queer poets writing during the 1980s and 1990s in order to make the argument that queer poetry is focused on a futurity in which queerness is able to exist on even ground with heteronormative society. Part of this argument states that death is a driving force for queers to strive for life, specifically a future generation that may live outside the confines of "straight" and "gay."

Introduction

An Introduction to the AIDS Epidemic

In the summer of 1981, five gay men in Los Angeles were reported by the CDC to have developed a type of a rare lung infection. Two of these men died. The same day, a doctor on the opposite end of the country in New York City called the CDC to report a rash outbreak of disturbingly aggressive cancers among gay men. The same week that the CDC released their initial report, there were similar outbreaks recorded around the nation. The beginning of the HIV/AIDS crisis was a time driven by unprecedented panic in a country where the speed of infection outpaced even the most proactive doctors. Part of what made this outbreak so disturbing was its lack of official diagnosis, which didn't come until a horrific two years later—with just shy of 1,300 deaths totaled since the disease was first reported in 1981 (Harr & Kane, 2008) Part of the delay in this discovery comes from the Reagan administration's apathetic response to AIDS, in which many press conferences were filled with laughter when the very subject of the gay plague was mentioned (Huber, 2018). President Reagan's cabinet largely denied the President's knowledge of the disease until 1983, and even after the administration admitted to the existence of the disease, there was much effort on their part to slow the access to HIV/AIDS medication as well as defund or non-prioritize HIV/AIDS research (Leland 2017).

However, gay communities throughout the country, specifically in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City, were already becoming aware in 1981 that the beginnings of an epidemic were at hand. The list of infection seemed to grow exponentially in those first two years, and by the end of that first summer, acclaimed writer and activist Larry Kramer held an assembly in NYC with over 80 gay men asking them to contribute money to research because, as he recalls later in his life, "people really were dying like flies (Leland, 2017). Kramer, a lifelong gay rights activist and founder of several AIDS coalitions including ACT-UP and the Gay Men's Health Crisis, authored the autobiographical play The Normal Heart (1985) which takes place from 1981 to 1984 and depicts his unpopularity within the NYC gay community for his adamant warnings about the oncoming "plague." Unfortunately, Kramer was opposed by many queer people in his community as strongly as those who opposed HIV/AIDS research on the foundation of homophobia (Whittington, 2012) To many, asking gay men specifically to not have sex in New York City during one of the most significant booms of gay culture to this day, felt like a betrayal of their validity as gay people. It was as much a part of their sexual identities as it was their personal identities. His play, released during the biggest wave of the crisis, was controversial in that

44

it was so outspoken and angry, but anger was not only justified, it was one of the only avenues through which queer people had a chance to instill change and protect their communities.

During the epidemic of the 1980s and 90s, the othering of the gay community that had been occurring for decades erupted along with the eruption of the plague, which Kramer describes in the opening of his play. Characters Craig and Mickey are sitting in the waiting room of a doctor's office when Craig asks, "Did you see that guy in there's spots?" to which Mickey replies, "You don't have those. Do you?" (Kramer, 1985) expressing in little words the indescribable anxiety that queer people have of being discovered, or of being innately "wrong," even in the case of two committed partners.

Part of what worsened the "othering" and fear-fueled hatred of queer people in the context of AIDS was the visual aspect of lesions and spots, bringing the thematic view of gays as unclean to a tangible reality. One of the founders of queer theory, Leo Bersani, details this hatred for the queer community in his work "Is the Rectum a Grave?," saying;

> [The] appalling examples of this crisis (taken largely from government policy concerning AIDS, as well as from press and television coverage, in England and America) and, most interestingly, an attempt to account for the mechanisms by which a spectacle of suffering and death has unleashed and even appeared to legitimize the impulse to murder. (Bersani, 1996)

Thom Gunn discusses this visual of lesions and the non-visual othering of AIDS in his poem "The Missing". Gunn writes, "Now as I watch the progress of the plague / The friends surrounding me fall sick, grow thin / And drop away," which sets the tone for a poem largely formed around the confines of a body and how the touch of body to body shapes a communal identity (Klein, 1992). This is demonstrated in the line, "Contact of a friend led to another friend / Supple entwinement through the living mass" where Gunn refers to the physical spread of the disease in more personal terms, the way a queer person would be experiencing the spread of this plague. Gunn continues his lament over the dying body in his final stanza, "Abandoned incomplete, shape of shape, / In which exact detail shows the more strange / Trapped in unwholeness, I find no escape," which highlights "unwholeness" as similar to "unholy," bringing us back to the anxieties of not functioning "correctly" within society. Gunn's narrative of losing his lovers to the disease relies on this motif of the breakdown of a physical body in order to parallel the physical gruesomeness of AIDS at the beginning of the crisis.

However, what is perhaps more thematically interesting in this poem is its overall frankness and sexually vulnerable voice. While AIDS imposed a hierarchical death sentence on both IV drug users and queer people, the response to AIDS was defiant, honest, and relied on a theme developed in the 1950s confessional movement of poetry – the lived experience (Harr & Kane, 2008). Prior to AIDS, the trend of queer poetics was wrought with coded language and dual meanings, giving this queer poetry a duplicity of meaning that in many ways could still exist within a heteronormative space (Boone and O'Hara 1979). What we see during and post the AIDS crisis, however, is an inversion of this tradition. During the crisis, queer poets frequently wrote in a previously seldom used voice of vulgarity, vulnerability, and a seemingly hopeless cry towards a future in which queerness has the space to exist. Queerness is one of the rare themes within literature in which death plays just as large a role in the desire for hope and future as life itself does (Edelman, 2004).

This paper seeks to prove that, throughout the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s and through the political culture it created within queer spheres, queer writers consistently write for a future which they themselves will not live to see through writing candidly about their lived experiences as queer people and by creating an atmosphere of strength through vulnerability. One of the largest strengths in being queer at this time was being able to say that you are queer, and these poets demonstrate just that. This thesis will demonstrate how the drive towards a queer futurity, as defined by José Muñoz in what follows, has always been present, but throughout time, the existence of AIDS has served as a shove towards the future that many queer authors have written of and aspired to over generations. Although AIDS is seen by many as a drive away from life and towards a dismal future of loss and death, the queer authors of the epidemic seize an opportunity to expose the reality of queerness as necessary and natural through their lived experiences both personally and as a collective whole.

Queer Poetry before 1980

Prior to the HIV/AIDS crisis, the queer community and scholars were still debating the dichotomy of life and death as it relates to queer experiences. This dual existence of queerness is no doubt connected to the political and social realities of queer people both in the past as well as the present. There is a natural fear that comes with being openly queer in a society that contains threats of violence – which permeates to the modern day in events such as the Pulse Nightclub shooting in 2016, ostracization, and death to queer people. However, queerness is also an identity found through love, sex, and the forming of relationships in spite of these threats. Scholar Richard Zeikowitz

defines these aspects of queerness as, "how queer identities are based on a seemingly obligatory repetition of acts, gestures, and appearances which heteronormative society defines as abject Other (Zeikowitz, 2004)". These acts and gestures hinge not only on sexual attraction to those of the same sex, but also on, "appearance, mannerisms, and speech style (Zeikowitz, 2004)," all of which help to encompass the broader meaning of the lived queer experience. It is this identification of the more visible other aspects of what defines queerness that makes the fear of discovery, as well as the trauma of secrecy, all the more real for those in the LGBTQ+ community. The continuation of this fear can be found. Thus, it's no wonder that queer scholars have been debating for some time where the future of queerness is heading.

All these action and presentation-based aspects of queerness are considered to be performative. The theory on performative-based queer poetry (which will be explored in greater depth in chapter two of this thesis) establishes an important distinction between heterosexual expression through poetry and homosexual or bisexual expression in that, the heterosexual viewpoint has always been and will be for the foreseeable future the default mode in analyzing a speaker. It is only through the introduction of some "otherness" that the reader will gain insight into the speaker's deviation from this assumed norm. Some pre-AIDS queer poets, such as Frank O'Hara who worked within the New York School of Poets, thus rooted much of their poetry in this ability for queer people to fade in and out of being visibly queer based on both their own behavior as well as through critiquing this assumption of the heterosexual default. One such example comes from O'Hara's poem "Having a Coke with You" published in 1960 – just shy of a decade before Stonewall. This poem explores the "hidden in plain sight" phenomena in a time when queerness was outside of common presumption. In the poem, the tone is not one of fear or secrecy but rather of an almost boyish playfulness, entwining both art and history with a rather unpopular viewpoint on homosexuality at the time, the connection to a brighter future.

O'Hara begins with the line, "is even more fun than going to San Sebastian, Irún, Hendaye, Biarritz, Bayonne (O'Hara, 1995)" which is perhaps one of the few and most famous instances of a queer poem opening with fun. Especially during and post the HIV/AIDS epidemic, fun is seldom found at the forefront of queer poetry. Yet, in 1960, O'Hara dedicated this love poem not to fear or the inevitability of violence, but to the excitement and joy of being with a beloved in public whilst remaining what the queer community would refer to as "passing," meaning they are not easily identified as queer. The line, "the secrecy our smiles take on before people and statuary," further

elaborates on this awareness of their ability to "pass" as heterosexual while also experiencing a romantic date with one another. There is a duality of identity within this poem that separates the speaker from the normalcy of those around him as shown in the lines, "it is hard to believe when I'm with you that there can be anything as still / as solemn as unpleasantly definitive as statuary (O'Hara, 1995)" while also alienating him from the masterpieces of the art gallery that the speaker and his partner are in. O'Hara writes, "and what good does all the research of the Impressionists do them / when they never got the right person to stand near the tree when the sun sank (O'Hara, 1995)," which puts into question the worth of social respect and hierarchy. This is another major theme often examined in queer poetry as well as the foundational cornerstone of the antisocial thesis in queer theory. Specifically, this line calls into question queer theorist Leo Bersani's debate on, "should a homosexual be a good citizen (Bersani, 1995)" in his book Homos in 1996 which will be further examined in the next section.

Essentially, O'Hara's poem encompasses two overarching themes within queer poetry that are foundational to the creation of the genre. The first being this tension between assimilating into heteronormative society or remaining outside the social norm. The second being this euphoria of finding connection, as expressed most potently in the final two lines of the poem, "it seems they were all cheated of some marvelous experience / which is not going to go wasted on me which is why I'm telling you about it" (O'Hara, 1995). O'Hara's final line summarizes in broad terms, the speaker's choice to look toward the future for hope. Futurism in queerness prior to the 1980s and 1990s was not considered the main mode of thought, and many more poets followed the tradition of queer poet Marianne Moore who, "does not look at the past as a talisman for the future, and her queer archival poem-collections attest to anxiety over—rather than faith in—inheritance, continuity, and memory (Arckens, 2016)" according to scholar Elien Arckens. O'Hara is not unaware of this as scholar John Lowney notes;

> [O'Hara's poetry] self-consciously reflects on its own place in the 'tradition of the new'," marking him as a poet who, "levels the 'significant' with the mundane, thus rejecting traditional modes of poetic transcendence. His best-known poems… are most frequently cited to exemplify his interest in the 'ordinary incident' instead of the 'important public' event. (Lowney, 1991)

O'Hara's unrelenting rejection of modernism as an aesthetic exemplifies his determination to speak to the "personism" in poetry as opposed to the political or movement-based aesthetics. Instead, Lowney argues that O'Hara's poetics are, "informed by an acute sensitivity to the oppressive mechanisms

that an ideology which represses difference can deploy," which speaks to the lived queer experience as a collection of moments worth capturing rather than ultimatums that speak to the past as a talismans or ever present losses.

The "lived queer experience" is a theme which this thesis returns to multiple times, and in this context, acknowledges the disconnect between the scholarship, politics, and aesthetics of queerness as well as the more personal, day-to-day experiences of queer folk. These day-to-day experiences are not as often captured in theory or political history, and are often entirely overshadowed by more notable moments such as the violence of the Stonewall riots of 1969 in New York City or the aforementioned Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando in 2016. The lived queer experience is further overshadowed by the repression of, or anger with, one's inner queerness as something innately wrong or at the very least, innately othered. This othering can be seen in the works of Elizabeth Bishop and Larry Kramer (whose works will be discussed in a later section). Furthermore, the lack of space for queerness within "functioning" society as argued by Leo Bersani and his contemporary Lee Edelman discussed in the following section also add to an overshadowing of the more benign and interpersonal functions of queer life. In this lens, O'Hara does something rather unique in melding both art history and personal history within this poem, and even more notably, in letting personal history hold a higher value than art and aesthetics. Such a conclusion connects to one of the main movements to surface during the HIV/AIDS crisis – a heavy amount of poetry focusing on the lived moment rather than the speaker's place within a broader context of queerness at that time.

However, working in opposition to O'Hara's movement towards this more immediate mode of writing is Elizabeth Bishop who is internationally acclaimed for her tightly concise and precisely worded poetry that often expounds on the past and a myriad of losses as well as the suppression of desire. Bishop's poetry, "much like her mentor Marianne Moore (Giragosian, 2016)," relates to many similar points brought up in the antisocial thesis of queer literature in that, Bishop's poetics repeat this theme of anxiety over self-identity and memory of past as argued by poetic scholar Sarah Giragosian. As a lifelong closeted lesbian, Bishop remained avid in keeping personal details about her sexuality concealed although, "she wrote love poems that have sustained homoerotic readings for a number of years (Giragosian, 2016)," which serve to prove how intrinsically linked queerness is to poetic identity, even for those who are closeted. In this instance, poetic identity is referring to one's style of writing and desires for one's work outside of how the author may view themselves in their personal spheres of life.

Bishop authored her poem "One Art" near the end of her career in 1976, and it is arguably one of her most cited and acclaimed works. Within an incredibly tight and concise villanelle, Bishop is able to master the tones of repression, controlled grief, and the utter lack of hope for the future not only for herself, but for the existence of the future altogether. She writes, "The art of losing isn't hard to master; / so many things seem filled with the intent / to be lost that their loss is no disaster" in the opening stanza of this poem (Bishop, 1979). In the beginning, Bishop refrains from connecting the sentiment to anything concrete, rather favoring a philosophical entrance to what will be a deeply personal narrative over a long spanse of time. Bishop goes on to account for the many losses she has experienced:

> I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or
> next-to-last, of three loved houses went …
> I lost two cities, lovely ones. And vaster,
> some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.

Bishop adds up all these losses all the while claiming, with elegantly painful refrain that "none of these will bring disaster (Bishop, 1979)."

In her final stanza, Bishop introduces her most painful (and for these purposes, relevant) loss – the loss of her long-term partner Lota de Macedo Soares. If O'Hara wrote to encapsulate the hope and joy of his relationships, Bishop wrote elegies to her loss of love and future with the women she loved, specifically Lota. While O'Hara grounds his poem in hope for what's to come, Bishop mourns what has been lost over decades using satire to draw out the wound left by losing that hope of a brighter future as seen in the stanza, "Then practice losing farther, losing faster: / places, and names, and where it was you meant / to travel" which emulates the speeding passage of time as one grows older. The presence of both Lota – who killed herself while living with Bishop – as well as the assumed presence of a more recent partner, Alice Methfessel – who left Bishop to marry a man – draws attention to Bishop's approach to her own future as a bleak look back on all that, for her, has truly amounted to disaster.

Part of what reads as inherently queer in this poem is the heavy refrain from explicit emotion (Bidart, 1994). The speaker battles to keep her tone even, repressing the blatant loneliness she is experiencing. This duality between O'Hara's elation and Bishop's paranoia and loneliness speaks to a duality brought up time and time again by writers during the crisis. As scholar William Cheng writes, "closeted individuals live in anxiety of being found out, while those who are out still face pressures of fitting in (Cheng & McClary, 2016)," meaning that queer folk on either side of the spectrum face an inabil-

ity to be seen as "fitting in" with the heteronormative, structured society. Cheng goes on to say that, "Cumulatively, there's far more theorization of gay shame than of gay pride, with the latter relegated to, as Alice Kuzniar describes, "something almost to be embarrassed about," or at least, something that doesn't have to be written about (Cheng & McClary, 2016)," which falls directly in line with Bishop's mode of thought. This viewpoint on queerness's place within literature has been extremely influential for decades of queer poets and authors, and especially during the AIDS epidemic, became, for many, impossible to maintain. However, prior to the epidemic, one of queer poetry's most defining components was the utilization of coded language and duplicity in meaning. For example, the terms "tea" and "tearooms" while plain enough on their own are used within queer culture, specifically drag culture, to mean gossip or as of the 1920s, a site for queer men to have sex (Cook, 2012). Thus, poetry using this term would signal to those accustomed to the LGBTQ community that the poem is dealing with queer undertones.

James Baldwin, although very openly bisexual as discussed in his novel Giovanni's Room, also practiced using this "coded language" when writing much of his love poetry. The traditions of such coded language have roots in many places other than merely queer aesthetics, and thus, this tradition within both poetry and song was adopted in a way by queer authors. Thus, placing the aesthetics of queer poetry within the context of many other poetic movements such as African American rhetorical traditions. One such example comes from Baldwin's poem "Munich, Winter 1973 (for Y.S.)" which is presumably written as a love poem to a male partner. Baldwin writes in the opening stanza, "In a strange house, / a strange bed / in a strange town, / a very strange me / is waiting for you (Baldwin, 2014)". Baldwin opens with a similar tone to Bishop's "One Art" in that the speaker is immediately somewhat alienated from himself. Throughout the poem, Baldwin makes several allusions to a sexual relationship, but never fully acknowledges the nature of the relationship or its need for secrecy:

I lie here in this bed.
Someone teased me once,
a friend of ours –
saying that I saw your hair red
because I was not thinking
of the hair on your head.
Someone also told me,
a long time ago:
my father said to me,
It is a terrible thing,
son,
to fall into the hands of the living God.

In this section of the poem, Baldwin – using sing-songy language and rhymes – constructs a relationship that wrought with tones of secrecy and foreboding, yet he refrains from giving any concrete detail on this relationship. This middle-ground of explanation is telling for much queer poetry of Baldwin's time. However, despite Baldwin never stating outright in "Munich, Winter 1973" that the sexual relationship takes place between two men, it was well known in both the black literary community as well as the queer literary community that Baldwin wrote from a queer perspective. Scholar Kevin McGruder in his article on black gay male writers in New York cites Baldwin and others as, "exploring their full identity in their work and empowering themselves and others with their discoveries (McGruder, 2005)."

Part of what makes Baldwin such a notable contributor to queer poetry has less to do with the explicitly queer sexual relationships in his poetry and much more to do with the internal dialogue of his speakers. The inward tension and alienation as seen in "Munich, Winter 1973" resonates strongly with the ongoing tension between those who accept their homosexuality and a culture that does not accept them. Another example of this comes from the lines, "I could not have seen red / before finding myself / in this strange, this waiting bed (Baldwin, 2014)". Here, the enjambment between the second and third line is an exemplary case of dual meaning within queer poetics. In one reading, the speaker is claiming that he would not have been able to appreciate the beauty of his lover before "finding himself," presumably meaning before he fully accepted his own queerness. However, another reading of these lines could be that, through connecting "finding myself" with "strange, this waiting bed" shows estrangement between the speaker's identity prior to and post this encounter. Not only does this poem utilize this duplicity of meaning, but the simplistic language used to construct the poem differentiates Baldwin from poets like Frank O'Hara and Elizabeth Bishop. Baldwin allows the white space on the page and choppy images to speak for the silences within

the poem, which later became a huge component of AIDS poetry during the epidemic as will be seen with poet D.A. Powell in a following chapter. Baldwin used this technique consistently throughout his poetry, and especially in the twilight of his career with his essay collection Soul on Ice, was known as the man who, "was never afraid to say it (Baldwin 2014)." Rather, the means by which he "says it" are deeply rooted in the psychological culture of being queer – meaning he did not write for heteronormative society to understand him, but to encapsulate his own, honest experiences as a queer black man (Baldwin, 2014). Thus, through this honesty, Baldwin's queer poetry remains extremely contemporary and influential for its resiliency and optimism.

Baldwin, who was writing in the 1970s, is somewhat mirrored by contemporary queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz. Muñoz also explored the importance of optimism within queerness in his work, which was published in 2009 (Muñoz, 2009). This look towards a hope that a utopia for queerness will someday be achieved, although a new strain of queer theory harkens back to traditions that poets like Frank O'Hara and James Baldwin were founding as early as 1950, subconsciously or otherwise. In the next chapter, the theory backbone behind queer poetry both leading up to and during the AIDS epidemic will be analyzed and apply its main theses to the poetry of AIDS.

Queer Theory, Futurity, and Optimism within Queer Theory

This section will discuss Bersani and Edelman as illustrations of negativity while comparing to Muñoz who will be discusses as an illustration of utopianism. The term "queer theory" is a relatively new term, having only been in use since 1990, and is a rapidly expanding genre for analyzing queerness within literature (Berlant & Warner, 1995). Within this field, there is an on-going debate over life vs. death, or in less definite terms, queer negativity vs. queer optimism. Queer negativity is defined by queer theorist James Bliss as, "the critique of reproductive futurity, of the family, of the politics of hope (Bliss, 2015)." This theory is encompassed in the scholarship of both Leo Bersani's Homos and more recently, Lee Edelman. In opposition to this theory is queer optimism, often discussed in concert with José Esteban Muñoz's thesis on queer utopianism, referred to as queer futurity. The majority of queer literature is analyzed and examined through one of these two modes of thought in queer theory.

In many ways, Leo Bersani initiated this conversation between negativity and optimism in his work Homos by posing the question, "Should a homo-sexual be a good citizen?" adding that, "useful thought might result from questioning the compatibility of homosexuality with civic service (Bersani, 1995)." Bersani is known for founding the antirelational thesis in queer

theory which states, essentially, that because queerness has no certitude of reproductive futurity – meaning the ability to biologically reproduce – there is no place for queerness within mainstreamed, normative society which must, by contrast, always be looking toward the future as a result of their ability to reproduce. Critics of Bersani's negativity towards queer futurity argue that, "for some queers, particularly for queers of color, hope is not something one can afford to lose and for them giving up on futurity is not an option (Bliss, 2014)." This makes it important to note that while Bersani and Edelman are both white men, Muñoz is a Latino gay man – making his outlook on futurity all the more poignant. Both Bersani and his contemporary Lee Edelman have been criticized that their, "stubborn refusal of futurity is structured by the privilege of having a guaranteed future, foreclosing the possibility that this project can speak to the concerns of non-white queers (Bliss, 2014)." Nevertheless, the antirelational thesis has been heavily influential on the readings of queer literature since the mid-1990s and into present day.

Bersani's argument of antirelationality comes in 1995, in conjuncture with the first HIV protease inhibitor which "ushers in a new era of high active retroviral therapy" according to queer historian Jennifer Brier in her book Infectious Ideas: U.S. Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis (Brier, 2009). During this time, the CDC and President Clinton make some of the most progressive steps in HIV/AIDS awareness and testing since the start of the AIDS crisis in 1981. However, it is this same year that Bersani publishes his thesis arguing for queer negativity and antirelationality. Partially because antiretroviral drug therapy was not readily available to everyone, a collective trauma from AIDS has not yet begun to heal. In one of Bersani's slightly older works, Is the Rectum a Grave?, he discusses AIDS and the ways in which, "a public health crisis has been treated like an unprecedented sexual threat (Bersani, 1995)". The stigma surrounding STDs prior to the AIDS epidemic alone has often lead to those infected being viewed as unclean or unworthy, compounding this stigma with the preexisting prejudice against members of the LGBTQ community. This reaction to AIDS prompted his point that there has been a, "general tendency to think of AIDS as an epidemic of the future rather than a catastrophe of the present (Bersani, 1995)". Thus, Bersani's relationship with the future has been one tinted by the political inadequacies of Reagan and his administration to properly handle the outbreak of HIV/AIDS.

By the time Bersani authored Homos, many queer scholars were inclined to work through his foundation. Scholar Drew Daniel writes that, "Given the harm endured and damage done to queers while living under the normative rigors of "straight time," the dark glamour of antirelational

negativity is undeniably tempting (Daniel 2010)." The antirelational theory builds off the concept that the politics of gay rights aim to subvert the social structure of heteronormative society. Therefore, Bersani asks his audience if queerness can function within mainstream society at all, and vice versa, could mainstream society continue to function if it were populated by queer folk? Bersani seems to think not.

