Please visit our website, *occamsrazorwwu.org*, to read two essays that we were unable to showcase in this print volume.

Dear *Reader*,

Welcome to Volume 13 of Occam's Razor, Western's undergraduate interdisciplinary academic journal!

It's our pleasure to introduce you to the stunning work of seven WWU students in various disciplines, including environmental studies, history, queer art theory, reproductive justice, and textile sustainability.

This year, we've cobbled together a research lens to seek the grey between extremes. In a nation structured by racist, ableist cis-hetero-patriarchy, this lens is necessary for our collective survival. By examining the complex origins of systems of whiteness, queerness, criminalization, medicalization, fast fashion, and environmental purity, we are moved to active tenderness for one another. I know I've experienced this while sinking into these pages, and it has inspired me to listen closer and look deeper.

Wholehearted thanks to our fabulous editorial team, including Eleanor Scott, Nadia Bartrand, and Edme Guetschow. Thanks also to our design team– Ella Woolsey and Kenny Phillips– for their stunning work both within and beyond these pages. To our authors: Reilly Parr, Anna Arensmeyer, Lani Suyama, William Sclabassi, Danielle Cannon, Sam Hankins, and Emma Estep: thank you for sharing your thoughtful and well-crafted research. It was a delight to be a part of your revision process and distribute your work to a wider audience. Thank you to our wonderful program manager, Megan McGinnis, for her endless support and direction. And thank you to Julie Dugger, our fabulous faculty advisor– we are so grateful for you!

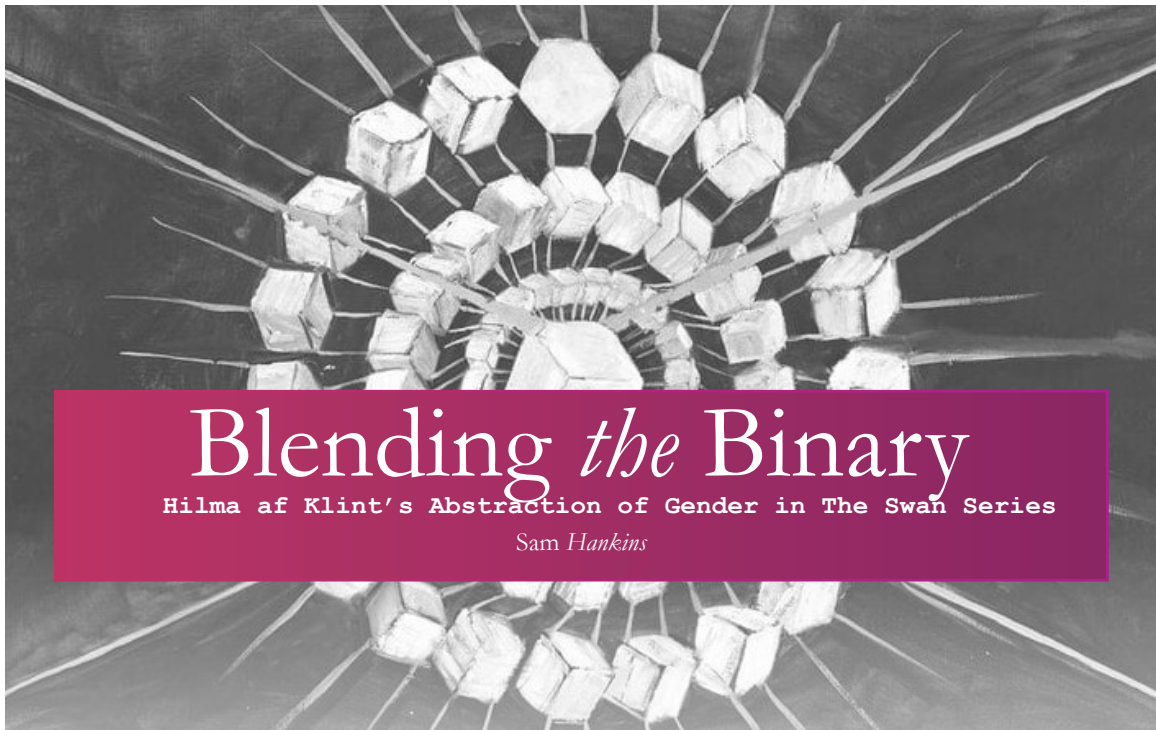And lastly, thank you, readers. We wish you tenderness on your reading journey.