A contemporary of Bersani, Lee Edelman, published his book *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* in 2004. Edelman's slightly modernized version of the antirelational thesis claims that there is no place for queerness within a generational future that is reliant on reproduction to continue. A review of the anti-social thesis published by the Modern Language Association, Caserio et al. argues that

> The power of Edelman's perspective partly derives from its bearing on a cult of family in the United States that never questions the value of biological reproduction and of children's sensibilities. To harp on children means to harp on parenthood; both emphases leave nonreproductive eros in the lurch. (Caserio 2006)

Edelman's construction of the future is thus hetero-centric. In *No Future*, he defines the future as, "a reality guaranteed, not threatened by time, [but] sustained by the certainty of immortality (Edelman, 2004)." A large part of the anti-social thesis, for which Edelman is also arguing, comes from viewing queer people as abject other within society rather than viewing them as a piece of society. In this reading of queer theory in *No Future*, queerness has been in existence for some time, but further, the existence of such a concept has been struggling against societal forces that are in opposition to it. Essentially, in both Edelman and Bersani's eyes, queerness is a lost cause, doomed to having no future. Part of this image comes from the non-reproductivity associated with gay sex. Without the assurance that the family structure of society will be reproductive, a generational anxiety is introduced to the whole of society. AIDS in many ways serves as a cumulation of this generational anxiety. In Edelman's work, the literary image of the Child and reproductive futurism in terms of queerness is problematic not simply because queer sexuality is oftentimes non-reproductive, but rather, that queerness is inherently "negative" towards the future. In Edelman's argument, because queers are unable to feel secure in a stabilized future, the relationship between queerness and futurism is by definition unstable due to a lack of self-realization. Thus, the queer "death drive" comes into play, referring to both the lack of a self-generated biologically fertile future for queers as well as their lack of compliance with mainstream society.

This was the atmosphere of queer theory when José Esteban Muñoz published his thesis on queer futurity in his book Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity in 2009. His thesis argues for Muñoz's theory of queer optimism and queer futurity and how, despite the AIDS crisis seemingly working against the future of queerness, its cultural and literary effects were actually more future forward than either Bersani or Edelman theorized. Muñoz's thesis is built around the workings of the anti-social thesis by Edelman and Bersani but rationalizes that rather than having been in existence and moving towards dying out, queerness has actuallyyet to be fully realized within society. In Muñoz's words, "Queerness is not yet here… we are not yet queer (Muñoz, 2009)". The queerness Muñoz describes is one in which futurism is something to be strived for, directly opposing both Edelman and Bersani. Queer theorist Lauren Berlant also argues for this conceptualization of queer futurity, stating that, "queer commentary has been animated by a sense of belonging to a discourse world that only partly exists yet. This work aspires to create publics… that can afford sex and intimacy in sustained, unchastening ways (Berlant, 1995)." Thus, both Berlant and Muñoz recognize queerness as an ideal that has yet to be fully achieved.

Queer futurity is not so much about the death drive or lack thereof, but rather, about embracing the validity of the future being a necessity within queer commentary and queer theory. Political approaches, such as the legalization of gay marriage and the more progressive policies of Clinton during the end of the AIDS crisis cannot individually make up for a societal standard that is aggressively heteronormative—a view that is also shared by Edelman. However, as Berlant argues the creation of queer publics, "make available different understandings of membership at different times, and membership in them is more a matter of aspiration than it is an expression of an identity or a history" (Berlant, 1995). In this lens of queer theory, the existence of the aspiration justifies the relationship between queers and futurism. Queer poet and author Audre Lorde, in her book *The Cancer Journals* (1980) writes that, "there must be some way to integrate death into living, neither ignoring it nor giving in to it" (Lorde, 1980). In many ways, this is the sentiment that the queer futurity thesis argues for – the ability to reconcile queer negativity and anxiety of the self with the aspirational future that queerness strives for. The existence of AIDS within a 21st century understanding of queerness has allowed theorists the opportunity to examine the queer reaction to death and anxiety of the future in a much more urgent light than prior to AIDS. The works of activists such as Larry Kramer, and poets such as Rafael Campo, D.A. Powell, and Diamanda Galàs (Cummings, 1986) who will be discussed in the upcoming section, drives within the lived experience of queerness that propels this aspiration of optimism towards the future.

In his book *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz pairs personal experience with his theoretical work in order to demonstrate the applications of queer futurity within the lives of queer individuals. In one example, Muñoz describes his growing up in the L.A. punk scene of the 1980s, writing that, "through what I call the utopian critique function of punk rock, I was able to imagine a time and a place that was not yet there, a place where I tried to live (Muñoz, 2009)." In this section, Muñoz also outlines a friendship which helped his own queer identity stabilize within the confines of the time and place in which he did actually live:

> I started hanging out with an artist, Kevin McCarty, with whom I shared an interest in punk and postpunk music, subculture, and utopia. Our friendship has endured various mutations, moments of volatility, and great fun, and our mutual neuroses have fueled our queer intimacy. Our friendship is ultimately based on convergent worldviews in relation to politics and aesthetics. (Muñoz, 2009)

The existence of "othered" subcultures, such as punk and queerism, reflects back on Berlant's argument for queer publics and has been mirrored in the experiences of many queers who initially integrated themselves within subcultures before truly reconciling with their queer identities. One such modern example comes from transgender frontwoman of the punk band, Against Me!, Laura Jane Grace. Grace also discusses the parallels between her queer identity and her affiliation with punk subculture of the late 1990s and early 2000s in her book *Tranny* (Grace, 2016).

The queer reactions to a heteronormative society which itself has, intentionally or inadvertently, led to a systematic oppression of queerness. Muñoz, in his conclusion chapter "Take Ecstasy with Me," "we must vacate the here and now for a then and there… We need to step out of the rigid conceptualization that is a straight present (Muñoz 2009)." This further emphasizes the point of queer futurity that aspiration is vital to the existence of queerness, but more importantly, it emphasizes that this future is obtainable. As opposed to Bersani and Edelman's stance that heteronormativity is the irrefutable default of our society, Muñoz and his colleagues deny that the current hierarchy of society is the natural default. It is also important to note that of these three theorists, Muñoz is not only the sole queer man of color, but that this identity is embraced and discussed throughout much of his scholarly work and makes an argument for the systematic exclusion of queers of color within queer dialogue.

Part of what Edelman and Bersani deny so adamantly is the necessity of hope, as outlined by James Bliss, and another part of this denial comes from the draw of believing queerness will forever be a doomed, futureless failure. Surely, the lived experiences of collective queerness have done more than enough to substantiate these anxieties. However, perhaps one of the biggest rebuttals to this argument for the queer death drive and queer negativity is the actual responses to AIDS from queer poets of the AIDS crisis. As will be seen in the next chapter, these poets respond with unprecedented urgency, honesty, and vulnerability which only furthers Muñoz and Berlant's stance that queer futurity is a reality which will someday become fully realized.

Urgency, Honesty, and Lived Experience in AIDS Poetry

Prior to the 1980s and early 1990s AIDS epidemic, the gay communities of the states went through what is known as the "gay liberation movement" which lasted throughout most of the 1970s. This movement was sparked by the Stonewall riots in New York City in the summer of 1969, most famously known to have begun when a black transgender woman named Martha Johnson threw a brick at a cop. The Stonewall riots began when cops raided a known gay bar, the Stonewall Inn, and a violence escalated between cops and members of the queer community. In the wake of these riots, there was a cultural push towards queers being more "open and out," with organizations such as the Gay Liberation Front making some of the first strides in making sexuality a political issue (Lewis, 2016).

Thus, leading into the AIDS crisis, there was already in motion a push towards queerness coming more into the political and social spheres of this heteronormative society. Poets such as Allen Ginsberg were at the forefront of this movement being reflected within poetry, however even during the 1970s, queer poetry often took on coded form, as typified by the works of Frank O'Hara, James Baldwin, and Elizabeth Bishop. However, partially due to the speed with which the disease was killing queer people and partially due to the lack of response from medical and political groups, AIDS poetry altered the queer voice with extreme speed. The coded language often used by writers such as O'Hara, Baldwin, and Bishop began to fall away in favor of more aggressive and direct speech. Poets of this time voice openly both romantic and sexual narratives of same-sex love, and not only openly, but some almost vulgarly as seen with Ginsberg's poem "Sphincter" which will be analyzed shortly. The sentiment of queerness not needing to be written about was not only becoming antiquated but becoming dangerous as the bodies piled up. Larry Kramer recalls the death toll in New York City:

In the Village, you couldn't walk down the street without running into somebody who said: 'Have you heard about so and so? He just died.' Sometimes you could learn about three or four people just walking the dog. I started making a list of how many people I knew, and it was hundreds. People don't comprehend that. People really were dying like flies. (Leland, 2017)

In reaction to the lack of response from their government coupled with extreme loss, queer poets recognized an urgency to reconcile themselves with their identities not only to gain civil rights, but also to save their communities from AIDS. More so, poets recognized a deep longing within themselves and their communities to be represented. Up to this point, much of queer contributions to literature have consisted of constantly toning-down their identities and experiences. In "How Hopeful the Queer," scholars Cheng & McClary write, "Much of queer theory is queer pride insofar as it contributes to compassionate understandings of diversity, tolerance, and justice, albeit via gloomy and tortuous avenues of inquiry (Cheng & McClary 2016)"; however during this crisis, pride was something that was highly confined to those communities that were already queer and did not extend into realms of life deemed heterosexual-dominant. AIDS forced poets to confront the majority of society not so much with pride but with honesty which is not to say it was devoid of doubt and shame but simply that queerness has a future within society and that the experiences of the community are relevant to society as a whole.

Scholar Joanne Rendell comments that "the disease, in its purely pragmatic effects on health and time, has led to, "the need to trim artistic endeavors… writers have turned to 'short books' and poetry to make their urgent responses to AIDS (Rendell, 2002)." This draws a direct link between the medical realities of the disease and the poetics that the disease drove. This urgency to provide representation can be seen in the shortening of queer poetry into short prose and punchy poems as well as through this confrontational acknowledgement of the author's own personal queerness. The poets writing about AIDS at this time do not appear to be seeking conformity or forgiveness, but rather acknowledgement for their lived experiences – sometimes even outside of the political sphere. In this way, AIDS compelled queer literature to mold itself after the confessional movement of the 1950s by prioritizing the capture of this lived experience over aesthetics or poetic ideals. The poems this section will analyze show a definite trend in the queer genre toward tones of personal honesty and urgency to articulate the anxiety and loss of life experienced during the height of the crisis.

This section of analysis will demonstrate how queerness plays an undeniably influential role in literature as whole, and that specifically due to the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and early 90s queer poets were influenced to write with a new honesty and urgency in order to present their lived experiences as queer people. The gruesomeness of AIDS led many queer poets during this time to reflect similar values to that of Leo Bersani's 1995 anti-relational thesis, in part, because queer people were being shunned with even more disgust and aggression than before the epidemic. As Bersani writes, AIDS provided the means "by which a spectacle of suffering and death has unleashed and even appeared to legitimize the impulse to murder (Bersani, 1995)." This was coupled with the reality of how many people were truly dying with no government aid in place to prevent the spread of disease (O'Hara, 1996). The mass death that quickly became a familiar reality to those in the gay scenes of big cities, but particularly in New York, became emblematic of a new approach to writing queer voices. However, despite the ease of falling into such pessimistic approaches to queerness, many more queer authors worked to explore how queerness actually helps to construct vital parts of society, specifically within the realm of literature.

One such early example comes from Allen Ginsberg in his poem "Sphincter." Ginsberg's poem discusses growing old during the beginnings of the AIDS epidemic, opening with the lines, "I hope my good old asshole holds out / sixty years it's been mostly okay / tho in Bolivia a fissure operation (Klein, 1992)," where Ginsberg marries the gore expected from AIDS poetry with the physicalities of gay sex as well as how sex for the gay male community became forever altered because of the disease. Ginsberg addresses the role of AIDS in his reflections through the lines, "Now AIDS makes it shy, but still / eager to serve / out with the dumps, in with the / orgasmic condom'd friend (Klein, 1992)." This new "shyness" of his sexuality speaks to the accumulation of fear and shame that AIDS aroused even in those who were quite openly gay. Yet, "eager to serve" acknowledges both the universal concept of sexual desire while also making it specific to the gay community in the following two lines. This poem represents one of the main shifts seen in queer poetry during and post the AIDS crisis. Ginsberg demonstrates not only that eloquence isn't a requirement when discussing queerness and sex, but neither is coded language or hidden meaning, as seen in works like "One Art." Of course, one could make the argument that the frankness with which queer authors begin to write during this time has as much to do with progressive political movements, like the Gay Liberation Movement, and a more modernized society. While this is undoubtedly a factor, the sheer desperation and fear created by the epidemic gave the final push for these developments to unfold rapidly, with vigor and honesty. As Kramer described, when the members of

a community begin dying at such a rate, the imperativeness to draw attention to the severity of this epidemic very clearly affected these developments in the written queer voice.

Another poem that deals with immediacy and sex is Carol Ebbecke's "Good Timing" in which she reflects on watching her female lover die of AIDS which, in an aggressively personal voice, she dubs "this shitty virus (Klein, 1992)." The poem takes on a conflicting tone of bitter guilt and tender lust, characterizing the nature of the relationship between the speaker and the subject very definitively as sexual, with lines such as, "I wanted to hold it to my waist, thinking / maybe I could bring you into the world again, / some way, bring you from myself," and later, "my meaning to swallow you in lust, but now / in a wash of extra blankets, hot packs in a fever, / you're caught between one blanket sheet and another (Klein, 1992)," all of which meld lust and a gentle, care-taking relationship into one.

Urgency here is utilized in two primary ways: the first being through time. Ebbecke writes, "saying you'll never hate me, I who unknowingly sought you, who inflicted this shitty virus," which, while vague in how exactly the virus was transmitted between the two women, acknowledges that it is only a matter of time before she, too, finds herself on her deathbed. She goes on to write, "just waiting for my own first loss of breath, / for sweat to come before, to be the only thing / that does (Klein, 1992)," anticipating her own death after the death of "Fran." However, urgency plays a large role in the craft of this poem as well. The speaker is rushing to reconcile her relationship with Fran before the invasive infection has eradicated what this love used to mean for her. The interweaving of lines like, "this shitty virus" with "my meaning to swallow you in lust" as well as "no posing on my part, no mistress, no angel waiting for / forgiveness…" and "just knowing the dark patches that fall back / into place (Klein, 1992)" set the tone of memory for the speaker, demonstrating the speed with which her new reality of hospitals and death have replaced this slow paced, passionate love. This poem once again utilizes the formations of the confessional poetry movement with its rawness, candor, and autobiographical structure. However, now being utilized within the confines of queerness, we see a double standard emerge as the confessional movement of the 1950s and early 1960s was almost exclusively used to discuss heteronormative society. Confessional poets such as Plath and Lowell both used this candor to discuss their heterosexual relationships and marriages, but this form before now seemed to be restricted from homosexual culture. Ebbecke reclaims these traditions in a modern context of homosexuality and queer culture, leaving much of her audience more uncomfortable that the heteronormative poets who orginiated these poetic traditions.

In this way, urgency is driven by the desperation to hold onto something that will soon be lost and clearly, as seen in Ebbecke's work, forces a highly confessional and honest tone of voice. We see a dramatic shift here from Elizabeth Bishop's tight-lipped approach to a queerness she perhaps felt "doesn't have to be written about" to Ebbecke and Ginsberg's blatantly sexual relationships with the same sex. There is, however, another notable change at play in both these poems. The style of language used in both has veered from the erudite language seen in works like Frank O'Hara's "Having a Coke with You" and taken a turn towards the crass and at times, vulgar. No longer are these poets overly concerned with using elevated language to mask the deeply sexual roots of their written works nor avoid detection or accusations of being indecent. These poets thrust themselves and their queerness into the light beyond any shadow of a doubt. Even outside of close, analytical readings, these poems construct a queer identity that is not only lived but is under threat. The connection to the "lived queer experience" comes from the frankness of feeling and of situation.

Another example of the move towards confessional honesty comes from gay poet and activist D.A. Powell in his collection *Repast: Tea, Lunch, and Cocktails* (2014). In the opening to his AIDS poetry collection, Powell writes, "This is not about being queer and dying. It is about being human and living (Powell 2014)" which asserts in two sentences the major argument of queer futurism, that we have not yet reached queerness and that because of this, queer people are still working to assert themselves as living human beings. José Esteban Muñoz writes that, "Bersani's formulation and others like it have inspired a decade of explorations of queer unbelonging (Caserio, et al., 2006)." However, in Muñoz's own work, he theorizes that, "Although the anti-relational approach assisted in dismantling an anti-critical understanding of the queer community, it nonetheless quickly replaced the romance of community with the romance of singularity and negativity (Muñoz, 2009)." Here, Muñoz begins to construct his argument for queerness as an ideal that is being struggled towards but has yet to be fully realized. This same notion of queerness can be seen throughout much of D.A. Powell's work.

In the *Tea* section of *Repast*, Powell includes the poem "[the goodbye to nasty habits annual ball: scott smoking and drinking]" in which he writes:

> and we sweated each other away
> that was the morning of burnt out butts:
> dumpsters tall with those discarded abuses
> the central nervous system cultivates a
> garden of tropisms about. yes, it was a
> Monday. (Powell, 2014)

Powell further opens up this diary-like retelling of the people and places the speaker experienced during this time. In the context of AIDS, Powell is here speaking to the dread that became innate to all social interaction for gay men. He writes in images and phrases that collect the way memory does, pooling a feeling that is founded in a dozen fragmented pieces. These remembered fragments are what define the lived queer experience within gay poetry, but more than that, Powell is marrying the two "new" movements of queer poetry brought about by AIDS within this, and other poems in his collection. This poem's relationship to urgency is seen through both the fragmenting of memories and images as well as its overall short length, spanning just 12 lines.

This briefness in explanation is a trend throughout Powell's collection, as is his lack of actual titles. Powell wrote the three sections of his collection separately and published them at separate times; first releasing *Tea* in 1998 as a reflection on those he lost during the crisis, then *Lunch* in 2000 and *Cocktails* in 2004, and each of these collections read as autobiographical looks back at various stages of the AIDS crisis throughout the 1980s. This collection then became known as the triology of the AIDS crisis. Thus, in releasing the three shorter collections as a whole, Powell, "mixes gay slang, horror-movie kitsch, shudder-inducing eroticism, and a vocabulary to rival that of Norman Rush (Leavitt, 2014)," with the most transitory aspect being this inclusion of gay slang while still maintaining a high level of transparency that these poems are, in fact, queer.

We see this technique yet again in Powell's poem, "[the daddy purrs. he is holding a leopard speedo. tonight he takes his sugar to tea]" in which Powell's use of gay slang such as "daddy" and "boypussy (Powell 2014)" is placed in an obviously queer context. The vocabulary used once again is of boldly sexual and vulgar nature, which furthers the claim that the immediacy and horror of AIDS brought about an aggressiveness in queer poets. By writing so openly, in such sexual and romantic terms, AIDS poets mark themselves as irrefutably gay and since their queerness is owned so wholly, poets such as Powell may further their directness as either a call to action or recognition of the damage caused by such a powerful epidemic. For instance, in the lines, "the pinguid man calls me. 'put it on' he says & I put it on. 'take it off' / I take it and take this piddling attention. my manners may be vile. I may drink from the saucer (Powell 2014)." By already confronting the reader head-on with the queerness of his speaker and of the environment within the poem, Powell cuts directly to the intimacy and power dynamics in this poem. The constant focus on power between the speaker and

his sexual partner or partners speaks to a larger sense of powerlessness in the speaker's personal identity.

This powerlessness is especially poignant when we consider the limitations placed on sex for the queer community by AIDS. Not only sex, but identity as well. Powell's "[the daddy purrs.]" demonstrates that there is still much uncertainty in the speaker's convictions about his relationship with men as seen in the final line, "someday my knuckles big as his and split. I'll try picturing what I'll have done with my hands (Powell 2014)" suggest in the future the speaker will boil over and act out against this sadomasochistic relationship. However, Powell uses language that is blatant and stark in order to circumvent uncertainty within the reader about his sexual orientation. What Powell attempts to do instead is acknowledge the universality of doubt and power struggles within relationships. Further, by placing this poem in the *Tea* section, Powell links this aggressively sexual relationship to the impending doom of AIDS which, during the time that his collection focuses on, is just slightly prior to the full-blown outbreak of AIDS in New York City. This is a sexual freedom that is soon lost once the realities of the disease are understood by the general public.

What distances this poem from previous poets who wrote about their queerness as an inner struggle (as with Frank O'Hara's "Homosexuality" discussed in the following chapter) is its triple synthesis of self-doubt with being openly gay with the threat of AIDS. The reader understands from the context of the poem that the community and way of life being described are soon to be devastated. As Powell writes, "Our fear of knowing our own HIV status was one of the powerful forces that held us together and drove us apart: we saw each other alternately as the possibility of salvation and as the possible instrument of destruction (Powell, 2014)." Powell encompasses these dichotomies of want and fear, lust and death powerfully throughout his collection. These dichotomies are much echoed by gay poet Rafael Campo, whose experience during the crisis is fraught with these contradictions. Campo worked on AIDS research and with patients throughout the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis in the early 1990s while also moonlighting as a writer, essayist, and poet. In his personal essay discussing this work, Campo claims, "The poetry of AIDS… is not simply and always about assuming control. Rewritten: it is about losing all control. It is about dying and fucking (Campo, 1993)." This statement creates conversation with Powell's that AIDS poetry is about "being human and living." Both Campo and Powell acknowledge the dire need to move away from viewing queerness as a lifestyle, as expressed by Powell:

I ran the danger of writing a collection in which death was a consequence of my "lifestyle." (I use quotes here, because I do not really understand the difference between a life and a lifestyle, aside from the fingerpointing. I am nevertheless happy to be accused of the style). (Powell, 2014)

However, unlike Powell's ability to delve into his queer identity, Campo was strongly encouraged by the medical community he worked for to conceal any personal connection he may have to the communities being affected by AIDS. Thus, as a gay, Puerto Rican doctor in the 1980s, Campo felt torn between his role as a research developer and caretaker, and his personal alignment with the minorities within the community being most heavily afflicted.

In his poem "What the Body Told," he explores this chasm between doctor and gay man in the lines:

I'd look inside another person's mouth,
And see the desolation of the world.
I'd see his genitals and think of sin.
Because my body speaks the stranger's language,
I've never understood those nods and stares. (Campo, 1999)

Here, while Campo is harkening back to some of the coded language used by the queer poets of the 1950s and 1960s in the first two lines, in the following lines his direct reference to the man's genitals and especially by drawing a kinship between the man, sin, and himself, Campo is stating clearly his queerness and how AIDS has affected his relationship not just to his community but to his inner sexual and emotional identity as well.

Campo is renowned not only for his work as a doctor and writer, but specifically within the poetry community, he is known for his skill in structured forms such as sonnets and villanelles, implementing a mastery of meter specifically iambic pentameter. This makes him a unique contributor to AIDS poetry as the majority of poets at this time – affected by the urgency movement – avoided structure in favor of raw, passion driven language. However, that is not to say that Campo's work is not passionate. In another of his poems, "The Abdominal Exam," Campo works with concise couplets opening with, "Before the glimmer of his sunken eyes, / What question could I answer with my lies?" (Campo, 1999). Once again, Campo acknowledges the tension between empathizing greatly with the fear of a gay man diagnosed with AIDS and his role as impartial doctor. Being the one to deliver a death sentence to this man and his boyfriend takes a great toll on the speaker both for the sake of the couple and for his own fears of catching the virus:

This hunger that announces death is near,
And as I touch him, cold and cavalier,
The language of beneath the diaphragm
Has told me where it's coming from
And where I'm going, too: soft skin to rocks,
The body reveling until it wrecks. (Campo, 1999)

This poem helps to further demonstrate how, while working within the confines of meter, the overwhelming push towards openness about one's queerness consumes the speaker. The final couplet of the poem reads, "Against the same internal, hidden shoal, / The treasures we can't hide, our swallowed gold" which speaks to this inability to remain closeted during such a time of crisis. Campo is also highlighting an important shift away from resentment at one's queerness, a motif expressed in both James Baldwin and Frank O'Hara's works, and instead, views this openness as true freedom. Although the couple is being met with death, their lives are honest whereas it is the closeted doctor who is consumed with dread.

Perhaps no poem better encompasses Campo's ability to blend the medical horrors of AIDS with the queer culture of the time than his poem "Her Final Show" in which, in typical Campo fashion, he reflects on the last moments of a patient dying of AIDS complications. He opens this tightly constructed, vivid poem with the lines, "She said it was a better way to die / Than most; she seemed relieved, almost at peace (Campo, 1999)." In this way, any reader would immediately take the subject to be a sadly elegant woman laying on her deathbed. However, as Campo provides the reader with more and more details about the woman's appearance, it becomes clear when we read through a queer lens that this is a drag queen. The following lines showcase Campo's astute references to drag culture that people outside of this community might not recognize initially:

the Opium / so daintily applied behind her ears…
Her shade of eyeshadow was emerald green
She clutched her favorite stones. Her final show.
She'd worn them all… (Campo, 1999)

In fact, Campo waits until the last third of the poem to actually state plainly the situation being described, writing, "The gifts of drag queens dead of AIDS. 'Those girls, / they gave me so much strength,' she whispered (Campo, 1999)." Campo recognizes that readers from a heterosexual background may be surprised by the revelation that the dying woman is, in fact, a drag queen. However, he takes this shock and uses it to propel the reader to the queen's last words. By placing her dying words alongside this revelation, the

reader is forced to acknowledge the legitimacy of the queen's connection with her community and the devastating reality of losing so many members of it. The speaker's feelings on the queen in the final two lines of the poem leaves the reader with a hollow ache: "…I straightened her red wig / Before pronouncing her to no applause (Campo, 1999)." Those of the queer and drag communities will of course understand on a deeper level the tragedy of this line, "to no applause," but through Campo's introduction not only of the queen's beauty, but of her own delicate pride in her stones, perfume, and makeup, even those outside of these spheres are able to feel the complexities of her character and the experiences that she has lived.

In discussing this poem, Joanne Rendell comments that, "Campo… disrupts the repetitive way "otherings" are maintained and reproduced," going on to write that, "the doctor straightening the wig and 'pronouncing' to 'no applause', fuses conflicting images of the pronouncement, preparations and applause of a… ceremony, with the image of the drag show, and with the image and pronouncements of death (Rendell, 2002)." In Rendell's analysis, she also argues that by drawing performative parallels between heteronormative culture and queerness, Campo is constructing an argument for queerness's relevance to literature as well as society. His language in this poem is intentional in the way that it shuns the idea of drag and queerness as a "lifestyle" and prefers language that humanizes the queen's life and the experiences she has had within the drag scene. Her relationship to her fellow queens and her pride in her own performative beauty all stand in opposition to the claim that queers are innately anti-social and in opposition to social hierarchy and societal structures. Rather, the works of Rafael Campo and D.A. Powell work in concert to build an image of light, connection, and passion within the queer community. This passion, in opposition Leo Bersani's anti-social thesis, demonstrates a strong desire within queer poets and queer culture to fight towards acknowledgement, validity, and especially in the context of AIDS, a desire to live and bring queerness into a more livable future.

Conclusion

Has AIDS Brought Us Closer to Queer Futurity?

In the mid-1990s, as the immediacy of the AIDS crisis was dying down partially due to the first waves of effective treatment for HIV/AIDS, queer activism began to shift its focus towards more legal barriers to queerness such as the legalization of gay marriage as well as employment and housing protections for queer individuals.

In 2018, Larry Kramer reflects on this shifting of gay politics in a New York Times piece;

> I know I'm lucky to be alive. I have fought very hard to get here. I have had a liver transplant. I've lived long enough to see an anti-retroviral therapy become available. I have been able to legally marry the man I've loved for many years. Why then do I still feel so destitute and abandoned? Surely all gay people fall into the same category as I. (Kramer, 2018)

Abandonment, as discussed by Kramer has not only to do with the current political atmosphere, but also with something on a deeper, cultural level. The urgency of AIDS is no longer the forefront of the fight for gay rights, and this in many ways has shaken the foundation of what queer honesty and expression has been built upon—namely that the equation of death and AIDS has become less necessary as treatment options have improved. Kramer highlights a point that much of the heteronormative-dominant inexistence today will never comprehend—that the legalization of gay marriage has never been the fight.

The fight Kramer refers to is not a fight to become acclimated within heteronormative society as a queer person, but rather, for queerness to be viewed as on equal footing with heterosexuality. Queerness as an identity has never sought to find its place within this normative culture, but rather, it has sought for a future devoid of such markers of success. Similarly, the poetry of AIDS has not been in pursuit of finding a place within heteronormativity, but in pursuit of broadening that which is understood to be culture as a whole. Simply put, queer futurity is not about becoming normative. Queer futurity is founded on and builds on the notion that there is a space and time in which queerness is not seen as an abject other, in which the lived queer experience will always vary from hetero experience but that these experiences will coexist in a society that sees neither as dominant or more relevant than the other. The aggressive tactics by which queer AIDS poets sought to be seen and acknowledged during the crisis were also aggressive in their overarching desire to be seen for and acknowledged for their actualities. It feels somewhat patronizing for a society that has argued for the extinction of queerness, albeit at many times only passively, to then invite this culture into their normative society—so long as queer people still fit in to this concept of domesticity.

This is much of what Kramer feels in his somewhat eulogy of an article. The poetry of AIDS speaks to heartbreak, abandonment, rage, death, sexual desire, defiance, and life. Within these poems, there is a lived element that cannot be fully brought into theoretical or sociological approaches to queer-

ness. However, part of what makes this era of queer poetry so important to the understanding of where queerness in literature is today is the necessity of its aggression and vulgarity. The ultimate struggle of poets at this time was the reconciling of the desire to exist within their untainted subcultures and the vital necessity to expand outside of them.

In 1954 – almost 30 years prior to the AIDS crisis – Frank O'Hara published his poem "Homosexuality" which opens with the line, "So we are taking off our masks, are we, and keeping / our mouths shut? as if we'd been pierced by a glance!" (O'Hara, 1995)" This outrage and defiance set in the opening lines is directed not at the heteronormative, McCarthyite society which dominated O'Hara's lifetime but rather, at the gays and queers within O'Hara's own circles. He goes on to denying that the judgement of normative society, the threat of arrest, and the imminence of violence are worthy of the anxiety of many gays, lesbians, and bisexuals at the time. Rather, O'Hara writes, "It's wonderful to admire oneself / with complete candor, tallying up the merits of each / of the latrines," creating an ode to the very intimate aspects of queerness that many queers people, specifically queer men, of his time would be familiar with. However, the most poignant lines of this poem come in the final segment of the piece, in which he writes:

> and there are the divine ones, who drag themselves up
> and down the lengthening shadow of an Abyssinian head
> in the dust, trailing their long elegant heels of hot air
> crying to confuse the brave 'It's a summer day,
> and I want to be wanted more than anything else in the world
> (O'Hara, 1996)

Here, O'Hara creates a wonderful duplicity of meaning from the enjambed line "drag themselves up / and down the lengthening shadow" which will signal more immediately to those immersed in queer culture that these "divine ones" are drag queens and possibly prostitutes in drag. This intimate calling to those of queer culture penetrates this silence called out in the opening couplet and seems to rally around all that entails queerness, even in such a dangerous time. His final quote, "I want to be wanted more than anything else in the world" creates deep, lustful and vulnerable longing in all that read it—both straight and gay—and more importantly, echoes into the present-day existence of queerness. The deeply held desire to be wanted within society without being asked to normalize is what Kramer is harkening to when he writes that "surely all gay people fall into the same category as I," even penetrating the theorists such as Berlant and Muñoz who write urgently and vulnerably for a queer future that has the space to exist, untainted by normalized expectations of domesticity and normativity.

Has AIDS drawn us closer to the utopian queer futurity of Muñoz? This thesis has sought to prove just that. However, this utopian future is one that has always existed. Even in the 1950s, with this very future outlawed by a heteronormative country in a heteronormative world, the aspiration and hope has been there, waiting for its final shove into the present.

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From Creation to Industrialization: How Sewing Machines
Influenced Women in America

Faculty Sponsor

Dr. Caroline Peyton

Abstract

This article discusses the way sewing machines impacted women in America, from their invention in the mid-1800s through cultural industrialization at the turn of the twentieth century. Primary sources, especially newspapers, are utilized to grasp how American culture shaped the way women were expected to interact with sewing machines, both inside the home and out. An internalist history of the sewing machine lays the groundwork for how the machines developed, and a more contextualist view shows how the introduction of sewing machines affected women in American culture, from domestic homemakers to public factory workers.

Introduction

Her hair was wild; she perspired; there were pins between her teeth. You might have thought her machine was a sort of weapon when she put her arms around it and turned it on. That vertical needle was a dangerous, powerful thing, and she had an arsenal of needles in a box—in all sizes, with replacements ready for those that broke.

Dyer, Cognard-Black & Walls 2016

Author Joyce Dyer wrote these sentences about her mother Annabelle who sewed her own clothes as well as her family's, just like thousands of other middle-class American women in the mid-twentieth century. Dyer writes of the hours that turned into days spent watching her mother sew; Annabelle made everything from warm winter coats to elegant evening dresses, and she was often pictured wearing a homemade hat with feathers attached to the side (Dyer, Cognard-Black & Walls, 2016). Dyer notes that reflecting on memories of her mother at her sewing machine brings more to mind than visions of perfect domesticity. While she does remember the smell of the sewing machine oil and the feeling of consistency that her mother provided throughout her childhood, Dyer further considers what her mother's life would have been like had she been born just a generation before. What if she hadn't owned a sewing machine as a way to clothe and provide for her family? What would her mother have been without her Singer? What would history have looked like without sewing machines? Annabelle's story is similar to that of many middle-class women in the mid-twentieth century, and it builds on the legacy woven together over the century prior as sewing machines were patented and marketed across America. Yes, sewing machines allowed women to clothe and provide for their families, but what other parts of the American female identity were shaped through the development of this new technology? Sewing machines became a normal part of life throughout the early twentieth century, and while a domestic approach to life was maintained by much of society,   technological advances also provided women with new paths into the working world. The adoption of the sewing machine brought a bittersweet mix of opportunity, loss, and freedom for many middle-class American women, dramatically changing both domestic and public workloads and expectations from invention and patent in the early nineteenth century to widespread commercial marketing and use in the twentieth.

Dyer's mother sewed on a Singer AH369694, built in the late 1940s—probably the same year her daughter was born (Dyer, Cognard-Black & Walls, 2016). The first American patent for the sewing machine had been granted to Elias Howe one century earlier on September 10, 1846, as noted in *Scientific American* in July 1896 in an issue marking the "semi-centennial anniversary of one of the greatest labor-saving devices of modern times" ("The Sewing Machine", 1896). As with most inventions during the mid-nineteenth century patent boom, many people contributed to the creation of the sewing machine, but lack the credit for it. Elias Howe's name is most commonly attributed to the invention of the sewing machine throughout historical records simply because his machine was the most efficient and well-working. However, Scientific American is unique in crediting both Thomas Saint and Walter Hunt with creating versions of the sewing machine prior to Howe's patent and subsequent commercial success with his machine ("The Sewing Machine", 1896). Writer Karen Ballard discusses the story surrounding the first French sewing machine, created by Barthélemy Thimonnier and patented in 1830. Following his patent, Thimonnier got a contract that allowed him to manufacture French army uniforms in his shop, resulting in a mob destroying his shop and machines out of fear that the new invention would put tailors out of work (Ballard, 2019). The sewing machine exemplifies one of the many inventions that caused tensions regarding patents, inventorship, commercial rights, and cultural consequences.

The Sewing Machine in Amerca

The arrival of the sewing machine in America prompted plenty of commentary throughout the country, both positive and negative. Edwin P. Alexander wrote an article in the *Journal for the Society of Arts* published in April 1863 with the following aims:

> Firstly, to trace the origin of the sewing machine; secondly, to explain the leading features of those varieties most generally adopted; and, thirdly, to lay before [the society] a few statistical returns showing the rapid development of the art of machine sewing, and its important bearing upon the social well-being of a large portion of the community (Alexander, 1863).

Alexander finds it surprising that it has taken so long for society to create a machine aiding in sewing and embroidery, and he acknowledges some of the attempts previously made in vain to create a working and efficient sewing machine. He writes about Walter Hunt, the first person to "employ two continuous threads" in his 1835 machine, as well as the different types of stitches utilized in the development of the sewing machine: the shoemaker's

stitch, the running stitch, and the lock stitch, among others (Alexander, 1863). Speaking on Elias Howe, the inventor of the machine that was ultimately patented and whose design is still used today, Alexander writes that he "know[s] of no higher example of patient industry and perseverance… of devotedness to science, than that displayed by Howe in his early career" (Alexander, 1863). Howe pieced together several prior attempts at creating a practical sewing machine to make his own, resulting in a machine that had a curved needle, a baster plate, a shuttle, and the ability to change thread tension depending on the material being sewn. Alexander goes on to divide all sewing machines into two classes, those that use one single thread and those that use two, opining that double-threaded machines are by far superior to single. He notes that the Singer sewing machine was first introduced in America in 1852, and was assumed to be the first machine to use a straight needle in place of a curved one (Alexander, 1863).

Regardless of Edwin Alexander's rave reviews, the sewing machine itself received its fair share of public criticism before rising to popularity. Machines were originally considered to be large and bulky, hard to understand and use, and inferior to hand-sewing with regard to quality of the seams sewn. The editor of *The North-Carolinian* is quoted in a June 1851 issue stating that "every stitch, instead of taking hold of the cloth, is entirely dependent upon a single thread…this thread may be cut at any point and drawn out…just as if there had been no sewing there! Therefore for durability, I consider the machine sewing not at all comparable to hand sewing." However, the author of the article goes on to say that "it is so customary to cry 'humbug' in regard to anything new," urging readers to give sewing machines a try for themselves before casting judgment ("The Sewing Machine", 1851).

As the sewing machine began making its mark in American culture, inventors set off on the race to make and market the most efficient and cheapest version. *The Alexandria Gazette* from February 1853 holds an advertisement for "Avery's Sewing Machines—price only $25!! Patented October 19, 1852." The machine was said to be able to "do the work of more than 20 seamstresses much better in every respect than it can be done by hand," and the article states that the stitches were "independent of each other," allowing most of the seams to stay sewn even if one stitch got cut and therefore alleviating one major public complaint of earlier machines ("Avery's Sewing", 1853). Singer, the largest machine manufacturer at the time, continued to promote their sewing machines, putting an ad in *The New York Herald* in May 1852 to say that in addition to the eight hundred machines sold in the United States, Singer machines were also being sent to France and London, showing "positive proof of their utility." The Singer advertisement

states that "it is long past a doubt in the minds of the people that sewing is to be done by machinery," and that "Singer's sewing machine stands alone in the perfection of sewing" (Singer's Sewing, 1852). This competition to create and to sell not only the best, but also the cheapest, sewing machines exemplifies rush by inventors of a new technology to market their products and promote commercial success. This resulted in a concept called "learning by selling" (Thompson, 1987). In his study of the sewing machine, historian Ross Thomson explains how the idea of learning by selling "structures the process of secondary invention"; as an invention becomes more widely known, demonstrated, and utilized, knowledge is deepened about the product, and inventors are pushed to tweak and tinker with their own machines to make them even better (Thompson, 1987). This process was the motor behind the system of American commercial industry throughout the nineteenth century, and the sewing machine was not immune to it.

The Rise of Domesticity

Alongside the technological and commercial revolutions that accompanied the invention of the sewing machine, the nineteenth century also saw the rise of the middle class in America, and with it came a surge of the concept called the "cult of domesticity." While many women chose to enter the workforce in the larger context of the World War II labor shortages, many others still chose to stay at home and use the sewing machine in a domestic fashion. The sewing machine went from being a luxury in the mid-nineteenth century to "a symbol of a family's middle-class respectability" in the early twentieth century. One major marketing technique heralded the idea that "the sewing machine was a labor-saving device that would free women from the drudgery of hand sewing and allow them to devote more time to their families and to themselves (Barm and Klepp, 2020)." The invention of the sewing machine cabinet allowed yet another marketing ploy to enter into the domestic world, as companies boasted about their "elaborate and fashionable pieces" that "encas[ed] the sewing machine in a respectable exterior…suitable to the home environment (Connolly, 1999)." The cult of domesticity encompassed the idea that a woman's place was in the home, and her job was to use a combination of domestic talents and newfound technology to make the home into "a refuge from the world where her husband could escape from the highly competitive, unstable, immoral world of business and industry (Lavender, n.d.)."

While ideas like the cult of domesticity became more common in society, the idea of separate spheres emerged simultaneously in the scientific world, dividing society into male and female domains on the basis of biology. Women were considered to be genetically prone to be more domestic, passive,

and delicate, and therefore confined to the home, while men were aggressive, independent, and tough, so they provided for the family by working. The cult of domesticity was made to thrive even further on concepts like this, as the idea became ingrained into both American society and science that women were intended to remain in the home.

It was in this context that the sewing machine created a sort of cultural and ideological paradox, with middle-class women being considered for the first time able to master technology by working the sewing machine, but at the same time still socially expected to remain confined to the home (Eves et al., n.d.). In the Grover and Baker sewing machine manual published in the late 1850s, the "voice of authority is that of the male machinist or inventor," and women are taught to use the machine so that their "expertise does not challenge the socially sanctioned view of greater mechanical skill in men" (Durack, 1998). Author and historian Katherine Durack posits that the Grover and Baker manual "clearly reinforces social hierarchies pertaining to masculine and feminine behavior and technological expertise." This is exemplified specifically in the storyline used throughout the manual in which the wife must solve problems with her sewing machine to prove to her husband that she is capable of using it (Durack, 1998). The husband gives the wife a series of tests she must complete under the guise that he does not understand the technology, and only when she has finished the tasks to his satisfaction does he admit to the circumstances. Durack writes that the statements made by the husband in the manual put emphasis on the "machine's value in economic terms…and its rewards as enjoyed by the master of the house," as opposed to focusing on the skills and characteristics of the female operator (Durack, 1998).

The Arizona Republican July 1911 issue included a full article about why women should continue making clothes for their families at home, citing cost of dress-making as a main reason. The article also notes that sewing domestically "prepares the young girls of the house to make…their own clothes," clearly something that women were still expected to do, even after the factory industry boomed and making clothes at home was no longer a requirement (*Arizona Republican*, 1911). Sewing was certainly a skill that women were expected to know and utilize at the turn of the twentieth century for economic benefit, but the problem emerged when society could not decide whether this skill should be used primarily inside or outside of the home.

The Sewing Machine in the Workplace

Regardless of the spread of domestically-centered beliefs in America, the widespread use of the sewing machine still opened doors for women to

enter the workforce and hold jobs outside the home. Overall, there was an increase of women in the workforce in the late nineteenth century, with just under fifteen percent of the American workforce being female in 1870 and twenty-two percent in 1930, according to the United States Census (Eves et al., n.d.). At the turn of the twentieth century, "textile, garment, and shoe factories were the primary industrial employers of women," with most of these workers being employed in the New England area (Blackwelder, 1997). Immigration played an important role in shaping the US workforce and economy at this time; many working women were the descendants of immigrants or were immigrants themselves, migrating from all over the world to work in American factory towns like Lowell, Massachusetts, or larger cities like Washington, D.C., and New York City. The workplace therefore became a primary teacher of culture and life lessons to young women as the labor force expanded. "Employment removed young women from the limited horizons of home, church, and school and educated women on a variety of levels," exposing them to new ideas that they did not get under the watchful eyes of their parents in a domestic setting (Blackwelder, 1997). Women were able to "exchange ideas and news with sister workers who helped shape their attitudes and expectations, perhaps leading them away from the prescriptions inculcated by family" (Blackwelder, 1997). Instead of having their identities fully shaped by their families, local schools, and conservative churches, women gained new ideas and socialized with people from all around the world, and the workplace dramatically shaped the American female identity in the early 1900s.

As industrialization boomed, demand increased for cookie-cutter, mass-manufactured clothes instead of homemade dresses and shirts. The women's garment industry became more mechanized and systematic, and there was a huge market for "young, unskilled women who did not have their own workplaces" to join the sewing industry (Barm and Klepp, 1984). Few women could afford their own machines to move their work to home, but they also could not afford to revert back to hand-sewing; preference was given to machine operators, and machines were much more time-efficient than hand-sewing at this point (Barm and Klepp, 1984). This increased demand for a large number of garments "created a widespread system of worker oppression," and many women were forced to work overtime hours for very little pay in less than ideal working conditions (Skinner, 2015). Women were often paid twenty to thirty percent of what male factory workers were paid, and some women were even required to "absorb some of the costs of production overhead by purchasing their own thread, paying 'rent' for the use of the machine, or supplying their own heat and light (Barm and Klepp, 1984)."

Miss Ida M. Van Etten, a well-known women's union organizer in the late nineteenth century, discusses at length the issues faced by women in the workforce in an 1890 pamphlet ("Women's Union," 1891). Her publication gives insight into how women themselves felt about the ways sewing machines changed their daily lives and domestic work as well as how women were treated in the working world. Van Etten discusses the terrible conditions that women were subject to when working in "the various trades dependent upon the needle," citing long hours, factory laws, the sweating system, and government workshops as just a few of the problems that needed to be fixed (Van Etten, 1891). This pamphlet was written not even fifty years after Elias Howe received his patent for the sewing machine in the United States, and problems were already very present concerning women and their labor conditions. Union organization became a key facet in bettering these circumstances, but it was not a simple task. Immigrants were coming to the United States from around the world, and it was difficult for them to organize because of "the many nationalities, the large number of workers…and the great numbers of small garment shops." This left many women to buckle down and push through the hard conditions to provide for themselves and their families (Chin, 2015).

Womens Liberation and the Sewing Machine

It came to seem that there was no good place for women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in America; factory work meant harsh working conditions and less-than-desirable pay, while domestic life meant being confined to oppressive ideas about what women could and could not do. A few brave women came forth to fight these ideals in the early stages, and one of the most historically well-known is Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Fifty years prior to the turn of the century, Cady Stanton had a goal to "destroy the deeply embedded ascriptive belief in sexual differences and to replace it with the liberal principle of natural rights and equality" (Davis, 2008). She believed that it was male tyranny over women that perpetuated the ideas that women were meant to be in the home and created the image of the homemaker as the perfect wife, and she sought to change that. Although Cady Stanton passed away before women in the workplace became the norm. The ideals she held were revolutionary for her time, and she helped pave the way for more feminist political movements in the twentieth century. The early 1900s saw several court cases arguing that women were physically inferior to men, that work "upset the menstrual cycle," and that women could not work the same number of hours as men. The principle was, and still is, that the government could "interfere with women's lives, because it is public policy to ensure the future of the race" (McElroy and Perry, 2017).

These ideas saw major pushback from women at the turn of the twentieth century, and the efforts to pass the Equal Rights Amendment commenced. The inclusion of the sewing machine as a part of both domestic and industrial life occurred simultaneously with the first wave of the women's liberation and feminist movements, and women were encouraged by their newfound freedoms and identities to fight for more rights; this marked the beginning of a years-long, continuing struggle for equality in both the home and the workplace.

Conclusion

Author Joan Perkin sums it up best in her 2002 article, writing,

> For women who made clothes for themselves and their families, the machines liberated them from hours of tedious hand sewing. For the middle class it was possible to have elaborate clothes made by a seamstress in a shorter time, on machines in their homes, and they expected the work to be done more quickly, for less money. For the rich, dressmakers produced the most fashionable garments, a process that often required both machine and hand sewing. (Perkin, 2002)

This information alone sounds like sewing machines were only helpful and not hurtful to women, but Perkin continues her argument, making this key statement: "Sewing machines were not liberating for women who tried to make a living by sewing" (Perkin, 2002). All women faced an identity crisis with the rise of the sewing machine—were they to take the opportunity to enter the workforce and fight through awful conditions and low pay to make a living for themselves, or were they to remain confined to the home and perpetuate the cult of domesticity, often still living in poverty? Women like Joyce's mother show that while it was difficult to do both, it was not impossible for women to retain their fiery spirits while staying at home, with wild hair and perspiring skin, dangerous needles sewing away to provide for their families. However, for women who depended on the sewing machine for their sole livelihood, the machine provided only a sliver of hope that often faded into long hours in garment sweatshops. As with so many technologies throughout American history, the sewing machine was most beneficial those who were already well-off, leaving those who were trying their best to make ends meet hanging on by a thread. Sewing machines and their consequences are irreversibly woven into the female identity throughout history, for better or for worse, and they, along with the quilts and clothes they sew, will continue to be a part of the narrative for generations to come.

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Peter Boyd

From Re-constructing Black Identity
to Deconstructing Society: Stokely Carmichael's
"Black Power" as the First Possibility of Afro-Pessimism
in Praxis and Black Rhetorical Thoughts

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Abstract

In my paper I analyze Stokely Carmichael's 1966 "Black Power" speech as a piece of Afro-Pessimistic rhetoric. I use Afro-Pessimism, a term established in the 1990s, demythologizes the historical representation of "Blackness" as an identity made powerless and culturally deficient by white hegemony. In considering Afro-Pessimism as a rhetorical lens, I link the denial of Black personhood to the Black Power movement's holistic aim to subvert American society by un-creating anti-Blackness in all its psycho-social forms. I further attempt to expand "Black Power" into the lexicon of Afro-Pessimism, thus demonstrating the rhetorical value in examining Stokely Carmichael's "Black Power" as an early example of African American rhetoric that addresses the multi-faceted deprivation of cultural and civic personhood that constitutes "Blackness."