See you next year!

With warmth and gratitude,

Jannah *Hinthorne*
Editor-in-Chief of Occam's Razor

Blending *the* Binary
Hilma af Klint's Abstraction of Gender in The Swan Series
Sam *Hankins*

Hilma af Klint, a Swedish artist born in 1862, is known as a founder of abstract art (Voss,). Her studies at the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm nurtured her talents in naturalistic landscapes, portraits, and botanical paintings (Voss). In 1906, increasing scientific discoveries of invisible forces (i.e. electromagnetic waves, x-rays, etc.), in conjunction with af Klint's interest in the spiritual realm and theosophy, led to the development of abstraction in her work (Muller-Westermann, 41). Af Klint began producing automatic drawings with a spiritualist group of women artists, known as 'The Five', acting as a medium by transcribing spirits' messages (Voss). From this point on, an automatic method guided af Klint's hand in creating diagrammatic abstract paintings that "look beyond the physical realms in order to experience a personalized sense of spirituality" and unify all existence (Grant). The visual and contextual significance of her work created a personal hesitancy in allowing the public to view her transcendent paintings (Muller-Westermann, 15). In turn, af Klint insisted her ethereal work remain hidden until 20 years after her death, making its first premier The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890-1985 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1986 (Muller-Westermann, 161).

Hilma af Klint's passion for the unification of social boundaries within theosophy is essential to the message and interpretation of her abstract art. While af Klint's interest in the visual unification of masculinity and femininity, across multiple series, has traditionally been observed through a feminist theory lens, the introduction of androgyne elevate beyond gender transcends feminism and deserves interpretation through a queer lens.

Hilma af Klint reimagines queerness in her abstract art as more than sexuality, redefining it as "the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world."(Munoz, 1) The possibility queerness provides spans across human identity, encompassing sex, sexual orientation, and gender. Incorporating a queer lens, we can imagine beyond the binary gender roles of the present and envision a queer utopia (Munoz, 2). These themes parallel teachings of theosophy, which embodies the union of the physical and spiritual worlds and claims that "there is no religion higher than truth" (Muller-Westermann, 113-16).

Theosophy proclaims that an individual, and in turn, society, will ultimately ascend to the highest state of consciousness, reaching an internal paradise by uniting and balancing masculinity and femininity (Carter, 155). Hilma af Klint's paintings "initiate a new way of thinking, flexible and lively, in order to break down destructive and rigid orders, such as the dualism of man and woman."(Voss) Visualizing the queering of the gender binary, Hilma af Klint's work, The Swan series (1914-1915), makes use of color, symbolism, and multiplicity to explore a queer utopia through the union and disembodiment of gender.

Cat 96., *The Swan, No. 1*, Group IX/ SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1915.

The Swan series (1914-1915) consists of twenty-four oil paintings on canvas, measuring 59 1/16" by 59 1/16" square, that are a "representation of the astral plane."(Muller-Westermann, 170) In The Swan, No. 1, af Klint begins with figures of a black swan and white swan, mirroring each other across the clearcut horizontal plane splitting them. The swans meet at their beaks in a delicate kiss and graze a single wing, aligning with the background's harsh shift from black to white. A red beak and blue details distinguish the pale swan from its counterpart: an ebony swan with a light pink beak and yellow details. Al-

though these are two separate beings, energy flows through the points at which they touch, creating continuous curved lines and a distinct negative space between them.

Cat. 93, *The Swan, No. 3*, Group IX/ SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1914.

As the series continues, the two swans intertwine eventually becoming one through the use of non-representational forms and color. Pink radiation of energy, a collision, and a spiral form as their necks tangle together in The Swan, No. 3. The background is no longer divided in one clean line across the horizon; instead, the ebony and pale feathered strokes mold around the curving figures. Additionally, the beaks' coloring begins to shift: a white swan with a black beak and a black swan with a white beak.

Cat. 93, *The Swan, No. 3*, Group IX/ SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1914.

As we reach The Swan, No. 7, four abstracted swans take the spotlight, ranging in color from browns, pinks, oranges, and white, symmetrically surrounding a geometric background with a central spiral. The colors of the background and spiral carry af Klint's original swans' essence: black, white, blue, yellow, and red.