Introduction

> "America is racist from top to bottom, and this racism is not a problem of human relations, but of a pattern of exploitation maintained actively or silently by society as a whole. And the rebuilding of society is not primarily a task of the Blacks; it is the responsibility of the whites" (Beerman, cited in Meyers, 2018, p. 136).

Unlike its predecessors, Black Power rhetoric negotiated the contracts of white society that enable racism, and therefore, emerged as a counter-critique to the nonviolent and integrationist rhetoric of the Civil Rights movement. It simultaneously demanding a radical redistribution of power through a de-racialized concentration of political and social power. Black Power rhetoric, then, relied heavily upon the notion that white society must intentionally deprive Black communities of access to full participation in a "global citizenship" (Wilderson et. al., 2017, p. 36). Moreover, the construction of American society is inherently detrimental to Black Americans' attempts to level distributions of power. Anti-Black racism undercuts the politics, history, and sociology of white is the institution that prevents Black Americans from gaining political power through social and cultural movements (Carmichael, 1996). The elevation of Black communities and the identity of "Blackness" beyond the spaces of oppression that white society allowed raised the question of how pro-Black ideology can survive in a society that was built to oppose Blackness. Stokely Carmichael, in response to society's segregation of "Black" and "political power and autonomy," focuses Black Power rhetoric on the Black reclamation of identity, formation of Black cultural institutions , and the ultimate abandonment of a society that has been built on a succession of anti-Black practices.

Carmichael's Black Power Rhetoric

Black Power recognizes anti-Blackness as a process wherein both an individual and the institutional aspects of social and civil life deprive Black Americans of land, capital, history, and therefore, their claim to a "national" presence as autonomous world citizens. This systematic deprivation leaves Blacks out of sync with the development that the rest of humanity has undergone. At the heart of Carmichael's Black Power rhetoric is the necessity for Black communitiesto create a Black identity and the social validation of that identity within an "American" narrative. White society, fortified by its own political and social power, destroys its position of supremacy by condemning anti-Blackness. In doing so, Blacks have the ability to determine their cultural place in the United States and the shape that a truly "free"

society must take, thus ensuring that notions of inhumanity and incivility are no longer "Black."

Black Power rhetoric interrupts its contemporary context by first asserting itself as a response to the Civil Rights Movement's failures, then by emphasizing the need for a social destruction as the climactic eruption of "anti-Blackness." Since Blacks, as a group are excluded from society and are routinely condemned to live in and represent bodies of inhumanity, the destruction of society's psychological and social logic that creates both "Blackness" and an inherently anti-Black society are the desired ends of Black Power's rhetoric and community reorganization. Stokely Carmichael's (1996) "Black Power," when examined as a response to both racial inequality and a critique of the historical structures that uphold racial power imbalances in American society, imparts the praxis of Afro-Pessimist theory. The covenants of society that use race to justify power distribution are the points at which justice must be focused. Carmichael, by using the Black Power Movement to critique racism as an interpersonal phenomenon and an intentional structure of society, refutes contemporary Black freedom rhetoric. He suggests that Blacks can negotiate a place of "equality" in society by achieving socioeconomic status, by establishing that the nation's social stability is dependent on intentional race making and distribution of power away from Black culture and identity, and politics is the crux of the nation's social stability, and by confronting white Americans' role in displacing power from black communities and towards a society that functions to benefit and protect "whiteness" and white Americans.

Black Power Rhetoric and the Civil Rights Era

Prior to the ascent of the Black Power movement, the Civil Rights era's rhetoric led Black social and political leaders to rally and soothe thousands of aggrieved Black audience members, to promise eventual salvation from oppression, and to project the negro voice to white society without employing direct confrontations. The Black Power movement, however, was a youthful, militant group that made a much less cautious articulation of Black identity and demands for social, political, and economic equity. They expected that confrontation against all tenets of society that were not explicitly anti-Black was the means to legitimize its rhetoric.

The attention that Carmichael gave to the embedded social constraints that the Civil Rights Movement failed to address also demonstrates how the entirety of "Black Power" rhetoric worked not only to ameliorate the immediate emergency of securing civil rights, but was also a rhetorical method of protest and identity that brought visibility to the society-wide systems

of white power and Black disempowerment. Civil Rights leaders failed to acknowledge these aspects that were detrimental to the advancement of Black communities. Four months before Carmichael spoke to a majority-white crowd at The University of California at Berkeley, the slogan and subsequent connotative meaning of "Black Power" broke ground in Greenwood, Mississippi. Carmichael had just been released after being incarcerated during the nonviolent Freedom Mississippi March.

For Carmichael and his compatriots, the fact that nonviolence could justifiably be met with police brutality and incarceration rationalized the need for Blacks to question the legitimacy of American society. "BLACK POWER," was a strategic piece of Black protest rhetoric. Its impact on achieving the desired goal of transforming the sense of anger and injustice into a unifying call for racial nationalism cannot be understated. Carmichael intentionally used his recent release from jail and the unfairness of the American response to civil rights to bolster his claims for Black Power, and ultimately, "...it was the genius of Stokely Carmichael to sense the mood gestating within the depths of the Black psyche and to give tongue to it." (Bennett, cited Stewart, 1997, p. 435-6). When he spoke, The crowd:

> "...greeted him with a huge roar. He acknowledged his reception with a raised arm and clenched fist...The only way we gonna stop them white men from whupin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power! ...BLACK POWER! they roared in unison" (Sellers & Terrell, 1990, p. 4).

Carmichael was an acute interlocutor of his own encounter with overly violent police. Having his every action met with criminalization became a synecdoche for the whole of Black history in the United States. Despite remaining nonviolent, Black protests for political representation and legal protections from further political, social, and economic disenfranchisement continued to be met with institutional police violence and suppression. For Carmichael, it was ironic that protests for a reprieve from state violence continued to face more violent repression. This brought up the need for Black Americans to begin to approach their lack of powerlessness not by protesting to be given more power, but by demanding the right to exercise their political authority. "BLACK POWER!" and the Black Power movement subsequently emerged as a rhetorical movement that removed white society from the role of "liberator" and placed the question into Black communities' commitment to creating a Black identity and using that identity to establish a strong presence of race-based political power.

Black Power and Colonialism

Carmichael first places "Blackness" into the historical context of colonization and the intentional race-making of white colonials to create a unifying narrative between contemporary society and a history of intentional Black disenfranchisement. He tells his audience, "We couldn't go bare-breasted anymore because they got excited…the missionaries came to civilize us because we were uncivilized" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 5). By referencing colonialism as the moment that is responsible for creating racism and anti-Blackness, Carmichael places white men in the position of being responsible for creating a paradigm of white superiority and Black inferiority. By referencing colonialism as the moment that is responsible for creating racism and anti-Blackness, Carmichael condemns the white community for creating, perpetuating, and relying on anti-Blackness to maintain "society." Carmichael is asserting that the prevailing ideology that "Black is uncivil" and "white is civil" was created with the intent of exploiting the historical and political capabilities of Black civilizations.

Carmichael uses this example of a colonial interaction to exemplify the cultural path of destruction to which Black societies were subjected. In doing so, Carmichael enlightens the audience not just to the origins of "Blackness" and racial subjugation, but to demonstrate how that interaction gave way to the contemporary society as well. This moment of inter-racial interaction, in Black Power as well as in Afro-Pessimist theory, exemplifies the origin of Blackness and all subsequent Black interactions in relation to white domination. In reflecting upon the idea of "civilized" versus "uncivilized" societies, Carmichael re-establishes that the injection of white morality into an African community with the justification that Black Africans were "uncivilized" is a circular argument on a grand historical spectrum. "Blackness" is both the reason and after-the-fact rationalization for subjecting the racial group to enslavement, rape, torture, denial of land, denial of voting and political presence. It is a refusal to exist in the nation with the full weight of a citizen.

Incrimination of Black Bodies

The argument that white men created a false narrative of Black "incivility" based on the social imagination of Blackness being evil incriminates white individuals in the audience by giving this ontological view of history wherein African cultures were not immoral or inferior until white interference. The collective white society has incriminated Black bodies and as a consequence, it is the Black bodies who gave physical form to the sinful characteristics- like sex and sexuality- that white, western societies essentially ban from their own moral, social, and racially striated world. Under the guise of "civilization,"

colonials sought to banish inhumanity from the civil world entirely through missionary colonialism. They ultimately displaced inhumanity and non-humans outside of society. As it continued to develop, white society condensed the practice of exploiting African land and black bodies by vilifying the appearance of Blackness, likening it to an "uncivil" primitive state of being.

In the cultural framework of the creation of social establishments that followed the colonial missionary (including the practice of chattel), white superiority used the exclusion, imprisonment, and dehumanization of Black bodies to uphold the notion that immorality and incivility are presupposed qualities of the Black individual. In the colonial reframing of racial relations, black societies are portrayed as the instigators of immorality. As a result of white displacement of so-called "inhuman" behaviors, like sexuality, on the Black form, "… the Black man … whether physically or symbolically, represents the dark side of personality…in all the civilized and civilizing countries, the Black man symbolizes sin" (Fanon, 1968, p. 199). As Carmichael uses a reversal of viewpoints, however, he establishes that though Blacks have been created to symbolize sin, evil, and incivility, it is the white man who "got excited" who must be examined for displacing not only his perceptions of moral and immoral, but his sexual attitudes, incompatible with a "civil society" onto the people whom he sought to dominate.

In the "collective unconsciousness" of white society, these collective stereotypes, myths, and perceptions that whites possess are the psychological factors that predetermine the meaning of "Blackness (Fanon, 1968, p. 136)." These stereotypes exist tangibly in history and cultural practices as they have been used to justify practices like enslavement, lynching, and the deprivation of land and wealth- the processes that prevents Blacks from experiencing the freedom to "be". Carmichael further expands upon this history of intentional subjugation by saying, "…They charged a price. The missionaries came with the Bible, and we the land; when they left, they had the land, and we still have the bible" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 5). In this statement, Carmichael intertwines the inception of white, cultural superiority with the subsequent land based and economic consequences that whites used to justify their repossession of Black material wealth. The social framework that Carmichael is describing in the past and present moments is a "settler-colonizer" situation. This is when the "settling" superior force segregates the subjugated class away from the world that he builds for himself (Wilderson et. al., 2017, p. 151).

Carmichael elucidates that, in the past, this pattern took the form of missionaries seizing African tribes' land. In contemporary American society, the process results in the continued "ghettoization" of Blacks that pushes them to the margins of society. The failure for Blacks to have been incorporated as

citizens into society can best be explained by the introduction of whiteness into Black cultures. On the interruption of cultural and psychological development by a colonizer, Fanon says, "The arrival of the white man… inflicted an unmistakable wound. The consequences of this European interruption… are not only psychological, since… there are inner relationships between consciousness and social context (Fanon, 1968, p. 77)." As Fanon suggests, the Black community suffers psychological consequences of white social domination because they are forcibly made unable to reclaim their "Blackness" as an identity. Because Blacks remain outside the bounds of humanity, due to both the position that whites have assigned them and their own lack of an identification, they are unable to sufficiently meld within the frameworks of American democracy, even though there are few remaining legal restraints that restrict Blacks from society. In this context of post-racial domination, there is no ability for the dominant and subjugated races to coexist in equal but exclusive spheres. Blacks, afterAfter encountering white domination, Blacks remain in close contact with white society while simultaneously being excluded from gaining full entry to the social class of whiteness.

Black Power's rhetorical use of colonization combines society's perpetual denial of a Black racial identity and white society's belief that Blacks cannot be entitled to a socially-bound sense of humanity. This correlates them both to the fact that Black Americans are, by consequence of white supremacy and white Americans, non-humans who lack both a coherent ethnic history and a physical place of origin. This interpretation accounts for a definition of anti-Blackness and is a stark departure from Civil Rights rhetoric, which remained grounded in enslavement as the "beginning" of Blackness in the United States. The rhetorical grounding that centers the Black American experience solely on enslavement neglects white civilizations' prior justifications of using Black bodies for expendable labor, cements the narrative that Blacks did not exist with a full cultural autonomy prior to enslavement, and permanently disconnects the experiences and ontology of American Blacks from those of the world-wide Black experience of subjugation and theft under white colonialism.

The creation of a Black and an inhuman class of beings allows white society to reinforce and re-legitimize its own racial paradigm by excluding Blacks from gaining social and economic capacity because "Blackness"allegedly warranted that exclusion. Frank B. Wilderson, Afro-Pessimist theorist, explains that "Black existence is simultaneously produced and negated by racial domination, both as presupposition and consequence" (Wilderson et. al., 2017, p. 10). Blackness in society, because it has been created as an aftereffect of "racial domination" is then bound in a cycle of

oppression. Being relegated to the position of "Black" demands that white society oppresses it and procedurally dehumanizes successive generations and uses violence to ensure compliance to maintain the white hegemonic moral and political order of the world. Blackness, in Afro-Pessimist theory, is not a racial identity as much as it is the consequential residue of the white supremacist social phenomenon, wherein "Blackness," laden with historical myths, encourages an onslaught of oppression and becomes the justification for a white individual having incited violence against a Black body. The urgency of creating a Black identity within the Black Power movement, then, is an effort to remake the connotative meaning of Blackness into one that is affiliated with the Black rhetorical experience of protest and survival, rather than one that is constituted merely of the white supremacist gaze.

Black Power rhetoric hinges on material restitution and cultural resuscitation through "racial pride, economic empowerment, and the creation of political and cultural institutions;" ("Black Power," 2020). These tenets are designed to rehabilitate Black communities, which have been starved of the ability to develop in time with the rest of society or in the same fashion as post-colonial nations. While Black Power theory alone can account for Carmichael's calls for the Black community to be "allowed" the capacity to create their own identity and to control the institutions that affect them the most, it does not account for Carmichael's deeper analysis of the way that "Blackness" is incompatible with the very notion of "society."

Afro-Pessimist Framework

That Carmichael relied heavily upon denouncing the integrationist and nonviolent politics of the Civil Rights movement while simultaneously condemning his white audience's inherently supremacist attitudes towards Blacks and Black protest movements demonstrates that Black Power must additionally be considered within an Afro-Pessimist framework. Though Afro-Pessimist theory was not established until the 1990s, a closer examination of Black Power through Afro-Pessimist theory allows for a deeper understanding of the nuanced ways in which Carmichael rationalized Black Power not just as a more effective alternative to Civil Rights, but as a rhetorical stance from which all anti-Blackness can be summed as a social pandemic that must be intentionally deconstructed.

Blackness, within the context of white society and the racialization of power distribution, operates as a social handicap that justifies cordoning "power" and the ability to shape community and opportunities away from certain undesirable groups based on their classification as "Black." The individual white person's association between "Black" and "evil" or "uncivilized,"

then, is collectivized and legitimized through centuries of enslavement and legalized segregation that had the social consequence of excluding Blacks from American society. Blackness, because it was uncivil, could not be welcomed into the mainstream power and society of America. Moreover, because incivility was rooted in ghettos, in poverty, in black culture, and in blackness, Blacks could not become politically or socially enabled. In utilizing Black Powers as a rhetorical framework for reclaiming "Blackness," Carmichael tells his audience, "We are oppressed… because we are black. Not because we are lazy or apathetic, not because we're stupid or we stink, not because we eat watermelon or have good rhythm. We are oppressed because we are black" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 6). In this instance, Carmichael is again condemning white society and reaffirming that "Blackness" is a social condition weaponized against blacks to warrant their subjugation. Carmichael is essentially arguing that, "it is the racist who creates the inferiorized" (Fanon, 1968, p. 73). In other words, the white world's perception of "Black" as evil and uncivil is used to justify incarcerating, oppressing, and dehumanizing Blacks.

Because white society, relies on these preconceived perceptions of "Blackness" in society, subsequent experiences with Black communities lead white society to relive and recreate the racial hierarchy which they comprehend as the "natural" order of society. This means that white society meets nonviolent demonstrations and self-identifying Black rhetoric with anti-protest violence in order to prevent Black-identifying individuals from attempting to merge into white society and to reinforce the white social schema that necessitates reenactments of racial domination.

The attainment of power, for Carmichael, no longer relies on negotiating a moral or political space for a Black movement. Instead, the ability to access, gain, and consolidate power became inextricably linked to racial contexts. These racial contexts ultimately result in the dominant white society determining the extent to which counter-movements like the Civil Rights or Black Power movements- are regarded as threats to the established cultural norms. The way to gain power was to enter a social dialogue that made race, politics, and power inseparable. that made the hegemonic link between whiteness and power undeniable, and that made the reality of "blackness" and powerlessness undeniable. By using race to talk about "power," Carmichael is establishing that racial identities equate to the possession or dispossession of power. Black Americans, as a result of being dispossessed, have the double task of reclaiming a Black identity, whose meaning has largely been predetermined by whiteness, and then connecting that Black identity to a new gateway to political power. "BLACK POWER" was revolutionary, because it stated,

without directly saying, that blacks are powerless in society and conversely, that the concentration of political and social power into white society is opposition to the movement's agenda.

Carmichael is aware of the irony in the fact that white individuals were afraid of Blackness due to an association with violence, yet also created and upheld anti-black mythography through violence. "White people would have to admit that they are afraid to go into a Black ghetto at night. Since white people are afraid of that, they've got to get a man to do it for them - a policeman" (Carmichael, 1966, pp. 15-16). In this scenario, policing, as Carmichael experienced just before his pivotal Greenwood speech, is the political materialization of white society's pre-emptive and reaffirming response to "Blackness." Cyclically, a white- Black social interaction neces-sitates re-enacting a colonial history of subjugation that casts the Black as an outsider and the white as the human and the citizen. In doing this, whites both "produce" Blackness by affirming its association to inhumanity, evil, and incivility before then "negating" that existence, making its mere appearance reason enough to destroy it. Because Blackness is evident in the world, it must, in representing the moral and political values of evilness and immorality, be pushed further and further away from the society and further from "whites," who are able to exist freely in society. For this reason, the rhetoric of Carmichael's "Black Power" speech is a sharp departure from the "freedom" rhetoric of the first wave Civil Rights movement, in that it, after bringing attention to this Black identity crisis, Carmichael does not look for a solution that involves Black immersion or "belonging" in society. For Carmichael and the Black Power movement, the counter to Blackness as a dehumanizing social position is for Blacks to reclaim and remake that moniker into an identity and , a stark difference from the first wave of civil rights movements which instead sought to move Blacks out of the ghetto and into "society."

Black identity in White Society

In following the social makeup that Carmichael has already established in his summations of Blackness and the anti-Blackness of American society, an adherence to integrationist tactics would mean that Blacks would have to attempt living inside the predetermined "Black" identity in a white society. Blacks would be forced to live in denial of their own existence, and, despite potentially having the ability to materially escape the ghetto, would remain psychologically and ontologically bound to a position of subjugation. In this context, Black existence is not merely a matter of proving to white society that a Black individual can achieve the same standard of living. Gaining entrance to society, then, becomes (as Carmichael puts it) a matter of each individual

Black competing against the other in order to gain enough material wealth to buy his way out of the ghettos and into the opportunity that society only affords to whites. While the integrationist attitude seems promising to Blacks, this rhetoric necessitates that Black communities subvert self-identification and community control to the white hegemony of social and economic capital. Blacks, in order to successfully "integrate" into the pre-existing American society, must willfully conform to anti-Blackness.

White society then, is never asked to respond to the historic anti-Blackness that would continue to benefit it culturally and economically, as Black individuals are turned against each other for the individual opportunity to, "...gain access" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 7) into white society by meeting white standards of social mobility: a collegiate education and presumably, a departure from the ghetto. White society, in still being allowed to hold the same supremacist worldview, would thus be permitted by both Blacks and itself to continue propagating an anti-Black attitude. Additionally, Blacks who are privileged enough to escape the ghettos and those who managed now represent a token minority group so deeply and internally colonized that they have accepted the schema of the colonizer as their own in order to protect that escape (Stewart, 1997, p. 436).

Integration, in the Afro-Pessimistic analysis that considers "Blackness" to be a permanent exclusion from society, makes it clear that assimilation into American society will not provide a way for Blacks to actively form an identity, culture, or socio-political counter to anti-Blackness's citizenship deprivation. Integration is designed, as a method for Blacks to live "within" society but does not guarantee that racist social barriers will be removed- thus, "integrated" Blacks will still lack a full cultural, political, and economic historical base that is on par with that of white society because white supremacy and anti-Blackness will still remain active parts of society, even if Blacks are in close proximity to whiteness.

To both Blacks and whites. Carmichael said, "[i]f you believe in integration, then we're going to start adopting us some white people to live in our neighborhoods" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 7). In this, Carmichael is making the rhetorical insinuation that Blacks cannot be held responsible for rectifying the historical and social disasters that have put them in the position of negotiating for and demanding a redistribution of power. Because white society and white individuals collectively possess more power, wealth, social privilege, and the supremacist attitude that enforces racism in society, it is more pertinent that they leave society and live on the margins than it is for marginalized individuals to attempt to survive in a society that exists on the promise of their destruction. Here, we see Carmichael making a humorous

statement, but this humor only softens and potentially shields his deeper rhetorical purpose of incriminating white society for its anti-Blackness and therefore, creating the next logical step that it is they, not Blacks, the social collateral, who should be responsible for "integrating" away from their privilege. Rather, it is whites who must be made to "self-correct" their denial of Black identity and the anti-Blackness they maintain. (Gallagher, 2001, p. 155).

Black Power theory, especially as it is exemplified through Carmichael's "Black Power," establishes that anti-Blackness- white society's generated resistance to integrating Black Americans into positions of power- is the source of the resistance that prevents Blacks from accessing systems of power. Because accessing the power to legitimize Black identity as an American identity and Black communities as integral parts of a larger American society is the ultimate aim of Black Power, the movement must focus away from relying solely on social tactics - like integration - that only respond to isolation and ghettoization without recognizing that they are consequences of a much larger paradigm. Black Power rhetoric, then, visualizes integration as a surface-level attempt to ease the image or experience of racism in individual relationships that ultimately fails to actively engage with a white society and government that benefit from perpetuating anti-Blackness and securing white privilege. Carmichael, to his audience, says that, "integration…was an insidious subterfuge for white supremacy. In the past six years…this country has been feeding us a 'thalidomide drug of integration,' and some negroes have been walking in the dream…" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 4). The fortunate result of the Thalidomide Tragedy, which left thousands of infants dead or deformed after promising their mothers a medical cure for morning sickness, is that the FDA began a more serious pursuit of drug testing. (Kim and Scialli, 2012, n.p.). In terms of liberation movements, integration is an untested theory that, as Black Power theory predicts, will merely project "success" as the assimilation of Blacks into white society instead of the rearrangement of a society that was designed to disenfranchise Blacks.

Carmichael's move away from integration is also a significant rhetorical strategy that allows him and the audience to begin questioning the extent to which Black Americans can, if at all, merge into the fabric of American society. Carmichael's ultimate decision is that Blacks are out of sync with society and that American society, because of the way that it continues to be motivated by anti-Blackness on a global imperialist scale, is out of sync with the rest of the non-white peoples of the world. He says, "We must question the values of this society, and I maintain that Black people are the best people to do that since we have been excluded from that society… I do not want to be

a part of the American pie," (Carmichael, 1966, p. 12). meaning that Blacks must resist the urge to assimilate into the ideals of a society that has not yet addressed its anti-Black crisis. Because integration forces Blacks into a materialist society parallel to white society without eradicating preconceived ideas of and responses to Blackness, Carmichael insists that Blacks cannot continue to praise integration as a means for achieving liberation. Blacks must instead engage the oppressor in deconstructing the society that oppresses them- white men created this society and they must surrender their power.

Black Power, as a movement and slogan, has a responsibility to force white society to recognize not only the validity of racial liberation movements, but the fact that "Black" is now a self-claimed racial identity, exist independently of disenfranchising social and economic systems and the supremacist-colored lenses of white individuals. In reframing "Blackness" as a social process that has slowed African-diaspora-descendants from possessing power over themselves, rhetors like Carmichael similarly argue that that American Blacks must be understood to exist as human beings whose claims to the amenities of citizenship - like a common land, history, and identity - are incapacitated by white American society. When Carmichael's Pessimistic analyses of race and society credibly establish that Black Power's impact is measured by its rhetorical responses to society; nevertheless, Black Power's self-determination rhetoric is perceived as a baseless attack on society. The refusal to integrate is not a social disruption, but a declension from cooperating with white society and a vocalization of a collective Black para-political body.

Ontologically, establishing a "Black" identity that has an impact on the way that Blacks are able to shape their history, culture, and opportunity must be examined as a matter of conflict, as the process of moving from the black "non-citizen" to a recognized human requires that Blacks begin generating the rhetoric that will lead to the destruction of white superiority in mentality and culture. Fanon, in similarly theorizing the conclusive image that Black and white relations must proceed, claims that, "We would not be so naïve as to believe that the appeals for reason to respect for human dignity can change reality...to fight is the only solution" (Fanon, 1968, 199). Since white society has already established that it has a social and psychological reliance on the destruction of Black being, theorists like Fanon foresee that attempts to elicit empathy from the oppressor by appealing to a common humanity will fail because white society cannot conceive Black individuals as "human."

The only methodology that will result in a dramatic leap of psychological and social orientation is for Blacks to "fight" against the white superiority that conversely, relegates Blacks to the position of cultural and racial authority.

From this position, Integration, in Afro-Pessimist theory, is a blind attempt of social cooperation that projects an image of un-creating racism but fails to successfully ameliorate the anti-Black creation that is at the core of white society. Therefore, if Blacks do manage to transcend the material barriers in society, in a psychological and ontological sense, they will still encounter the same racial barriers throughout society. While the notion of "gaining recognition among others in a society" is shared by Afro-Pessimism, Black Power theory, and Civil rights integrationist theory, Afro-Pessimism differs in that the paradigm in which Black power and Blackness are recognized must be one in which Blacks are not seeking to assimilate into a structure that necessitates their self-destruction. Such a situation indicates not that Blacks have truly created their "freedom," but that the movement had, "…merely loosened 'up the restrictions barring the entry of Black people into the white community'" (Stewart, 1997, p. 437). Such restructuring would not constitute the systematic change necessary to fully create a "Black citizen with power to determine the course of a Black culture and the making of a Black American history" (Stewart, 1997, p. 437). Instead, anti-Blackness will continue to proliferate, infecting the Black-faced reiterations of anti-Black cultural and economic institutions.

If anti-Blackness remained unaddressed while social movement proceeds, then Black "movement" into society will be limited to a Black-versus-Black competition to accrue enough socioeconomic capital for the few privileged Black individuals to feel as though they have transcended the barriers that Blacks face when attempting to maneuver society. The privileged few, however, by nature of there only being a "few," are merely playing alongside the same anti-Black sentiments, proving to whites that systemic racism can be overcome by individual Blacks; proving to Blacks that the only way towards an equal society is to play by the same rules of race, power, and wealth that white society established centuries ago. Therefore, Blacks, as Carmichael concludes in condemnation of integration and defense of Black community power, "…must wield the group power we have, not the individual power that this country sets as the criterion…" in order to prevent being led into a false sense of social security "…that… is called integration" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 6). White society, because of the Afro-Pessimistic influence on social and racial tenets of Black Power rhetoric, must be made the locus of social change and racial reorganization in order to prevent the possibility of anti-Blackness and Black communities attempting to exist in such close proximity.

Redistribution of Power

For whites, "integration," in Black Power theory as it has been used in

contemporary civil rights rhetoric, necessitates a redistribution of power into Black ghettos; the reality of integration, as an Afro-Pessimist nuance realizes, realizes that the attempt for Black masses to assimilate into white society is detrimental for both Black existence and impossible for an anti-Black society to comprehend. Theorist Frantz Fanon, in dissecting the Black man's attempts of securing "equality" says, "[f]or the Black man, there is but one destiny. And it is white" (Fanon, 1968, p. 202). Though Blacks do not realize that society is "white" by nature of its inherent anti-Blackness, the pursuit of an entry into society logically and ontologically creates a situation wherein Blacks attempt to escape a history and continuation of subjugation by seeking a place of denial within white society. Integration provides the comfortable illusion that Blacks may have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the safety and material wealth of white society by maintaining an anti-Black view of society.

The goal that the Civil Rights movement projected towards Blacks is one that foresees that Blacks will begin to profit culturally and economically alongside whites only if "Black" identity and culture becomes palatable to white society. Integration was a tool that required the Black community to "define" itself insofar as "Blackness" was not mutually exclusive to American ideals, but the anti-Black views of Blacks held by white society were still the metrics by which the Civil Rights movement waged these claims. This rhetoric therefore neglects to acknowledge the continual state of crisis in which American society will remain if it is forced to function against its nature; American society has a deep political, economic, and cultural history of anti-Blackness, and the cultural hegemony of whiteness has the power to normalize whiteness and blackness in their current relation one another and to appraise racial movements as a "threat" to the veneer of hegemony. (Gramsci, quoted Garza, 2020, pp. 224-5). Neither Black protest movements, nor the aspirations to equalize and redistribute power and resources that have been predetermined based on race, nor American society in its current form can coexist unless the dominant society, then, yields to validate and goals of a movement that critiques the use of race to limit who can possess power. Doing so, however, would come at the cost of destroying the very racial and political narrative that generates resistance between a contemporary white society and Black communities who still live in the aftermath of underdevelopment.

Black political movements and American society will continue to arrive at a crossroads until society is no longer racialized and racially skewed to favor white comfort, privilege, and power over Black communities; power to self-govern their identities, cultures, and communities. Movements that

negotiated with white society, like nonviolent and integrationist-focused movements, were limited in tactic and goals by what white society and white politicians deemed palatable. This means that a movement aiming to secure for a Black community, the end of police violence, an end to state funded prisons, and an increase in funding for community education and job programs, will reach a rhetorical impasse with white politicians and mainstream white society. The demand for American society to decriminalize Black-coded behaviors and traits that are traditionally ameliorated with policing and the decision to approach those social inequalities with bridge programs, instead represents a crossroads at which people in power will have to decide to reconcile with the possibility of whether or not to provide opportunities for social elevation to those whose mobility has historically been prevented by state-enforced oppression and the denial of opportunities. People in power and people who benefit from their social power- like white Americans- would have to acquiesce to creating a society that, instead of criminalizing Black communities and societies, is instead dedicated to providing constructive programs and autonomy to disenfranchised communities and enclaves who can then rebuild and elevate themselves to the same political and economic capacity as a mainstream society that has never faced systematic barriers while developing.

Carmichael is using "Black Power" rhetoric to engage with integrationist rhetoric by confronting the extent to which the white community will be forced to successfully integrate their mentality to the idea of "Black" entering their social sphere, and he concludes that acknowledgement being done by white society, integration will remain a one-sided attempt for the older "Negroes" (Stewart, 1997, 438) to pass themselves off as either meek enough to be "accepted," i.e., not feared by whites, or the struggle for individual gain and social mobility into white society by embracing an anti-Black lifestyle. The alternative to integration that Black Power proposes is separatism and a return to community with the goal that Blacks realize that the necessary mode of acting is to sympathize with Black Power by organizing to undermine systemic racism, rather than re-arranging Blacks throughout an anti-Black society. The alternative is for society itself to be reassessed, for both Blacks and whites to focus on demolishing the disenfranchising social structures of the past, and for whites, especially, to bear the weight of redistributing the power and wealth they collectively hold in society. For white society and white liberals alike, the dichotomy of Blackness and society within the context of liberation necessitates that Carmichael uses Black Power theory to force a white epistemic break in the understanding that white society is responsible for creating "racism"; Black liberation movements alone are not responsible for negotiating freedom so much as they are demanding that whites finally

abdicate their sense of cultural superiority that halts Black development.

For Black Power theory and for Carmichael especially, the fact that Blacks hailed integration as the finish line of equality, thus blindly accepting the anti-Blackness in society, was a rationalization of white superiority within Black communities that seemed to accept Black dehumanization as an inherent tenet of social function. Most devastatingly, for Blacks, this means that integrationists would have to be willing to choose a national identity as "Americans" over their socially assigned identity of "Black." The most detrimental consequence is, "[w]ithout a cultural identity that adequately defines himself [sic], the Negro cannot identify with the nation as a whole" (Brown and Shaw, 2002, p. 26). In the absence of an affirmative "Black" identity that recons with both the anti-Blackness of the nation and challenges the stereotypic assumptions of "Blackness" that originate in the white community, Black communities and individuals will remain unable to construct a coherent chronology that places their history in the present moment.

Without that mechanism for Blacks to self-identity- namely, for a declension from "society," and an affirmation of being "Black"- and for that self-identity to be validated by society, "Black" and "white" will remain in tension with one another, as Blacks continue to resist a predetermined identity to enter society while white society emphasizes that identity and prevents entry. In extending beyond the Black Power movement, the lack of a recognized Black identity also means that white society will, ironically, continue to challenge the Black revolt against oppression as if it were a crime against civility, thus ensuring the survival of a national history that uses anti-Blackness to disconnect white supremacy from the protests and lived experience of Blacks. The rhetorical process of constructing a Black identity becomes the crux of Black Power ideology, for the reclamation of a "Black" identity through "BLACK POWER" necessitates that Black Americans assert, en masse, that "Blackness" cannot be excluded from the maintenance of social, cultural, economic power.

Furthermore, in being formally recognized as an ethnic group with a common identity and history, white Americans could ultimately have no other response to Black Power but to develop an alternate social schema that does not rely on anti-Blackness. In this sense, the Black power movement, is entangling itself in the process of re-asserting Blackness into history and society. Placing the dualistic struggle to create a Black identity and to have that identity validated by the nation within the hands of Civil Rights or Black Power leaders alone would require that those groups already possess the institutional power to validate and normalize "Blackness" as an ulterior mode

of humanity and a category of social citizen. Because white society alone has that power, it is the white liberal who must be incorporated into Black Power rhetoric to do the work of empowering the Black community to self-assert.

Afro-Pessimist Theory, however, provides a historical, psychological, and ontological examination of "Blackness" as a social condition, created and enforced by "whiteness." Whiteness, because it is the dominant expression of power, is the state of being that necessitates the economic and cultural destruction of descendants of the African Diaspora as a means of maintaining an identity. The common factor that unites Black and white Americans, in the context of Afro-Pessimist theory, is the fact that "racism," is interpreted as a spectrum of humanity that subsequently rationalizes the inclusion or exclusion of certain races into society. The adherence to anti-Blackness, furthermore, relegates "whiteness" as the inherently civil persona and "Blackness" as the exclusionary sect of uncivil humanity (Wilderson et. al., 2017, p. 9). Modern settler-colonial societies, where an oppressed people remain on their land but in economic and cultural exile in relation to their oppressor, continue to perpetuate these systems because the effects of colonialism are upheld by anti-Black attitudes on individual and institutional levels; these "attitudes," when incorporated into the construction of a civilized society, are built into the society's culture and systems of social, economic, and political power. This separation between land, history, capital, and culture is further divided for Black communities who are additionally separated from the "Africa" to which Carmichael refers due to slavery; his rhetorical reliance on community and cultural control, therefore, is used to compensate for the history of enslavement that leaves American Blacks without a claim to a natal point of origin. The Black community, therefore, is theorized to be a site of cultural and historical revival that will root the "Black American" experience, the history of African diaspora, and the history of enslavement and segregation within a pseudo-origin in the United States, thus giving Black Americans the ontological ability to claim an additional American nationality.

As a result, Black Power, in its slogan and rhetoric, signifies the pending upheaval of the racial rhetoric that has been interworked into the very creation of the nation and national identity for Blacks in white society and for society itself. Carmichael, in giving this tangible foundation to the racist ideology that undercuts all of white society, gives "Black Power" rhetoric the opportunity to acknowledge anti-Blackness and to offer a historical, social critique that further implicates white society and the white individual in the creation of Black subjugation. Carmichael's Black Power analyses of racial domination embody an Afro-Pessimist view on deconstructing and

restructuring race in society. ; In the relationship that follows a colonial interruption, social development morphs from an intertwined relationship of white theft and forced Black "dependence" on white society to one in which society as a whole continues to fund its material and cultural existence by perpetually dehumanizing Black citizens. Whites, in the contemporary moment, assesses Carmichael, remain the exclusive owners and determiners of ethics, morality, and economic wealth/value in association to race. Blacks, the constructed threat to civil society, are visibly "ghettoized" because of economic theft and are culturally excluded from society because of the association of "Black" to evil, immorality, and incivility. Blacks, and Black communities are the permanent social "scapegoat," (Fanon, 1968, p. 170) against which a never-ending assertion of white supremacy and "civility" is placed.

Attitudes Towards the Black Power Movement

The Black power movement was both feared and heavily criticized, as its strong backing of separate community approaches to gaining autonomy and eliminating societal barriers was often equated to "Black nationalism." However, while Carmichael did establish that Blacks must preserve their own communities in order to survive, he did so by espousing a rhetoric of "commu- nity nationalism," which places more emphasis on Black development than on the act of "separating" from an American identity. For this reason, the Black Power movement was not explicitly a Black nationalist movement that posed a threat to notions of what "America" represented in terms of racial unity and national values of freedom or democracy. That Civil Rights Leaders prioritized a sense of national cohesion and thus, did not support the "militancy" of Black power out of the concern that "pro-Black" necessitated "anti-white" (Gilyard & Banks, 2018, p. 41) made it clear that Black Power's potential to respond to the crises of Black identity and social exclusion, in the context of Civil rights rhetoric, was seen as too radical of a process that would endanger the delicate balance that Civil Rights had created between oppressed Blacks and their ascent into "white society."

Carmichael's portrayal of the Black Power Movement in his October 1966 "Black Power" speech at U.C. Berkeley communicated Civil Rights to a white audience. Carmichael's portrayal of the Black Power movement in his October 1996 "Black Power" speech at U.C. Berkley to a predominantly white audience stressed the need for Black Americans to "move" away from white America in order to provide for their own community. This type of separatism is more akin to "community nationalism," which is the expression of a collective cultural identity in separation from the whole of society. "Community nationalism rests upon a premise…- African Americans should

control and support communities and institutions where they dominate" (Dawson, cited Brown and Shaw, 2002, p. 25).

The need for Blacks to turn inward for the sake of community preservation would have allowed Black Americans to solidify a sense of identity before attempting to integrate with "America" as individuals with a poorly-defined cultural point of origin beyond or within the United States. Carmichael's attempt to negotiate that Blacks have the right to determine a sense of physical place and a strong sense of a Black self most truly comes to light in his argument that integration, the ending goal for the nonviolent campaign, does not hold within it, a way for a Black self or community identity to form and to remain centralized within Black communities and institutions.

Blackness, as white societies established hegemony, materialized to fulfill the role of as an internal threat to the "civilized" structures of white society, and it is therefore crucial to consider that Afro-Pessimist theory recognizes that "Blackness" and "society" are incompatible ontologies; Blacks cannot exist within society and "society," itself a construction of anti-Blackness, simply cannot function alongside "Black inclusion." Carmichael uses this idea of an internal Black enemy to link the idea that white power and white society are responsible for creating the contemporary "Black" identity that cannot be "dis-imbricated" from the state of ontological and social death. (Wilderson, et. al., 2017, p. 20) Blackness remains transient and has no point of reference to a history or land. Because "Blackness" is the one remaining factor that determines American African-descendants' histories and experiences, Black Power rhetoric relies on transforming the word "Black" into a communicable state of being that is rooted in Black community institutions and the power to self-define the meaning of "Blackness" in a "post-colonial" context.

The focus on "power," is the rhetorical cornerstone of the movement that links Blackness to the obtention of the Black freedom to "move in the world" while still retaining a "Black" identity. For this reason, Carmichael, in defending the Black Power slogan and movement to Civil Rights leaders, says, "'We must use every constructive means to amass economic and political power. This is the kind of legitimate power we need. We must work to build racial pride and refute the notion that Black is evil and ugly. What we need is a new slogan with 'Black' in it" (Carmichael, cited Gilyard & Banks, 2018, p. 43). Carmichael, in presenting the rhetorical purpose of the Black Power movement and slogan, further unites the Black experience of being held permanently captive by white society and over-policing with the notion that "Blackness" must be recognized, by the Black population, as a crucial aspect of their identity that white society restricts from moving into society. The primary concern of Civil Rights movement leaders, in response to placing

"Black Power" in the contemporary dialogue, was the potential for "Black Power" to alienate white supporters, thus leaving the Black community without support. Carmichael, however, continues to utilize "Blackness" as a necessary qualifier that must be vocalized within the movement; he furthermore, is considering the impact of "Black Power" solely by considering the psychological, cultural, and material reparations that the Black population must secure for itself, rather than the possibility for Black Power to adhere to pre-existing social expectations. The refusal to fully utilize "Blackness" as a racial identity, a foundation for culture, and a unifying nomenclature, for Carmichael, demonstrated that civil rights leaders prioritized white fears of Black mobility and of the movement instead of responding to Black Power's potential to address the individual and systemic injustice that Blacks face when confronted by social barriers.

The battle for racial recognition and equality exists psychologically, in the struggle to claim an affirmative Black identity and to disengage white society from its anti-Black mentality and response to Black protest. Having established that Blacks reside within a permanently subjugated position in society and in the white imaginative creation of a racialized society, Carmichael expands his analysis of Black and white racial dynamics by investigating Black Power's rhetorical power over identity formation, then focuses on recognizing the psychological components that have constructed race and racism, and it does so by positing that Black individuals and communities must have the ability to determine the cultural development of their own institutions. Carmichael (now Kwame Ture) says, "We shall have to struggle for the right to create our own terms through which to define ourselves and our relationship to the society, and to have these terms recognized. This is the first necessity of a free people, and the first right that any oppressor must suspend" (Hamilton and Ture, 1967, p. 38). Through enslavement and since emancipation, Black identity and cultural self-determination have been subject to definitions of race and power that benefit the elevation and preservation of white society. In the absence of enslavement, Blacks were subjected to over a century of changing legal definitions of "Blackness," banned from participating in the political functions of the nation despite being "citizens" and subjected to anti-Black racism on a daily basis. In this later analysis, Carmichael draws a clear connection between Black self-identification, white society's denial of its oppressive tendencies, and the fact that white society must be forced to suspend its self-ordained "right" to determine the extent to which Blacks may be included as members of society.

The Black "relationship to society" is, additionally, the common denominator between the rationalization for creating a self-identity and the

anti-white society rhetoric that condemns whites of their role in upholding anti-Blackness. Black Power Rhetoric engages with the anti-Black exclusivity of society exactly by "legitimizing" Black rhetoric and discrediting white American fears and defenses, in a parody of the current social dynamic that continues to legitimize white fear and resistance to Black identity and inclusion.

Black Power's Socially Disruptive Rhetoric

Without a socially bound Black power movement that implements the white intentionality of race-making, American society is incapable of placing Black self-identity, which contradicts the stereotypes of primitive, uncivil Blackness, into either a position of being or a recognized position of belonging in the United States. As Carmichael points out, white colonization creates the racialized foundations of society; these relationships enforce the understanding that white society is only able to construct itself and establish a "white" identity by propagating a set of stereotypes and morals to and about the newly subjugated "Black." All of white society, because the determiners of social functioning were white colonials, is created and upheld by the individual "…white supremacist attitude, which you [the audience] have either consciously or subconsciously, [and] is running rampant in society today" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 5). The attitude of white supremacy determines not only the recognized power that Black communities can have, but also the extent to which Blacks may successfully negotiate for their own "liberation," which in and of itself represents a mortal opposition to the very foundations of society. Out of self-protection, white society does not and cannot acknowledge Black Power rhetoric as a "valid" racial ideology, because doing so would necessitate acknowledging the need to dismantle all institutions. Carmichael is using this psychological aspect of white supremacy not only to explain the perpetual formation of racism in society, but to further embellish the parallel between the Black experience of "being subjugated" to a white attitude that relies on "subjugating Blackness."

The supremacist attitude, furthermore, is what Carmichael uses to "condemn white America for her criminal acts against Blacks…The institutions that function in this country are clearly racist; they're built on racism" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 3). In attributing racism to white supremacy instead of communicating that it is a consequence that Blacks must live through by nature of their being Black, Carmichael effectively establishes that the white community is the point of origin for the Black condition. This assertion comes contrary to the constructed world, which seeks to establish that "Blackness" is the object which determines a level of inhumanity. This moment in Carmichael's speech attaches white supremacy, and therefore, anti-Blackness, to

the white world as an inevitable, undeniable condition that determines the racial relationships and structures of society. Carmichael, therefore, is able to condemn the nation by directly condemning white society and its "attitude of superiority. "This particular condemnation gives Carmichael and Black Power rhetoric the \strength to hold white society accountable for perpetuating anti-Blackness and prevents whites from exonerating themselves from "being racist."

Re-examining Black Power through an Afro-Pessimistic lens that establishes a relationship between the social value of race and a racialized distribution of power allows Black Power rhetoric to continue dissecting the political limitations placed on black communities and the public responses to Black self-identification. It additionally expanded discussions of civil and racial equality by arguing that racism and power must be analyzed in the contextualized understanding that they are tools that have undermined 400 years of Black Americans' development for the sake of white hegemony. Black Power rhetoric must first be examined as a rhetorical appeal that continued to question the exclusion of Black Americans from social, political, and economic wealth. Black Power secondly, by reframing a historical and politicized racial identity, used race as a tool to enter and deconstruct the social dimensions of power by theorizing that the combined momentum of white individuals, who benefit from the disenfranchisement of a Black underclass, as well as society itself, which has yet to legitimize Blackness as a caste without the history of self-determination. This means that Black Power must contend with whiteness and anti-Black racism to successfully lead a movement that redefines and legitimizes Blackness and the need for "Black Power" movements in the public sphere and that the "public sphere," in both culture and politics, must then be altered in such a way that the oppression of Black Americans is abolished.

Carmichael, in order to counter the anti-Blackness that manifests in white psychology and commonly accepted social structures, transitions away from traditional freedom rhetoric by implicating his white audience by saying, "[i]t's time that white people…start defending themselves as to why we are oppressed and exploited" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 6). In doing so, Carmichael reframes the contemporary problem of "racism" not as a burden that must be born and triumphed over by Blacks, but as a choice, and even a "sickness" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 9) to which white society owes the possession of its social power. Black Power rhetoric, in continuing to follow the societal model of Afro-Pessimist theory, posits that white society's "power," essentially because it has already "legitimized " itself, in becoming the dominant social schema, must de-legitimize itself and white society must abdicate its material

and psychological possession of social capacity and definitions of "humanity" if Black liberation is to succeed.

The Black Power movement is challenging the social and racial myths that have been pre-set within the United States; the movement to create Black racial pride and power over institutions and to have Blackness accepted as a class of people in the United States is an affront to anti-Blackness in society and the act of placing Blackness into society is contradictory to the prevailing attitudes that have constructed society by excluding Blackness as a valid identity or political force. By expressing modern racism, a phenomenon that is dependent on white society and by placing the origin of that relationship in a historical context, Carmichael creates a dialogue wherein white society cannot exist without anti-Blackness, and the explicit adherence to anti-Black beliefs, psychologies, worldviews, and social structures. In this dialogue, "Black" and "white" are socially bound dynamics that Carmichael then uses to establish the groundwork for the remainder of his argument to justify Black Power as a movement to free Blacks from individual racism and an inherently anti-Black society; furthermore, the white population who suffers as a result of the Black movement into a position of social equality and equal identity recognition as whites, are at fault for their own suffering, as the Black community, while disrupting white society's innocence, is merely moving towards an equal positionality with white individuals and all of society.

Carmichael, speaking to the mostly white liberal student body of U.C. Berkeley asks, "Who has power to make his or her own actions legitimate?... In this country that power is invested in the hands of white people and it makes their acts legitimate" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 6). White society has not only the power over institutions, but again, the power to be recognized and to recognize themselves as socially and culturally valid, meaning that others abide by that system that they have created. Carmichael further implicates white society as a dynamic component of Black liberation rhetoric because "power" cannot be self-claimed by people who have historically been power-less; "power" within a society must be recognized by others by the class of subjugated people successfully demanding that their oppressor grant them the equal human recognition that has been subverted by "Blackness" for centuries. For Black communities to exist in self-sufficiency, instead of continuing to struggle for social validity, whites now must acknowledge their own supremacy and complacency. Carmichael here makes it the white community's responsibility not just to accept Black social movements, but to respond in a way that will finally allow whites to "begin to move to see Blacks as human beings," (Carmichael, 1966, p. 7) instead of equating Black identification with anti-civil disruptions.