Cat. 102, *The Swan, No. 12*, Group IX/SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1915.

Cat. 107, *The Swan, No. 17*, Group IX/SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1915.

From this point on, af Klint leaves behind the form of the swan known in our physical reality. The Swan series metamorphosizes as circles, symmetry, spirals, cubes, triangles, and color become the primary focus. Triangles of color are reflected across a horizontal line of symmetry in The Swan, No. 12. The blues, greens, yellows, and reds are no longer highly saturated, but muted and mixed. The Swan, No. 17 depicts a circle split vertically down the center on a bold red background. A pale outer ring encloses a black core on the left half of the circle. The other half acts as a mirror, with a blue outer ring, yellow core, and a small pink center. The highly saturated shapes create a vibration of color atop the red background.

Cat. 112, *The Swan, No. 24*, Group IX/SUW, The S U W / U W Series, 1915.

Af Klint's final piece, The Swan, No. 24, displays a harmonious union of the realized swan forms. The asymmetrical division of four squares becomes a basis for the figures to coalesce. A single desaturated color within each quadrant – pink, white, brown, and ashy-purple– provides a muted background. The black swan inhabits the left half of the painting, craning its neck to the right, across the central point, to then folding back in on its own body. The white swan mirrors this position, occupying the right half of the painting as its neck extends left across the central line to then curve back. Their beaks meet along the central vertical line, combining their efforts by holding an emblem of a blue, yellow, and red three planed cube. When entangled, the swans' wings create a large 'X' shape, occupying space in each of the background's four quadrants.

As witnessed, af Klint depicts the gradual meshing of two contrasting beings throughout The Swan series, blurring our assumptions of self-contained bodies and rigid identities. The second half of this essay will examine Hilma af Klint's use of color, symbolism, and multiplicity to explore a queer ideal through the union and disembodiment of gender.

Hilma af Klint's use of color is a central component in representing the utmost state of consciousness, or queer utopia, realized through the union of gender. The detailed documentation of af Klint's color-coded work identifies yellow and black as symbols of power and masculinity (Muller-Westermann, 41) while blue and white serve as symbols of the foundation of knowledge and femininity (Muller-Westermann, 48). These color archives are the basis of af Klint's exploration of individual and societal theosophical enlightenment through the discussion of gender in The Swan Series, echoed in the modern queer potential of paradise. The pale swan with blue details embodies femininity, while the ebony swan with yellow elements represents masculinity, differentiated by the colors of their bodies, beaks, and feet. As The Swan series progresses, the swans' coloring shifts. No

longer isolated by their color-coded features and backgrounds, they begin to merge. In The Swan, No. 3, the white swan's beak becomes black, and the black swan's beak, white. Hilma af Klint alters color as a literal representation of the union of masculinity and femininity, echoing the underlying theosophical ideology of reaching a higher state of consciousness through this unity. Additionally, as the series becomes progressively more abstract, the introduction of mixed pigments appears. Browns, oranges, pinks, and greens become metaphors for a potential world proceeding society's elevation to a queer paradise through the union and disembodiment of gender. Using color to smudge rigid boundaries between gendered bodies, Hilma af Klint "announce[s] the future of the species itself in the history of humanity… [a]bstraction would be the language of the future of the species in the 'mental' era of bodies rid of their fleshy husk."(Muller-Westermann, 172) In af Klint's work, color is utilized as a visual metaphor, proposing a new language to propel society toward a queer paradise, depicting the potentiality modern-day queerness provides.
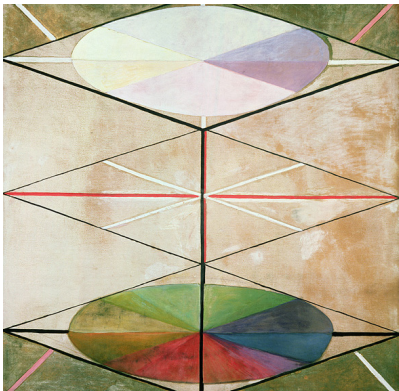
Cat. 111, *The Swan, No. 23*, Group IX/SUW, The SUW/UW Series, 1915.