114

The Black rhetorical shift from negotiating for a space within society to questioning the validity of society as a whole begins with Black Power rhetoric's demand for Black social and cultural autonomy. In demanding the movement of Black people into positions of power, Black Power is engaging with the Afro-Pessimistic suggestion that Black subjugation is not an unavoidable "condition" of civil society, but a dynamic relationship between white supremacist attitudes, white power, and Blacks, whose powerlessness and lack of an identity are consequences of whiteness and of the construction of "moral" societies on top of African civilizations. Creating a Black liberation movement that is centered on re-positioning Blackness and Black experiences in society is a crucial aspect of Black Power that shows the movement to be aware of its need to be engaged with the ontological component of Blackness that has been significantly impaired by social relationships. The methodology by which Carmichael and Black Power establish the creation of these paradigm shifts, however, is what makes Black Power a form of liberation rhetoric that in Afro-Pessimist tradition, ultimately uses the reconceptualization of racial dynamics to lay the groundwork for the un-creation of racialized societies. In this process, society, as a third entity and a materialization of anti-Black praxis, is first abandoned by Black communities and then re-organized within white communities, who, until a new society is formed, still retain the economic and political power to institute change.

Carmichael reaffirms to his white U.C. Berkeley audience that, "…Black people must be in power, doing and articulating for themselves" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 9). In affirming the significance of the Black individuals right not only to recover a pre-colonial culture and to fashion a post-colonial identity, Carmichael is also establishing that the interruption of Black self-determination and community organization must be accepted as a phase that society must enter. Carmichael, by essentially justifying the actions that Blacks take in vocalizing oppression and creating new protest and freedom rhetoric, is refuting a potential reading of Black Power that presumes it to be a movement of "reverse racism" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 9). Arguably, his claim that "A man is born free… The only thing white people can do is stop denying Black people their freedom" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 4) is one of the most telling indications that Carmichael damns his white audience for breaking what should have been a sacred promise: the notion that all humans are entitled to the same rights by law and by nature of being human.

Black Americans must place themselves in positions of repositioning Black possibility social and political wealth in order to survive and in order to facilitate a re-evaluation the way that society has structured "power" towards white hegemony. This articulation cannot be achieved by negotiating with

society- it must be done by destroying it. Although Black Power is predicated on the reasoning that Blacks must be able to have a self-defined identity to become a recognized part of being in society, Carmichael advocates for a new social order wherein Blacks are able to confine themselves to their own communities to attain a psychological freedom from white society, thus freeing whites to re-examine systems of oppression. Carmichael, by abandoning the rhetorical conventions that focused on Blacks being accepted into white society, used "Black Power" as a tool to encourage the critical thought of race, power, and society of his audiences.

Carmichael finalizes Black Power's socially disruptive rhetoric by concluding, "I maintain that every civil rights bill in this country has been passed for white people, not for Black people…. I also know that while I am Black, I am a human being…White people don't know that" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 4). The assertion that Civil Rights Bills have been written, but not to the effect of successfully rectifying the white supremacist society demonstrates, firstly, the inability for the American political system to "condemn herself " (Carmichael, 1966, p. 3) by re-writing legislation that would unfound society. The assertion that "Blackness" is human, but that "Blackness" is excluded from the makeup of "society" demonstrates that attempts to incorporate "Blackness" into the workings of a civil society will continue to fail unless either "Blackness," as an identity or "American society," as it has been constructed is destroyed. American society as it stood, however, would not survive if whites continued to view the consequence of racism- Black ghettos, non-dominant cultures, and freedom movements- as disruptions of national coherency instead of eruptions into a new position of historical and material self-determination.

In Carmichael's Black power speech and in accordance with Afro-Pessimism, Blacks in society must begin to create a situation in which their existence is no longer one of pure subjugation; this movement, regardless of whether or not it makes use of physical violence or not, represents a violent ideology in the minds of white society, as it is a threat to the insistence that whiteness can only maintain power so long as it is able to establish itself as the "superior" being and to establish a society that therefore, benefits that superiority in the material sense. Despite protests that "Black Power" is too militant, it must survive in society because itreinforces cultural dissent that has been recognized by those with power. This dissent can only be recognized if (white society has surrendered its racialized claims to power and its hegemony over positions of power in all institutions. Stokely Carmichael, in his final rhetorical twist, turns toward an imagined white society,to ask, "And that's the real question facing the white activist today…" asks Carmichael.

"Can they tear down the institutions that have put us all in the trick bag we've been in for the last hundreds of years?" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 8).

Finally, then, an ingrained patten of rejecting Blacks from the image of "civilized" society is implicated as the source of racial tension; in this implication, Carmichael also asserts that whites, too, are victims of their overreliance on Blackness and the creation of an endless supply of expendable, non-citizen Blacks on which construct a "white" identity of citizenship and belonging. As a result, white individuals, and society, in Black Power rhetoric and Afro-Pessimist theory, have both duped and doomed themselves in creating a sense of superiority that essentially survives only if whites are able to permanently contain "Blackness" to the same historical pattern of disenfranchisement. White society, if it does not intentionally enforce violence against Blacks and in response to Black freedom rhetoric, frees Blacks from the limitations of structural anti-Blackness and can also free itself from the psychological need to succeed by eradicating the possibility of Black participation in society.

White Perpetuation of Anti-Black Violence

Although Black Power rhetoric is perceived by white society as a revolutionary, violent disruption in the imagination of white society and Civil Rights leaders, Carmichael works to prove that rhetoric of Black Power, which seeks to destroy the destructive practices associated with anti-Blackness, not an inception of violence, but a response to the white perpetuation of anti-Black violence. Carmichael questions the connotative meaning that "Black Power" holds in opponents' minds in order to exemplify the rhetorical errors that society and leaders intentionally make when referencing the Black Power movement. Carmichael says, "This country knows what power is. It knows what Black Power is because it deprived Black people of it for over four hundred years. White people associate Black people with violence because of their own inability to deal with Blackness" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 14). Here, Carmichael makes it clear that the point of tension between "Black", "Power," and a third unnamed party, white society, is because of the imaginative presumption that power for Blacks necessitates that the Black anti-citizen emerges from outside of society and usurps the white citizen. He further, in claiming that the nation knows what is meant by "Black Power," is adding a cynical tone of intentionality behind the fear-based backlash that the Black Power movement received. It is white society's own fear and dehumanizing connotations of "Blackness" that created their fearful association between Black Americans and the "BLACK POWER!" rhetoric that gives Blacks a place outside of the ghetto and into the nation as citizens with full autonomy over their history and institutions.

In an ironic sense, white society, judging by its reaction to Black Power rhetoric, grasps the idea that it cannot exist in its current form with a successful Black Power movement, and it is projecting the idea that "Black Power" is inherently destructive to an otherwise peaceful and democratic society as a way to cast a gaze of presumptive and anti-Black guilt on the movement. Carmichael envelopes his discussion of "Black" power around the perception of "Black power." The rhetoric of Black freedom movements is corrupted because the notion of "Blackness" itself receives a "violent" connotation from the white community. Carmichael says, "…the question [is], why do white people in this country associate Black Power with violence? And the answer is because of their own inability to deal with "Blackness" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 13). By creating this distance between the true intent of "Black Power's" rhetoric (white society must be condemned and destroyed), from the racist ideology that originates in white society, Carmichael is able to demonstrate that the anti-Blackness in society is detrimental to the Black movement. There is an ontological inability for Blackness and society to coexist so long as "Blackness," remains (in the white imagination) the antithesis of "society" itself.

By drawing attention to the social connotation that "Black" implies "violence," and in the strongest sense, "social destruction," Carmichael is engaging with the falsehood that Black movement necessitates violence by ironically redescribing the type of "violence" that a pro-Black movement brings into society. Carmichael is able to disconnect the idea that an oppressed group's movement towards "healthy ground" and ultimately, a new society (Carmichael, 1966, p. 9) is not indicative of retaliatory violence from the Black community. In the white imagination, the rebuttal of their paradigm of privilege and racial denial is violent, but in deconstructing anti-Blackness, this form of psycho-social violence is necessary. The enforcement of psycho-social violence unto white society, namely by condemning them for the creation of a "Black" non-citizen and by highlighting the fallacies of whites using their anti-Black worldview to combat Black protest rhetoric, furthermore, does not allow white society to experience the epistemic break which the Black Power movement seeks to instill. In this break, white society will have to confront the historical prevalence of anti-Blackness, and their social power to diminish Black protest movements. Carmichael and Black Power rhetoric embody this notion of anti-colonial violence especially in their opposition to the nonviolent messages of the first wave of civil rights movements. The adherence to nonviolence, because it does not offer the oppressed an opportunity to begin creating a defined self in the aftermath of subjugation, fails to effectively create an equal "Black and white" coexistence. As Fanon says, "Nonviolence is an attempt to settle the colonial problem around the

negotiating table before the irreparable is done, before any bloodshed or regrettable act is committed" (Fanon, 1963, p. 23).

Nonviolence is preferred by the dominant society and is a subversive, suppressive tactic because to the oppressed, it is presented as a "socially acceptable" way to negotiate for their humanity. In reality, the oppressive society's nonviolent quota is merely another barrier placed in front of Blacks that gives white society permission to deny Black voices should they deem Black social movements to be "too violent" in accordance with white social standards. Whites, in this consideration, will have done nothing to address the historical anti-Black worldview that already predisposes them and the rest of society to associate Blackness with violence, evil, and incivility, and "violence, evil, and incivility" with Blackness. In other words, nonviolence will not force the oppressed and the oppressor to enter a dialogue in which the oppressor can begin to recognize the oppressed independently of the scapegoated, evil image into which he was fashioned.

The rhetoric of "nonviolence" (and the assumption that Black leaders will adhere to it) is preferred by white society because whites will not be held responsible for creating the very world order that has put them in the position to decide the acceptable methodology for Blacks to begin demanding "freedom" over their own existence, but Carmichael, most noticeably by condemning the Civil Rights movement, defends the merits of the Black Power movement by arguing that Black freedom rhetoric must also be a dynamic that is used to counter an anti-Black society. Without the prior knowledge of anti-Blackness being used to inhibit Black movement and accruement of social capital, it becomes easy for viewers to misinterpret "Black Power" as a movement that is lacking in nuance or critical thought regarding the racial texts of society. Although Black Power is not in its rhetoric an avocation for a physical destruction of life or property, its existence does evoke a violence against white supremacy and against white society, as these two forces combine to create Blackness and its contingent subjugation. This symbolic violence, however, is one that exists because, as Carmichael quotes, Blacks must begin to "come alive by saying NO!" (Camus, cited in Carmichael, 1966. p. 9.), or by inserting their own definition of themselves into social dialogue by resisting. The defiance of a status quo that is in itself oppressive is the one way for an oppressed being to assert that his existence and experiences must be recognized as a part of human experience. The combat against oppression, in this sense, is not equivalent to the act of committing that oppression. Rather, struggling against oppression is necessarily a "violent" act that is required for individuals to overcome their oppressor's damnation of them and then become truly "free."

The image of violence, though there is no physical threat to white members of society, the translation equating it to "anti-white power" (Wilkins, 1966/1969, cited in Gilyard & Banks, 2018, p. 41) or "social destruction" that listeners receive from "Black Power" is deeply symbolic (and can hardly be called unintentional) because the ultimate goal of Black Power is to create enough social momentum for Blacks to create self-reliant cultural institutions in their communities. Whites, once enlightened to the almost undeniable immorality, depravity, and denial of their superiority, and the subjugation under which Black communities live, will begin organizing in their own communities so that Black communities can continue to make material and cultural gains. For the Black Power movement, the "destruction of society" is a task that requires white society to respond to the Black community's critiques of white supremacy and anti-Blackness. In Black Power rhetoric, these different responses are expressed as a Black cultural movement within Black neighborhoods and a simultaneous drive for white liberals to organize poor whites. In Afro-Pessimist theory, these two simultaneous efforts are the theoretical praxes for creating a "post-racial," or "non-anti-Black" society.

According to Afro-Pessimist theory, in a truly post-racial society is the positionality of the Black subject… gestures toward the disconfiguration of civil society. From the coherence of civil society, the Black subject beckons with the incoherence of civil war, a war that reclaims Blackness not as a positive value, but as a politically enabling site, to quote Fanon, of "absolute dereliction" (Wilderson et. al., 2017, p. 79). By this, Afro-Pessimistic theory means to enunciate the fact that typical, white social reorganization is capitalistic and must reorganize wealth distributions, because whites are socially limited by a lack of access to material wealth. This singular capitalist limitation is why whites must organize against poverty and economic deprivation in white communities. This white organization against poverty is key because, "[t]he worker…is recognized as fully human and a full citizen and can articulate his claims because he has attained this recognition by distancing himself from Blackness" (Roediger, cited in Weier, 2014, p. 422). The economic base that Carmichael describes is not just key in dismantling the racialized economic oppression that Blacks face, but it is instrumental in de-racializing the poor white community's ideology that their one way to achieve social or economic capital is in relative comparison to Black inhumanity. For Blacks, however, a "social reorganization" requires that the entire society, because the entire society (including the capitalist society) profits from anti-Blackness. Therefore, that entire society must be "disconfigured" beginning with its organized institutions.

Blacks in society, because their cultural movements threaten to interrupt the dominance of a singular white supremacist narrative, "beacon with the incoherence of a civil war" by providing a racial identity for Blacks and by interrupting white hegemony. Blackness, then, because it both interrupts white history and society and interjects a Black identity through the deconstruction of capitalism and white supremacy, has the capability to enter society and to provide Blacks with cultural and political capital. Because Carmichael, in keeping with the reasoning of Afro-Pessimist theory, reasons that Black citizens can only be fully liberated once white society recognizes the humanity of Black individuals and "Blackness", the process of eliminating racism must become a society-wide effort to "disalienate" Black experiences from white associations of "Black" to a "non-human non-citizen". Carmichael begins by saying that, "The failure of the civil rights bill isn't because of Black Power…or because of the rebellions that are occurring in major cities. That failure is due to the white's incapacity to deal with their own problems inside their own communities (Carmichael, 1966, pp. 4-5). The Black community, in other words, cannot be held responsible for the alleged "failure" of its liberation movements because, as Carmichael reasons, the crisis rests solely within white society's failure to allow those movements to succeed and to deconstruct the much larger social systems that a race-based movement will encounter as it makes these social moves towards "disalienation" from the world.

Separatism

This process of embracing separatism as both an alternative to integration and a solution to solving anti-Blackness in society is not a permanent image that Carmichael sees for a "post-racial" or "anti-anti-Black" society. It is, rather, a necessary step that Blacks must take in order to preserve internal cultural organization and a similar step that whites must take to destroy theirs. In expressing this, Carmichael does not focus exclusively on the Black community's methodology for achieving racial freedom; rather, Carmichael directs his attention towards the role that white society, and especially white liberals, must play in this restorative act. White society, in the absence of a Black presence upon which to construct a sense of racialized superiority, must deconstruct the secondary economic superiority that gives a tangible structure to racial striation. Carmichael says that white liberals must "… organize [within the white community] in order to form a coalition base for Black people to hook up with" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 8). White liberals, as Carmichael stresses to his audience, will only be able to commit to this organization if they continue to distance themselves from the semantic battle over Black power and the extent to which Blacks can protest for an end to racism within society.

Carmichael is explaining that the white remnants of society are not aftermath to "Black separatism" because whites must intentionally organize in order to deconstruct the exploitative systems that have allowed collections of power against poverty and Blackness. Carmichael's organization of the white remnants of society ensures that the white individual will not be without a sense of self, purpose, or identity once he is forced to sever his existence and his worth from existing in opposition to a Black "other." Instead, his moral and social obligation is to create and exist in a society of mutual recognition, not in constant conflict and domination against systematically impoverished Blacks. The organization of white liberals is not only ontologically necessary for whites, but necessary for a successful destruction of society; power begets power, and once a certain condition of human existence triumphs over another, it then has the ability to perpetually grant itself power by building a society to its advantage, while the powerless positions in society remain locked in a struggle attempting to gain the same amount of relevance and wealth.

By framing the theoretical approach to social destruction that America must take, embracing community as the separatist approach to social reformation, Carmichael is removing Blacks from their historical reliance on white validation and creating a path for the Black community to "free" itself from existing underneath the superiority of white society. Once white society removes itself from its ownership of racial and economic capital, the Black struggle to find this recognition of cultural validity vanishes, as there will no longer be a "superior" white class to determine the humanity of other groups in relation to itself. Per Afro-Pessimist Theory's Hegelian references to the "master-slave dialect," in a raced society, the master must unmake the master and cannot attempt to "free" or un-make the slave. In resigning his position as the "master," there is no longer a structure wherein one human is in ownership of another, the "slave" can now have an opportunity to exist in pseudo-isolation in relation to the "master." While the two will invariably come into contact, their relationship will no longer be determined by preestablished racial paradigms. The "ex-slave," after the master willfully revokes his position, then has the leeway to build and recover an identity that is free of an oppressive colonial past.

This singular Black-white relationship, influenced by centuries of racialized structures of power (and theoretically altered only by the abdication of white power), however, remains one relationship that does not encompass, for example, the history that created a master and a slave or whether there are still political and economic systems skewed towards the ex-master's additional gain even after he acknowledges the humanity of the slave. In

other words, though the master, or the white man, may acknowledge the past, there is no guarantee that he will acknowledge the present, in which the past actions of white men ensured that white society would be the beneficiaries so long as society continues to remain anti-Black in its makeup. Carmichael, in discussing the multifaceted oppression that American Blacks face says, "it is nonsensical for people to talk about human relationships until they are willing to build new institutions. Black people are economically insecure. White liberals are economically secure. Can you begin to build an economic coalition? Are the liberals willing to share their salaries with the economically insecure Black people they so much love?" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 11). In a somewhat taunting manner, Carmichael is accusing the white community of refusing to step outside of their comfort zones, all while claiming to be on the side of Black Power and their oppressed Black brothers and sisters. Carmichael is intentionally complicating the relationship that white liberals will be able to have with the movement not by insinuating anti-whiteness, but by placing them into an "all or nothing" situation. Either the white liberal's love for Black humanity is true, and he will do the necessary work to eradicate anti-Blackness, or it is not, and the white liberal will choose to remain comfortable by speaking of an "equality" that necessitates that blacks find their way into white society, thus freeing him from committing to the social and rhetorical labor of de-structuring racism.

Contrary to what a social reorganization looks like, the real work and the merit of a social movement is determined by whether that movement has the capacity to attack the sources of inequality instead of addressing individual Black and white relationships on a surface level. Essentially, Carmichael is stating that racial relationships can only be changed once the world that determines the human method of forming relationships changes; members of society cannot address their individual biases and behaviors within their relationships and anticipate that racially skewed practices will crumble as an after-effect of "good people" moving into tainted institutions. Carmichael furthermore adds, "We don't know whether the white community will allow for that organizing, because once they do they must allow for organizing inside their own community" (Carmichael, 1966, p. 16). Black organization leads to white organization, and this organization means that systems of white power and privilege will be destroyed; in this sense, regardless of whether or not white communities decide to demolish the disenfranchisement of capitalism within their own communities, Carmichael predicts that once Black communities abandon society, that society is bound to self-destruct as a consequence of its reliance on creating a Black noncitizen to lock into poverty and social non-being. While the Black Power movement made the first, revolutionary call to action, it is ultimately, through the white society's

self-destruction, that Blacks will finally have the ability to exist without a battle against political and cultural oppression. Without that abdication of power, Blacks will continue to build an identity and cultural institutions, but they will not have the privilege of having that aspect of their humanity recognized by other Americans.

Because Carmichael is speaking to a majority-white audience and essentially requesting that they destroy a society that benefits them for the good of Black humanity or warning them that their destruction will be inevitable once pro-Black rhetoric becomes an ideology of social organization, he does not end this speech with the "BLACK POWER" chant that signifies the quintessential self-determination and militant thirst for change that initiated the movement in Greenwood, Mississippi. Instead, Carmichael's final words offer both a warning and an answer to his rhetorical question to the white audience of whether or not they can overcome their own racism: "If not, we have no choice but to say very clearly, 'Move on over, or we're going to move over you." (Carmichael, 1966, p. 21). By ending his speech on this militant, yet nonspecifically-action oriented note, Carmichael presents his audience with a choice: white liberals can either begin to engage with the psychological and social processes of acknowledging and eventually abdicating the power systems that they create for themselves, or they can continue to deny their social privilege and the humanity they deny to Blacks, thus making a future struggle to accept "Black Power" a self-inflicted punishment.

Conclusion

The Black Power movement, in continuing, will not be one that uses integrationist or nonviolent rhetoric that will allow white society to continue its refusal to respond to the oppression and impossible conditions that it has created for Black society. The absence of the chant indicates that Carmichael is not necessarily working to garner explicit group support for the Black Power movement.

Rather, by speaking to a white audience and using Black Power rhetoric to give a warning to white liberals, he is communicating the role that white liberals must play in decentralizing the white monopoly on social, political, and economic control. For the white audience, Black Power points out white society's failures, fallacies, and hypocrisies, guiding White Liberals towards restructuring the parts of white society that Black individuals have no power to change. Because it prioritizes what white society will undergo to atone for and eradicate racism, Black Power centralizeswhites and whiteness within the larger social consideration of race and power. Although "Black Power,"is both a cultural movement and a political and sociological tool that must

begin moving in opposition to the cultural and economic structures that benefit white society.

One unique facet of Black Power that separates its rhetoric from Afro-pessimist theory is the realism of its praxis; Carmichael makes no indication that his forecast society will fit into a clear definition of "post-racial", though it is clear that he is heavily advocating from the perspective for a world that is "post racist," in that it will no longer rely on anti-Blackness. The question of Black Power's rhetorical merit as a theory that encompasses Black ontology, economics, and the racial relationships within society lies just outside of Carmichael's speech. Carmichael theorizes material plans for Black communities and justifies the need for white society to bend enough to allow Black progression, but he fails to consider the long-term combination of a "Black" identity in a society that no longer conceptualizes "Blackness." The dualistic insistence that Blacks must come into existence while whites, especially, work to destroy the very society that created "Blackness" in the first place is paradoxical, but it suggests that Carmichael may truly wish for an end to anti-Blackness without an end to "Black" produced cultural institutions. The question, then, is whether the identity of "Blackness," indeed aided in the process of coming into being by the rhetorical work of Black power, can continue to exist within a society that no longer uses the conceptualization of Blackness to determine humanity or the distribution of socioeconomic capital. Nevertheless, the call for a reconceptualization of the societies that have been created in the aftermath of colonialism is a socially pessimistic conceptualization of race and liberation that gives Black Power rhetoric s dimension that expands beyond the invention of Blackness.

The role that Black Power played in centering Black identity and autonomy within civil rights and society made it impossible to disentangle "Black" as an identity, "Blackness" as a restrictive social and psychological construct, and society as the mechanism that materialized and projected an interiorizing context on Black individuals. Carmichael's "Black Power" speech is communi- cating that, because Blackness is the byproduct of white supremacy, the move towards civil rights must begin within white communities, as they are the origin point of the racism and classism that suppresses Blacks. Conceptualiza- tions of civil rights cannot, therefore, proceed according to an integrationist theory or with a methodology that entitles white society to "give" or legislate Black freedom. Black freedom in its truest sense, must emerge from the white world abdicating its cultural superiority and the collective material benefits that have accrued as a consequence of that superiority. Blackness itself is the foundation on which inhumanity is based and is, additionally, a piece of Afro-pessimist tradition that allows

Black Power rhetoric to make a jump from a rhetoric that is grounded in seeking the acceptance of the oppressor to one that thoroughly accounts for the oppressor's role in creating and potential to destroy an anti-Black society.

"Society" is a dynamic condition thatdetermines the permanent rejection of Blackness. This refusal is what makes Black Power so radically different from its contemporary freedom rhetoric and more in line with Afro-pessimist theory. A rhetoric that attempts to reconcile "Blackness" and "society,"is paradoxical and destined to result in a catastrophic failure. Black Power rhetoric, with its double-awareness of the Black and white interconnectedness that creates a continuous dialogue of a race-based society, is thus able to reconceptualize "liberation" as an earth-shattering paradigm shift. The responsibility of bringing this shift to fruition rests, in action, upon white society's recognition of Black humanity and its own historical reliance on the denial of Black humanity.

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Jacob Burkley

Employment and Income Following Intimate Partner Violence: Does Mental Health Moderate Negative Economic Outcomes?

Faculty Sponsor

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Abstract

Intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors are at great risk of negative economic outcomes. Previous research found that IPV survivors have higher prevalence rates for mental disorders like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Few studies have examined the effect of negative mental health on economic outcomes of IPV survivors. To fill this gap, we examined whether PTSD or depression severity moderated the relationship between IPV and negative economic outcomes among a sample of 190 help-seeking women. PTSD and depression severity were assessed using data from a cross-sectional study. Logistic regression was used to determine if depression or PTSD moderated the relationship between IPV and negative economic outcomes. Results showed that PTSD and depression were non-significant predictors for employment and income. No significant main effects were found for interactions between PTSD or depression on IPV. Results highlight potential for future research to utilize different methodologies and observe different samples.

Introduction

Affecting nearly 8.5 million women in the U.S. each year, intimate partner violence (IPV) has proven to be an epidemic across the nation. IPV is defined as an act of aggression committed by a romantic partner and is divided into three forms: emotional, physical, and sexual (Center of Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). IPV exposure can impact a victim's well-being, hindering their ability to seek treatment and obtain resources (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Campbell, 2002). Unanimously considered to be the most common consequence of IPV exposure is the development of mental health conditions. Survivors of IPV have an increased risk of meeting diagnosis for mental health conditions (Campbell, 2002). These include, but are not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety (Al-Modallal, 2012; Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Maskin et al., 2019; Stam, 2012; Beck et al., 2015). These conditions can be chronic, persisting for years after separation from the abusive partner (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Gerber et al., 2014).

Prevalence rates for mental health conditions are increased in IPV victims when compared to nonvictims. Observing prior research, we can determine which conditions are most prevalent. In a sample of 774 women survivors, Dichter et al. (2017) found that 53.8% women met diagnosis for a mental disorder one year after exposure. Among these, the most common were depression (34.1%) and PTSD (30%). This increased prevalence of PTSD and depression is further supported by multiple studies; depression and PTSD are reportedly more prevalent among IPV survivors (Campbell, 2002; Mechanic,Weaver, & Resick, 2008; Taftet al., 2009). These heightened prevalence rates are our motivation for utilizing PTSD and depression as our predictor variables.

The impact of IPV is not exclusive to mental health, however, as economic well-being is commonly affected by IPV exposure. Prior research has found that IPV survivors are at greater risk for negative economic outcomes, such as unemployment and job instability. These outcomes can lower a woman's financial earnings, further hindering a victim's ability to acquire treatment or resources (Crowne et al., 2011; Rayner-Thomas et al., 2016; Swanberg, Logan, & Macke, 2005; Tolman & Wang, 2005; Wathen et al.,2018). A gap in the literature remains, though, as past studies have focused primarily on economically disadvantaged women, such as welfare recipients or shelter seeking individuals (Adams et al., 2012; Adams et al., 2013; Bonomi et al., 2014; Dichter et al.,2017; Lindhorst, Oxford, & Gilllmore, 2007; Memiah et al., 2018; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg, Logan, & Macke, 2005; Tolman & Wang, 2005; von Eye & Bogat, 2006). These studies have found that low income can be a risk factor for future IPV exposure; women

who make lower incomes are seven times more likely to be exposed to IPV (Bonomi et al., 2014; Jordan, Campbell, & Follingstad, 2010). Due to this, steady employment is necessary to maintain income, lowering the barrier of access to resources for alleviating economic burdens.

Most importantly, employment can be a protective factor against revictimization, reducing the probability of experiencing future IPV exposure (Alsaker et al., 2007). Employment plays a crucial role in the lives of survivors, bringing in a steady flow of income while opening the door to various resources. However, prior research has scarcely focused on how mental health may influence a survivor's economic well-being. One study by Tolman and Rosen (2001) found that mental health problems acted as a barrier for women attaining employment. The current study seeks to explore this finding further and determine if mental health may influence the probability of negative economic outcomes. In order to determine if such an association exists, it is important to understand how mental health is impacted by IPV exposure.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and IPV

PTSD is a mental illness that affects 1 out of every 11 people each year (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2017). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM-5; APA, 2013) identifies four main symptom clusters that make up a PTSD diagnosis: 1) alterations in reactivity and arousal, 2) avoidance of trauma-related stimuli, 3) intrusion symptoms, and 4) negative alterations in cognition and mood (APA, 2013). Stemming from what is known about PTSD in the current literature, PTSD symptoms are a common consequence of intimate partner violence and are increasingly more prevalent among victims compared to nonvictims (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Becker, Stuewig, & McCloskey, 2010; O'Campo et al., 2006; Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006). Across multiple samples, PTSD was highly prevalent following victimization; follow-up appointments find victims still experiencing PTSD symptoms up to a year after abuse. Symptoms may persist for years after the abuse, with it being chronic in several cases (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Campbell, 2002; Golding, 1999; Gerber et al., 2004; O'Campo et al., 2006; Pico-Alfonso, 2006). Of those who suffer from PTSD, symptoms are found to be more severe after separation from the abusive partner. This is opposed to less severe symptoms while still romantically involved with their abusive partners (Campbell, 2002; Dutton et al., 1999; Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006; Wathen, MacGregor, & MacQuarrie, 2018).

Many limitations exist within the current literature. First, studies have divided focus on specific forms of IPV rather than quantifying IPV as a

composite score (Al-Modallal, 2012; Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006; Maskin et al., 2019). Identifying the differences in PTSD between each form of IPV is beneficial. However, significant overlap between the different forms of abuse has been observed. Assessing IPV as a composite can provide findings that are more generalizable (Basile et al., 2004; Becker et al., 2010). Previous studies have also limited the IPV experienced to be within a 1-year period (Alsaker et al., 2007; Maskin et al., 2019). Knowing PTSD has the potential to be a long-lasting condition, this limits our understanding of the long-term effects. As a highly prevalent consequence of IPV, PTSD symptoms can impair the daily function of survivors. Taking this into consideration, we can delve further into how PTSD may compound with other mental health conditions. As depression has an equal prevalence in those exposed to IPV, we have investigated the literature to determine its impact.

Depression and IPV

Depression, as defined by the DSM-5 (APA, 2013), is a mood disorder characterized by symptoms such as loss of pleasure, depressed mood, and reduced energy. In order to meet a diagnosis, these symptoms must be present for two weeks (APA, 2013). One in six people will experience depression every year with it being more common amongst women (APA, 2017). This is consistent with heightened prevalence in cases of IPV exposure being more common in victims relative to nonvictims (Al-Modallal, 2012; Golding, 1999). Evidence for this increased prevalence in IPV survivors has been a key finding in previous research. Across 18 unique studies, Golding (1999) observed a prevalence rate of 47.6% for victims who met a diagnosis for a depressive disorder. An equally high prevalence rate was found in a sample of 75 female victims; 45.3% of this sample had present depressive symptoms (Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006). Nixon, Resick, and Nishith (2004) also observed a high prevalence of depression in their sample of 142 female victims. Of this sample, 52% percent met criteria for major depressive disorder.

Along with increased prevalence of depression in survivors, many indications for its prognosis have been found in prior research. Depression symptoms tend to be more severe immediately after separation from an abusive partner, seeing a decline in severity over time (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Campbell, 2002). Other studies, however, have shown depressive symptoms can remain for years after separation, with some cases found to be chronic (Gerber et al., 2004). This might be dependent on the severity of the abuse, however, as Alsaker, Moen, and Kristoffersen (2007) found that victims who experienced more severe IPV experienced greater depressive symptoms. This has led many to view depression as a leading cause of impairment in the daily functioning of IPV survivors (Beck et al., 2015; Campbell, 2002;

Pico-Alfonso, 2006). Like with PTSD, studies have been limited to observing depression severity within a 1-year period (Al-Modallal, 2012; Alsaker et al., 2007; Crowne et al., 2007; Zlotnick, Johnson, & Kohn, 2006). Since we know depression can be persistent, and is as common as PTSD in IPV survivors, determining how it may affect victims over time could prove beneficial. With this knowledge, we can begin to question how PTSD and depression might influence economic outcomes in those exposed to IPV. We must first understand how economic outcomes can be affected by the abuse, however.

Economic Outcomes after Victimization

Employment

Many studies find that employment can be impacted by IPV exposure. Victims of IPV can be at greater risk for long-term unemployment (Anderson & Saunders, 2003; Banyard et al., 2011; Maskin et al., 2019; McFarlane et al., 2000; Tolman & Wang, 2005). In addition to a greater likelihood for unemployment, IPV victimization can negatively impact multiple factors within the workplace. These include job satisfaction, increased absence, reduced work ethic, and decreased job stability. (Banyard et al., 2011; Maskin et al., 2019; Shephard & Pence, 1988; Tolman & Wang, 2005). Similarly, in interviews with 19 domestic violence victims, Moe and Bell (2004) found many victims expressed having less available income, which then limited their access to additional resources.

Alsaker, Moen, Baste, and Morken (2016) highlight the necessity for stable employment, finding that it helps build self-esteem and maintain income. This was reinforced by as Swanberg and Logan (2005) who found that work resources such as Employee Assistance Programs, paid time-off from work, and job relocation helped maintain job retention among female victims of IPV. A limitation posed by the current literature is the fact that samples usually involve economically disadvantaged women. For instance, Tolman and Wang (2005) focused on a sample who were reliant on welfare systems. Many women affected by IPV might not qualify for such systems, making this finding difficult to generalize.

Income

There is evidence that income, like employment, can be affected by IPV victimization, yet the current findings are limited. Adams et al. (2013) found that 12 months after IPV exposure, total income for female survivors was significantly decreased relative to non-abused women. However, they claim this finding could be due to participants' education levels which limited

their ability to acquire higher paying work. Income was also found to be significantly decreased for female survivors when compared to nonvictims by Maskin et al. (2019), but this study focused on women in higher paid positions, so the findings are not generalizable. This study is opposite of the majority of prior studies, which observed lower-income IPV survivor samples (Adams et al., 2012; Adams et al., 2013; Al-Modallal, 2012; Memiah et al., 2018; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg, Logan, & Macke, 2005; Tolman & Wang, 2005; von Eye & Bogat, 2006). Many found that lower income is a risk factor for future IPV exposure (Adams et al., 2012; Adams et al., 2013, Anderson & Saunders, 2003). The current study contains a sample that is economically diverse, hoping to fill in the gap within the literature.

Relationship Between Mental Health and Economic Outcomes

A significant relationship between mental health and economic outcomes in IPV victims has been found in many studies. Al-Modallal (2012) noted that income and employment status were significant predictors of negative mental health in victims. Women who earned lower incomes or were unemployed experienced more severe mental health problems. Anderson and Saunders (2003) found that women who struggle financially see more severe mental health problems compared to women who are economically advantaged. These studies do not observe whether negative mental health can influence the outcome of these economic factors. Currently, research with a focus on this influence is limited to a single study. Lindhorst, Oxford, and Gillmore (2007) sought to determine if psychological distress moderated the effect that IPV had on unemployment. Moderation variables are variables that influence the strength of an association between an independent and dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Lindhorst, Oxford, and Gillmore (2007) noted a correlation between unemployment and psychological distress. They did not define what psychological distress was. This lack of focus on a single disorder limits us being able to generalize these findings.

The Current Study

The goal of the current study is to identify any potential moderating effect that PTSD and depression severity may have on the association between IPV exposure and economic outcomes. Of the studies that have examined this association thus far, mental health problems seem to play an integral role. Evidence for mental health as an influence determining victims' employment status has been found; the more severe the mental health problems, the higher chance one has of being unemployed (Lindhorst, Oxford, & Gillmore, 2007). With this in mind, we predict that PTSD will moderate

the relationship between IPV and employment. Similarly, we predict that depression will moderate the relationship between IPV and employment. We assume that a more severe presence of these disorders will result in a greater chance of a victim being unemployed. We assume income, as it is reliant on steady employment, may be impacted similarly by IPV exposure. Assuming that income is linked with employment, negative mental health may play an influential role in determining a survivor's earnings. Thus, we predict that both depression and PTSD will affect the relationship between IPV and income.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 190 female survivors of IPV who participated in The Athena Project. The Athena Project is a mental health research center at the University of Memphis that provides free and confidential assessment for women over the age of 18 who have suffered from IPV. Participants were recruited through community outreach events, informational flyers placed around the Memphis metropolitan area, or from referrals from other professional services. Women were included in the study if their IPV experience met criterion A2 for PTSD diagnosis. Criterion A2 is characterized by intense horror, hopelessness, fear, and presence of a perceived threat (APA, 2013).

The sample was selected from a larger pool of 541 total participants. Study participants were excluded if they exhibited psychosis ($n= 2$), were cognitively impaired ($n= 9$), were unreliable reporters ($n= 6$), or had not experienced IPV ($n= 22$). As the current sample was concerned with effects experienced after separation from an abusive partner, 67 women were excluded as they were still romantically involved with the abuser at the time of the assessment. Participants were included if they were employed either full time or part time. Descriptive statistics for the sample can be found in Table 1.

Measures

Dependent Variables: Employment

A demographic questionnaire was used to determine income level and employment status for the purposes of the current study. The employment variable on the questionnaire is categorical and divided into six categories: full-time, part-time, unemployed, disabled, homemaking, and retired. These categories were dichotomized as either being employed (consisting of full-

time and part-time) or unemployed.

Dependent Variables: Income

The income variable was split into 8 categories: $0-10,000, $10-20,000, $20-30,000, $30-40,000, $40-50,000, $50-60,000, $60-70,000, and $70,000 or above. Income was dichotomized: those who made under $30,000 and those who made $30,000 or more. There was also a secondary reporting option where the participant could estimate monthly income if they could not answer the original question. If participants decided to use the secondary estimation option, we fit the estimation into the appropriate income category.

Independent Variable: Intimate Partner Violence

The Conflict Tactics Scale-Revised (CTS-2; Straus, Hamby, McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) is a self-report questionnaire that measures 39 different behaviors related to intimate partner violence. It comprises 78 questions that are divided into five subscales: negotiation, physical assault, sexual coercion, injury, and psychological aggression. Each question is asked in the context of the respondent (how many times have you done this?) and the abusive partner (how many times did they do this?). Respondents answered these questions based on their experiences during the past year. Scores ranged from 0 (this has never happened before) to 7 (not in the past year, but it did happen before). Scores were totaled in order to obtain a total IPV severity score. For the purposes of the current study, only the physical assault and sexual coercion subscales were utilized in the total score, as the psychological aggression subscale is less internally consistent in comparison to the other subscales (α = .79; Straus et al., 1996). The other CTS-2 subscales have demonstrated good internal consistency (α = .86 -.95) and good construct and discriminant validity (Straus et al., 1996). Within the current sample, the CTS-2 demonstrated strong internal consistency for both the physical aggression (α = .91) and sexual coercion (α = .87) subscales.

The Psychological Maltreatment of Women Inventory –Short Form (PMWI-SF; Tolman, 1989) is a self-report measure that focuses on psychological maltreatment of women by their abusive partners. The measure consists of 14 items that are asked within the context of the past six months. Participants are asked to answer based on action frequency (1 = never to 5 = very frequently). The PMWI-SF evaluates two domains of psychological maltreatment: domination-isolation (ICC = .94) and emotional-verbal (ICC = .92; Tolman, 1989). The PMWI-SF has demonstrated good internal reliability and strong discriminant validity (Tolman, 1999). The PWMI-SF total score was used in place of the CTS-2 psychological aggression for the

current study. The PMWI-SF demonstrated strong internal consistency for both the emotional-verbal ($α$ = .91) and domination-isolation ($α$ = .91) subscales within the current sample.

To compute an IPV composite score, the total for the utilized CTS-2 subscales was summed and standardized. The same was done with the PMWI total score. These two scores were summed and standardized to create the IPV composite score and was used in the analysis.

Moderator Variables: Depression

The Anxiety Disorders Interview Schedule (ADIS) for DSM-5 (with DSM-IV coding) is a semi-structured interview administered by trained doctoral students that assesses the frequency and distress of mood, anxiety, and other externalizing mental disorders. Due to the majority of our sample having completed the ADIS using criteria from the DSM-IV, we used the DSM-IV criteria for both major depressive disorder and dysthymia (known as persistent depression disorder in the DSM-5) to remain consistent with our assessment of PTSD (see below). Clinician-rated severity scores from 0 (no symptoms, no distress or interference) to 8 (met criteria for diagnosis, extremely distressed, severe interference) were used to determine depression severity within the current study. Scores from both major depression disorder (MDD) and dysthymia/persistent depression disorder (PDD) were summed to compute a total depression severity score. While favorable inter-rater reliability was found for many of the disorders (Brown, Di Nardo, Lehman, & Campbell, 2001), other studies have noted lower reliability, ranging from good to poor (Gordon & Heimberg, 2011; Rutter & Brown, 2015). Inter-rater reliability for the current study was assessed by a secondary clinician through video-recording (approx. 24% of study sample randomly selected) using intraclass correlation coefficients. Agreement on clinician coding was strong for major depressive disorder (ICC = .91) and relatively strong for dysthymia (ICC = .80).

Moderator Variables: PTSD

The Clinician Administered PTSD Scale (CAPS; Blake et al., 1995) is a structured interview conducted by trained interviewers to assess PTSD symptoms over the past month. Similar to the ADIS, the majority of our sample completed the CAPS using the DSM-IV PTSD criteria. Thus, we opted to use data utilizing the DSM-IV coding to assess a greater sample population. Notable differences exist between the DSM-IV and DSM-5 criteria. The most important difference is the inclusion of only three symptom clusters in the DSM-IV criteria (intrusion and re-experiencing, avoidance, and emotional

numbing, and heightened physiological reactivity). Initially, participants were asked to describe their IPV experience and to rate feelings of fear, helplessness, and feelings of potential injury based on a Likert-typescale from 0 (not at all) to 100 (extreme). A score above 50 indicated the event met criterion A. Frequency and intensity ratings were collected for each symptom. Frequency ratings ranged from 0 (symptom never occurs) to 4 (symptom occurs daily) and intensity ratings ranged from 0 (no distress) to 4 (extreme distress). The duration for the symptoms and daily impairment were assessed. Both sets of scores were summed to provide a total severity ranging from 0 to 136. Higher scores indicated more severe PTSD symptoms. The CAPS demonstrated good psychometric properties for its DSM-IV coding. Inter-rater reliability for the total severity score was strong (ICC = .97; Weathers et al., 2018). Strong convergent validity was found for the CAPS-IV total severity score ($r = .83$; Weathers et al., 2018). CAPS interviews were video-recorded and then assessed by a secondary clinician for reliability (approx. 24% of study sample randomly selected). Inter-rater reliability was assessed using intraclass correlation coefficients. Reliability was very strong (ICC = .95) for IPV-related PTSD within the current sample.

Procedure

All procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board. Inclusion into the study was determined by a confidential prescreening. If participants were eligible, an informed consent was provided at the initial assessment. Following consent, assessments were completed on average in two to three visits and conducted by trained clinicians. Upon completion, participants were provided with treatment referrals based on needs for additional professional services.

Analytic Strategy

A binary logistic regression analysis was performed using SPSS Version 26. Logistic regression was used to determine the odds of a given outcome occurring caused by the predictor variables. Negative mental health (depression and PTSD severity) and IPV were used as predictor variables. Income and employment status were used as outcome variables. Four unique models were analyzed with negative mental health and IPV severity being predictor variables for economic outcomes. Interactions between IPV and negative mental health were investigated to determine if a moderation effect existed. Each mental health predictor consisted of two models: one for employment and another for income. There was no evidence of outliers or issues with normality or linearity for our predictor variables. A square root transformation was made for the IPV composite variable to acquire a preferable skewness

and kurtosis. Fit was tested using the Hosmer-Lemeshow test. Nagelkerke's R-squared was used to analyze the variance of the dependent variable in association with the independent variables.

Results: Primary Analyses:

PTSD and Employment

This model demonstrated poor fit, (X^2(8, N= 190) = 5.66, p= .69), with PTSD accounting for little variance on employment status, (Nagelkerke R^2= .006). Correct classification for participants being employed was 100% and 0% for participants who were unemployed, identical for the employment model for depression. Table 3 contains regression coefficients, odds ratios, and chi-square tests for the model. PTSD was a nonsignificant predictor of unemployment, with participants who experienced any level of PTSD having an equal chance to be employed or unemployed, (expB = 1.02, p = .44). This was the case with IPV, with participants who experienced any level of abuse having an equal chance of being employed or unemployed, (expB = 1.05, p = .54). No main effect was found for the interaction between PTSD and IPV on employment, (expB = 1.00, p = .57).

PTSD and Income

The model demonstrated a poor fit, (X^2(8, N= 190) = 14.13, p= .79), with PTSD accounting for little variance in income, (Nagelkerke R2= .028). Correct classification for participants making under $30,000 was 92.7% and 12.5% for those making above $30,000. Table 3 contains regression coefficients, odds ratios, and chi-square tests Participants who experienced any level of PTSD have an equal chance to make either lower or higher income, expB = .966, p = .06. IPV was also found to be a nonsignificant predictor, with participants who have experienced any level of abuse equally as likely to make lower or higher income, expB = .920, p = .26. No main effect was found for the interaction between PTSD and IPV on income, expB = 1.00, p = .08.

Depression and Employment

The model demonstrated a poor fit, (X^2(8, N= 190) = 11.89, p= .16), with depression accounting for very little variance in employment status, (Nagelkerke R^2= .010). Cases were over-classified into the employment group due to it being the majority, with correct classification being 100% employed women and 0% unemployed women. Cases, therefore, were over-classified into the employment group due to it being the majority. Regression coefficients,

odds ratios, and chi-square tests for the model are reported in Table 2. Participants suffering from any level of depressive symptoms were equally likely to be employed or unemployed, (expB = 1.20, p = .50). IPV severity as a predictor was insignificant, with those experiencing any level of abuse equally likely to be employed or unemployed, (expB = 1.04, p = .39). Finally, no main effect was found for the interaction between depression severity and IPV on employment, (expB = .985, p = .34).

Depression and Income

The whole sample was included in the analysis for depression and income. This model yielded similar results to the prior depression model. It demonstrated poor fit, X^2(8, N= 190) = 4.87, p= .77, with depression accounting for even less variance in income outcomes, (Nagelkerke R^2= .009). Correct classification for participants making $30,000 or under was 95.5% and 6.3% for those making above $30,000. Table 2 shows regression coefficients, odds ratios, and chi-square tests for the model. Participants who have experienced any level of depressive symptoms are equally likely to make lower or higher income, (expB = 1.01, p = .94). This is similar for IPV, as participants who have experienced any level of abuse are equally likely to make lower or higher income, (expB = 1.04, p= .47). Additionally, no main effect was found for the interaction between depression and IPV on income, (expB = .994, p = .65).

Results: Secondary Analyses

PTSD

Due to missing data, 186 participants were included in the secondary analyses. Secondary analyses were conducted controlling for elapsed time in our PTSD models. The model for employment demonstrated poor fit, (X^2(8, N= 186) = 7.84, p= .45), and accounted for very little variance, (Nagelkerke R^2= .012). Furthermore, elapsed time was not a significant predictor in employment outcomes. Participants who reported lower or higher time away were equally likely to be employed or unemployed, (expB = .998, p = .38). Findings were similar in the income model, which demonstrated poor fit, (X^2(8, N= 186) = 8.42, p= .39), yet seemed to account for more variance than the primary model, Nagelkerke R^2= .043. Still, elapsed time was not a significant predictor of income in this model. Participants who reported lower or higher time awayfrom workwere equally likely to make low or high income, (expB = .1.01, p = .09).

Depression

Secondary analyses controlling for elapsed time were also conducted for our depression models. When controlling for elapsed time, the depression and *employment* model demonstrated poor fit, ($X^2(8, N= 186) = 10.12, p= .26$), yet accounted for more variance than the primary model, (Nagelkerke $R^2=$ .023). Elapsed time was a nonsignificant predictor for unemployment, with those reporting low or high time away being equally likely to be employed or unemployed, ($expB = .997, p = .31$). Findings were similar for the income model. The model demonstrated poor fit, ($X^2(8, N= 186) = 6.72, p= .57$) but accounted for more variance than the primary model, (Nagelkerke $R^2=$ .027). Elapsed time was not a significant predictor of income level. Those reporting low or high time away were equally likely to make lower or higher income, ($expB = 1.01, p = .10$).

Discussion

PTSD and depression severity were nonsignificant predictors for both unemployment and lower income and did not increase the odds of being unemployed or making lower income. Similarly, IPV was not a significant predictor of either unemployment or low income in both the PTSD and depression models. Additionally, secondary analyses were conducted controlling for elapsed time away from an abusive partner. Time elapsed was found to be a nonsignificant predictor of both employment and income.

Unlike the prior findings of Lindhorst, Oxford, and Gillmore (2007), negative mental health did not moderate the association between IPV severity and employment. Because Lindhorst et al. (2007) focused on general distress and not a specific condition, it is difficult to compare their results to those of the current study. One consideration is that as more time passes following separation, severity of mental health conditions may diminish. This would be consistent with prior findings, as Anderson and Saunders (2003) state these effects can last up to 3 years with decline over time. Alsaker et al. (2016) found that the workplace allowed women to receive positive feedback which helped rebuild self-perception. This is supported by Banyard, Potter, and Turner (2011) who state that survivors suffering from mental conditions benefit from job-based support programs. With the majority of our sample being employed, they could have had more access to job-related programs. This in turn may have helped ease symptom severity in victims. This study was limited to looking exclusively at data from help-seeking women. Data from help-seeking populations are not generalizable to the wider population. Mechanic, Weaver, and Resick (2008) studied a help-seeking sample and and found that negative mental health could result from a lack of financial resources.

Similarly, we did not find IPV to be a significant predictor of unemployment. These findings do not align with prior research. Crowne et al. (2011) found both short and long-term effects on employment caused by IPV. A benefit to their study, however, was its longitudinal design. As our study was cross-sectional, we were unable to assess women over multiple time periods. Tolman and Wang's (2005) study was also longitudinal, finding IPV exposure predicted higher rates of unemployment. Their sample consisted of women receiving assistance from welfare systems. Our sample was not exclusively women seeking governmental assistance. Therefore, we cannot determine if women who qualified for such systems would present different results. McFarlane et al. (2011) found that more severe IPV predicted unemployment in their sample. However, since a portion of McFarlane et al.'s (2011) sample had sustained injuries from the abuse which prevented them from working, it is difficult to compare these findings with the current sample. The present methodology led to discrepant findings when compared to prior studies.

IPV was not a significant predictor of negative income, similar to employment. Prior literature was not replicated. Adams,et al. (2013) found that IPV predicted decreased income in survivors. However, this study focused on a lower income sample. The current sample was more economically diverse which could explain why our findings do not align. Additionally, Adams et al.'s (2013) sample comprised women receiving government assistance. As we did not look at government assistance exclusively, we could not determine if individuals qualifying for these systems would provide different results. Maskin et al. (2019) saw decreased income in female survivors of IPV. This sample, however, consisted of women in higher-paid positions. Our sample was economically diverse, making it understandable as to why we did not replicate their findings. Future research should seek to integrate a broad range of income brackets to make the findings more generalizable.

Limitations

The current study has several limitations. First, this study had a cross-sectional design, meaning data was obtained at one time period. This prevents us from knowing any potential longitudinal effects. Second, participants who were still romantically involved with their abuser were excluded. Determining how employment or income may be impacted before separation can give insight into whether long-term effects exist. Third, the sample consisted of help-seeking women who had either contacted the clinic or been referred by other professional associations. Help-seeking populations tend to have more severe symptoms compared to the general population, making it difficult to generalize our findings. Many individuals who suffer from IPV may face barriers that prevent them from seeking help. These include judgment

from peers, embarrassment and shame, and general stigma (Overstreet & Quinn, 2013). Lastly, the sample consists of individuals in a location that has a lower average income. Furthermore, the sample consisted mainly of Caucasian and African Americans. These results may differ if analyzed in a different location characterized by a more ethnically varied income range and a more diverse sample.

Implications

Despite not finding evidence for negative mental health having a moderating effect on the association between IPV and negative economic variables, there are some important implications to mention. The current study focused on post-separation from an abusive partner. Perhaps the influence of negative mental health may be stronger while survivors are still romantically involved with their abusive partner. So, for these women, abuse committed by the partner may lead to a higher chance of being unemployed or making less income.

Future Research

Future research has ample opportunity to expand on the current study. First, identifying if additional types of mental disorders (e.g., general anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia) are significant moderators in the relationship between IPV severity and economic variables is a natural evolution of the current question. Second, a different research design could look at different aspects of the relationship. A cross-sectional design could look at comparisons between victims separated from their abusive partner and those still romantically involved. Furthermore, a longitudinal study could grant a better look at the relationship between IPV, mental disorders, and employment/income over time. This could determine if negative mental health is more detrimental while still romantically involved with the abuser as opposed to after separation. Third, including male survivors of IPV could identify how they are impacted relative to female survivors. Lastly, testing other factors (e.g., education level, race, number of children) as moderators of the association between IPV and negative economic variables expand this line of research and illuminate other factors that may have a stronger influence on this association. In terms of economic outcome variables, using other variables such as government assistance and reactions to a job (e.g., job satisfaction, safety at work) could help identify common problems in economically disadvantaged IPV survivors.

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Appendix

Race	N	%
African American	71	37.6
Caucasian	100	52.6
Hispanic	3	01.6
Asian	3	01.6
Other	12	06.3
Did not report	1	00.5

Education Level	N	%
Elementary	3	01.6
High school	18	09.5
Some college	81	42.6
2-year college	17	08.9
4-year college	39	20.5
some graduate	7	03.7
2-year advanced	13	06.8
Graduate	12	06.3

Employment	N	%
Full-time	72	37.9
Part-time	65	33.2
Unemployed	53	27.9

Income	N	%
Below 10,000	37	19.5
10-20,000	43	22.6
20-30,000	30	15.8
30-40,000	21	11.1
40-50,000	18	09.5
50-60,000	11	05.8
60-70,000	15	07.9
>70,000	15	07.9

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Model 1-- Employment			Model 2-- Income		
Variable	**B**	**p**	**Odds**	**B**	**p**	**Odds**
Constant	-1.31	.021	.271	-.540	.302	.583
Depression	.112	.500	1.20	.012	.939	1.01
IPV	.043	.393	1.05	.035	.467	1.04
IPVx Depression	-.015	.338	.985	-.006	.653	.994
Nagelkerke R-Square	.010			.009		
Chi-Square	1.293	*df*=3	*p*=.731	1.272	*df*= 3	*p*= .736

Table 2. Logistic Regression of Depression as a Moderator on the Association Between Intimate Partner Violence and Income and Employment

Notes: IPV = intimate partner violence. IPVxDepression indicates the interaction variable. Statistical significance at p<0.05.

	Model 1-- Employment			Model 2-- Income		
Variable	**B**	**p**	**Odds**	**B**	**p**	**Odds**
Constant	1.53	.043	.271	-.571	.407	.583
PTSD	.015	.444	1.20	-.035	.063	1.01
IPV	.047	.536	1.05	-.087	.225	1.04
IPVx Depression	-.001	.566	.999	.003	.077	.994
Nagelkerke R-Square	.006			.028		
Chi-Square	.814	*df*=3	*p*=.846	4.05	*df*= 3	*p*= .257

Table 3. Logistic Regression of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder as a Moderator on the Association Between Intimate Partner Violence and Income and Employment

Notes: IPV = intimate partner violence. IPVxDepression indicates the interaction variable. Statistical significance at p<0.05.

Clarisse de Jesus earned a B.A. in communication studies with a minor in sociology in Spring 2021. Clarisse has been very involved on campus serving as the president of Lambda Pi Eta honor society in the communication department, as an Honors College Ambassador, and as a member of the executive boards of several other organizations on campus. She presented this project at the 2021 Southern States Communication Association Conference. In 2021, she won the Joseph R. Riley award for the Helen Hardin Honors College. After completing her bachelor's degree, Clarisse plans to work at a non-profit company working in the fundraising and project management sector.

Clarisse de Jesus

The Rise of Live Streaming: Exploring the Ways in Which We Cultivate Relationships Online vs. Offline

Faculty Sponsor

Dr. Lori Stallings

Abstract

Previous research has studied parasocial relationships with television bonds and how this one-sided relationship affects the users. This study examines how these bonds translate to the rise of live-streaming— specifically on the Twitch platform. Moreover, it explores the bonds made from user to user as well as from user to streamer. This study seeks to look into how bonds are created online versus offline and how they could be intertwined. By using the parasocial relationship theory paired with the idea of relationship maintenance, the research indicated trends in how users created and maintained a relationship as well as how men and women used the platform. The consensus was that users felt that using Twitch strengthened their relationships offline but did not help create relationships online.

Introduction

A study conducted at the University of Washington studied gaming effects in conjunction with burn patients at the Harborview Burn Center. The goal was to examine how a virtual game can combat pain. Researchers gave these patients an interactive snowball fight game called Snow World. After playing, patients reported feeling so immersed in the game that their pain decreased by 30% to 50%. The fascination with gameplay and its impact on lives has spiraled into this research. This study seeks to look at how gameplay can positively impact someone's life. Looking into how playing games can potentially change people. That is where live-streaming and the Twitch platform comes into play. This study is conducted around this platform since it has been noted as one of the leading broadcasting platforms within the last five years according to Twitch metrics. It has garnered so much attention due to its interaction and engagement as well as its accessibility and diversity. When looking on the website, you see that gameplay is really only half of its content. A large portion of the streams people flock to are not related to gaming, but activities such as cooking, drawing, and vlogging. According to a study done at the University of Florida, the platform reaches up to 15 million viewers per day so its users can interact on different chats and connect with people in real-time.

It is important to study gaming and the impacts that it has on people as the industry has expanded so much in the last 20 years; online gaming and the community surrounding video games have become massive markets. The evolution of gaming has spawned from DVDs and consoles to having games directly on one's phone. Accessibility is one unique feature that revolutionized the market. The video game industry is increasing every year with reports explaining that by 2025 it could become a 300 billion dollar market (Koksal, 2019). With the increase of money to be made and the expansion of the community, online video games have become a large part of people's everyday lives (especially young people). Not only are more people playing video games than ever before, but more people are also watching them on online streaming platforms such as Twitch and Mixer. They have developed and created dedicated fan bases for the popular celebrity-type figures using the platforms. These different forms of social interaction have led many college-aged individuals to go online to form friendships and engage with people in the online world as opposed to the offline world. This study seeks to find the connection between time spent forming relationships in the online world and the effects this has on social interaction in the offline world. By examining ways in which people interact within the video game community, the study sheds light on the positive and negative effects coming from different forms of online social interaction.

There are three important conceptual definitions related to the study that provide a more detailed understanding of the relationships within the online community. Online Streaming Platforms (OSP), as mentioned earlier, include such sites as Twitch, Mixer, and YouTube. These sites have features that differentiate them from each other but provide a common theme. There is a way for content creators to live-stream their videos to an audience. Along with the ability to live-stream their content, the sites provide a chat feature for audience members to engage in the content as it is going on and to have discussions with other members of the audience or ask direct questions to the content creator as well. Oftentimes, there are avenues for audience members to send money to content creators as a way of getting more attention drawn to themselves. Parasocial relationships pertain to the relationships formed between content creators and audience members. A parasocial relationship is one in which one party involved extends more emotional energy and effort than the other and has more commitment to the relationship. In the case of the content creator and audience member relationship, there is disproportionate participation on the side of the audience member as they know more about the person streaming. The last concept deals with relationship maintenance, this deals with actions and behaviors one does to keep the relationships they currently have. This is important because this study will delve into the mechanics that go into how users keep relationships and how they are trying to create relationships, whether it be online or offline.

Literature Review

Since the live-streaming community and industry are relatively new, much of the research conducted has only spanned the last ten years. For this reason, the literature review is taking a thematic approach to the organization of research. The major themes have been divided into parasocial relationships, relationship maintenance, and the social aspect of gaming. The topic of video games relates to one's ability to communicate on and offline. It will also look at gamers' parasocial relationships that are cultivated when watching live-streams and the data covered on how it might alter their attributes and in turn affect their relationships.

Themes With Connecting Online

Gaming and online social connections lead to an easy transition between purely online social relationships and offline relationships. This can be seen in the social aspect of video games in general and how playing video games can be a social activity (Consalvo 2017). The researchers found that even single-player video games can provide a social experience. This quasi-social

activity is important to the study since it occurs regardless of whether users view themselves as part of the gaming community or not. By playing video games, the player benefits from the perceived social interaction. A similar study conducted by Stone (2019), delves into the gamer identity and the attributes attached to someone who identifies as a gamer. Stone found it was more likely for someone to self-identify as a gamer if they had a larger friend group who played games as well. Stone also found that as the years progress the term 'gamer' is becoming less negative and holding more positive connotations, possibly a result of the growing gaming culture which is becoming more widespread and more common. This study also points to the fact that gaming can very well be a strong bonding element among friend groups offline as well. Another study conducted by Diwanji et al. (2020) looks at how behavior is affected by the use of Twitch; this study will exaimine behavioral factors from a communicative point of view.

Gaps in Literature/ Themes of Negative Impacts

The act of gaming has become a form of escape that gamers are turning to and creating a shift in how they relate to others offline. This current study fills in gaps within this research project that do not identify what seems to be missing from online relationships but exists more in their offline relationships. Another study by Pietersen et al. (2018) follows this up and supports it with a similar conclusion. It states that many of the participants in the study reported that they felt their online connections were important to them and a great way to socialize, however, to create stronger bonds they preferred offline face to face interaction. This could indicate that while online social interaction is helpful and a good way for many to stay connected, it can be used as a temporary replacement but not a full substitute for offline interactions. Again, the gap in the study by Pietersen et al. (2018) of why people feel their offline bonds are stronger is a topic that this current study will seek to fill in. Legkauskas & Gintarė (2018) reported that there is a difference in how genders engage in relationship maintenance and how that can translate to this research on live-streaming.

There is increasing importance to determine the positive benefits that can be found from online gaming. A different study by Lobel et al. (2017) seemed to find a connection to depression and anxiety in children who played video games excessively. This is important to this current study being done since there is a balance between spending time online being positive and spending online having negative impacts on an individual. Another research study by Chen & Chang (2019) came to a similar conclusion, and found that excessive gaming with university students could lead to bad coping mechanisms and possible negative attributes. This seems to imply that gaming

can cause detriments to offline relationships. The intended focus of the study is college-aged adults; it is important to note that excessive gaming during early development is linked to negative attributes. Tian et al. (2020) showed that the impacts that video games and their effects on the individual can lead to changes in social online bonds. This study observed college-aged students and the changes in their behavior based on the game they were playing and the effects on their interactions. The study shows how offline attributes like shyness shifted. They were more likely to be aggressive during game play. Chen & Chang (2019) take a similar approach of connecting the offline and online world, and whether these attributes that happen online are likely to transition offline as well.

Livestreaming

Livestreaming has become a way for parasocial relationships to be formed and that applies to the impact of a gamer's offline engagement. Parallels between television personalities and live-streaming can be drawn in the similar parasocial bond that is formed with the audiences and the personalities. For this reason, Jahng (2019) looked at a similar discourse that examined the connection between reality television stars and the cultivation effect the shows have. The research observed that the more reality television one watched the more likely one was to engage on social media and to extend participation outside of simply watching. This research examines whether or not parasocial connections online can bring lasting impacts on social interactions in the offline world. Research done by Lim et al. (2020) looks into viewers' wishful identification of the streaming personalities that they are watching. This research focuses on live streams and parasocial relationships. It shows that audience members watching have a desire to have some of the traits of the people that they watch often; traits that could be learned and that could bleed over into their offline relationships. A study by Chen & Chang (2019) looks at the reasons why people find themselves watching and engaging in these streams and the viewers' potential benefits and potential downfalls of participating. In the study, Chen & Chang found a direct correlation with loneliness and the need for escapism in the Twitch viewers that they surveyed. The final study, done by Woodcock (2019), examines the media personalities themselves and specifically studies Twitch streamers and their abilities to be social media influencers. The study talks about how streamers are in a good position to influence people and get business benefits.

Previous literature about this topic has shown the rise of live-streaming and how it impacted society within the past five years. Delving into this topic, the previous literature questions how watching live-streams can be pivotal in influencing and communicating with others. It also investigates the variables that can lead one to connect or reach out online and offline. Therefore, the following research question poses the idea of how live-streaming can impact the way users communicate with each other online and how that can bleed into their offline bonds.

> **RQ:** Do participants on Twitch feel the community within the platform has made it easier to connect with others offline?

Methods

The approach in this study was to employ a qualitative content analysis. Ten college-students were recruited (six men and four women) using snowball sampling. This study conducted a semi-structured interview via Zoom. Participants were asked 15 questions that were a mix of open-ended and straightforward questions to gather the general Twitch experience and understand what attracted participants to the platform. The response to the questions determined the course of the interview. After conducting the interviews, it was decided that thematic-coding would be the best course of action. By using this method, the data interpreted how gamers view their gaming experience and interactions with others to look at trends and similarities of shared experiences or differences. The limited number of responses is a possible short-coming in the study, which can be expanded in a future study.

Theory

The theoretical framework that this study based its research on is the theory of parasocial relationships. Parasocial relationship theory created by Donald Horton and Richard Wohl in 1956 examines the bonds formed with media personalities and viewers despite never meeting (Horton and Wohl, 1956). Horton and Wohl analyzed this phenomenon with mass media consumers and media persons such as television or radio stars. However, it is noted that this phenomenon coined by Horton and Wohl existed before their study and could be seen with religious figures or politicians. They reported that the majority who experience this theory merely use parasocial relationships as a secondary type of social interaction and not a full replacement. A small circle of people replace social interaction with parasocial relationships. The

theory was expanded in 1989 by Elizabeth Perse and Rebecca Rubin when they challenged Horton and Wohl by claiming parasocial relationships are a natural occurrence and bound to happen when users spend time with these media personalities. They based their research on television personalities. Their study is the most often referenced and supported to base other research on. However, this theory has expanded to fit the new age of media with social media influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube.

This study also looks into the social aspect of gaming—how people perceive gaming as social interaction and how it affects users. Because live gameplay is in its infancy, this study aids our understanding of how users connect with Twitch as a social space. Lastly, this study explores relationship maintenance with broadcasting platforms. Though many regard Twitch as a social media platform, its end goal is being a livestreaming website. This study delves into how the difference is from user to user.

Results

By using thematic-coding, I found trends in the ways users maintained relationships, created relationships, and the different ways men and women used Twitch. The first trend in how users maintain relationships deals with how one might try to keep relationships. These could be actions or behaviors that show how it is not a one-sided relationship. For example, a person reaching out or communicating to show that they care. The next trend goes into creating relationships, examining how users create relationships online or offline. There is an emphasis on how users are choosing to build a connection with others. The last trend is the difference between men using Twitch versus women. It is interesting to note the specifics in how different sexes use Twitch and how that can contribute to their choices with building connections.

Maintaining Relationships

The findings show that overall, users said that using Twitch does not help them form bonds online but strengthens the bonds that they have already made. It meant that they were less inclined to find relationships on sites like Twitch, but users were more likely to talk about their usage of the platform with people they already know.

There were also trends in their Twitch usage. Twitch usage spiked because of COVID, so they were spending more hours on the platform than they usually do. In turn, they were reaching out to their friends more and more and likely to engage in relationship maintenance because of the pandemic. Many participants expressed that they felt their bonds strength-

ened during the quarantine. They used the platform as social interaction. Since fewer people were going out, they spent time with friends and caught up by playing and watching games together. This aligned with the idea of relationship maintenance since they were going out of their way to keep relationships around them during a time where in-person social interaction was limited.

The last part of this trend is that using Twitch has become intertwined with the participants' lives. Users felt a sense of necessity to catch up on the platform. Three users used the phrase "routine" to describe how they used Twitch every day during the pandemic and felt a bond grow between themselves and streamers. In turn, they felt that by watching their streamer, they were catching up with a friend and practicing relationship maintenance. Two users felt comfortable enough to say that they were friends with streamers even though they had never met the streamer before. This information also exhibits tendencies of parasocial relationships since users created a one-sided connection that translated into their everyday lives.

Creating Relationships

The next trend deals with creating relationships-whether online or offline. On Twitch the streams are accompanied by a live chat where users have their messages scroll vertically as more messages are sent. A majority of the participants felt like the Twitch chat was moving too fast to get a chance to have their messages actually read. The speed at which the chat moves corresponds directly to the number of viewers and the number of messages being sent. One user told me that it was "useless to use the chat with big streamers" since the messages could be hard to read and often missed, so they did not see the point of using that function. Another user said that they have always wanted to use the chat option but they were too shy.

This lack of participation feeds into how they are less likely to form bonds through the platform due to the fact that they feel detached from other users. Touching on the aforementioned fact that there could be up to 100,000 users on one single streamer's page, they felt they could not form a personal bond with other users. This trend is different from relatively smaller streamers since the engagement is lower resulting in a slower moving chat more conducive to participation. In these instances, users felt as if they could use the chat to engage with other users and the streamers. But, full-fledged relationships never emerged in either the case of small or large streamers. They were not as interested in forming a relationship online versus building them offline.

On the other side, there was a trend in how participants used their

interest in Twitch to form a bond offline. Face-to-face users felt confident enough to talk about their Twitch usage to people they just met. They are using their shared experience with the platform as an 'ice breaker' to talk about similarities and find common ground. Users' shared experience is used to branch out to other topics and be able to form deeper connections.

Men on Twitch

This study observed that men were less likely to practice relationship maintenance offline as opposed to online with regard to Twitch. This trend is due to their belief that gaming is popular among men, so there is no stigma attached to being a part of the gaming community. One participant expressed that "gaming is popular among men so it's embedded within our identity." They felt as if they could share their hobby with other users online. Men expressed in the interviews a majority of their friendships have been built from the activities they shared and that gaming was an activity they often had in common. One participant stated that "during the quarantine, playing games and going on Twitch was a go-to passtime." Since most of these friendships are activity based, once the activities were not available face-to-face, they were less likely to continue the said friendship. The relationships they built were not built on an emotional connection and did not go beyond casual friendships. The male participants were more likely to seek out friendships online since they go on similar websites like Twitch to build friendships around a shared hobby. They reported their Twitch usage sky-rocketed during the COVID-19 quarantine. One participant even claimed that they felt that their "bonds were stronger than ever during quarantine". This indicated that they were more likely to engage in the chat than just being watchers. Their increased participation could be attributed to them feeling more comfortable expressing themselves online versus in real life. Four out of the six men interviewed mentioned words like "shy" or "uncomfortable" when asked if they felt they could express themselves offline more. The anonymity could play a major role in them feeling comfortable enough to come out of their shell. This may be heightened by the fact that Twitch users are not required to use real names or divulge private information.

Women on Twitch

Women using Twitch exhibited opposite attitudes. Women were more likely to practice relationship maintenance with those they knew online as opposed to offline. They were more inclined to strengthen the bonds that they already had rather than trying to create new ones. Because of this, during the period of isolation due to COVID-19, they were the ones more likely to reach out to their friends to watch streams or play games.

This difference in usage could be because they were more likely to be Twitch watchers rather than trying to be interactive. One participant claimed that they felt "more comfortable spending time with friends they've already made." Other women participants expressed this same issue. That is why they were less likely to seek friendships online because they felt as if they could not express themselves the same way they did in real life. One participant in this study revealed that her friendships were not limited to specific activities, stating that "friendships do not have to be activity based". Participants were more inclined to create a deep emotional bond and pass the boundary of casual relationships. All the women interviewed indicated the issue surrounding Twitch's demographic. Men dominate the platform and the women feel intimidated and judged when they try to use the chat. They felt safer and more at with others offline rather than online.

Conclusion

Overall, it was found that Twitch does not make it easy to connect with others online, but it does help strengthen the existing bonds. This study sought to investigate the similarities between connecting with others by using the Twitch chat and connecting with others offline. Similarities were not shown in this data because the site can have up to 100,000 users using the chat with a fast rate of posts. As a result, most people cannot effectively have meaningful conversations as the messages are too fast and too plentiful. They feel like small fish in a big pond. It is important to note parasocial relationships were less likely from user to user but were likely from user to the streamer. This aligns with the current theory of parasocial relationships and their effect with media personalities. For future research, this study could be conducted in a post-COVID setting since participants' levels of Twitch usage spiked during the period of isolation. The findings of this research were skewed because of the increased usage, so it would be beneficial to see how much the data would change if usage went back to pre-COVID levels. It would also be helpful to expand the participant sample from 10 to 30. Expanding the data to different age groups could potentially change the data in a positive way. A future study could expand research to varying ages and also socioeconomic demographics. Seeing if relationships were different if someone uses Twitch every single day, if they donate to specific streamers frequently, or if they participate in smaller streams where the ability to communicate in the chat would be easier. However, there has not been existing research with the idea of relationship maintenance and live-streaming. Lastly, future research could explore how relationship maintenance translates to users live-stream usage.

Appedix

Interview Questions:

1. How often do you game? How often do you go on Twitch? Are there any other websites you go to like Twitch?

2. When you say "live-streaming" what does that mean for you?

3. When you say "gaming" what does that mean for you?

4. Can you walk me through how you use the platform?

5. Who are your favorite streamers to watch. Why?

6. If you don't have any favorite streamers, what attracts to watching a certain stream?

7. Do you feel as if the platform has made it easier to connect with others? Why or why not (If why, can you give an example story?)

8. Do you think you spend more time on Twitch than spending time with friends? (this includes texting or talking)

9. Have you made any friends from Twitch?

10. In what ways do you think you can connect more with others on Twitch? Opposite of that, in what ways do you think you connect less with others on Twitch?

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174

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Papers should present analytical research performed by the author(s). Submissions should include a section in which data and research methodology are described in detail.

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