The Swan series' use of symbols reflects the queer potentiality achieved through the creation of ungendered language to overcome and disembody the polarity of the masculine versus feminine binary. Throughout The Swan series, the birds, spirals, circles, cubes, and theosophical symbols take the place of language as a visual invitation to a higher consciousness (Muller-Westermann, 50). Literally and conceptually, a swan represents the "struggle between flesh and spirit, good and evil… the masculine and the feminine." (Muller-Westermann, 163) Androgynous liberation is manifested within this bird through the fusion of these oppositional energies, emancipating the spirit and representing queer utopia (Muller-Westermann, 170). Spirals, as displayed in The Swan, No. 7, provide a path of energy depicting androgyne, an extension of evolution that unites "balance, growth, and infinity."(Carter, 155) This spiral reveals itself in the form of a shell in The Swan, No. 19 - No. 20. Across af Klint's abstraction in this series, circles represent a worldview above religion, the union of death and rebirth, balance, and a harmonious state of being (Carter, 159). The Swan, No. 17's use of circular form as the primary vessel of discussion, provides insight into the achievement of balance and concord through the union of masculinity and femininity. Within The Swan, No. 23, a horizontally sliced cube creates a geometric pattern, and three planes represent a personal theosophical ascent to a higher spiritual level (Carter, 159). In the final painting, The Swan, No. 24, the unified birds hold a theosophical emblem signifying androgyne, energy, potential, and life as society elevates through individuals finding unity of the masculine and feminine within themselves (Muller-Westermann, 163). Hilma af Klint's use of symbols reflects the continuous evolution and creation of language to discuss enlightenment, gender, and a queer idyllic society.

Within the twenty-four individual paintings in The Swan series, the multiplicity of abstraction reflects the liberating potential of the theosophical and queer disembodiment of gender. The series is born with figurative swans on opposing planes of black and white, and viewers witness their bodies gradually enmesh as the series persists. Eventually, the swans evolve into non-figurative shapes and symbols and resurface in the final painting as a wholly united black-and-white swan.

Hilma af Klint's work can only be fully impactful in the form of a series. Her paintings are "speculative, transgressive, open, and in evolution…there to move, not to fix." (Voss) In viewing a single painting without the context of the series' evolution, the geometric forms, color choices, and symbolism would be completely diminished. Likewise, the core of queerness revolves around the ability to morph and reach a fluid consciousness that unfolds a limitless map of gender expression and ways of being (Cooper, 297). The forces of a binary world limit our ability to expand to a higher level of being that theosophy and queer utopia explore (Cooper, 2). The essence of non-representational art allows for meaning to be derived from a multiplicitous spectrum, with an infinite amount of possibilities (Cooper, 2). The Swan Series parallels this idea by beginning as representational and dancing through abstraction to find significance. Humanity and identity are not stable, but continuously fluctuate throughout time and space (Cooper, 286). Hilma af Klint represents this flux between masculinity and femininity for society to collectively reach a higher consciousness, or queer utopia, across The Swan series.

Although her work dates back a hundred years, Hilma af Klint's interrogation of society's strict gender borders is still relevant to modern-day activist work attempting to dissolve the gender binary. Using color, symbolism, and multiplicity, af Klint reimagines the gender landscape, mapping out the expansive vision of queer eden. Across the boundaries of time and space, af Klint's work remains relevant through her advanced ability to formulate themes of androgyne and enlightenment through abstraction. As society progresses, turning back to the forerunners of queerness and identifying queer potentiality in spiritual and feminist history becomes an integral step in moving beyond the limitations of gender. Through the analysis and affirmation of queer ideologies' existence, society can become one step closer to actualizing queer enlightenment.

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A Critical Analysis *of the* Garment Industry

Environmental Impacts and Promising Solutions

Lani-Kalei *Suyama*

Introduction

Amongst the seemingly endless cycles of production and consumption in the capitalist model of development, perhaps the most dire is that of the garment industry. In reference to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, clothing is categorized as a basic physiological human necessity alongside food, water, and shelter (Block, 2011). Textiles have proven ubiquitous in day to day functions, and none more so than clothing. Clothing protects, warms, and comforts. It is a visual pinnacle of self expression, a cultural fingerprint, and in many aspects, a second skin. Over the course of the past century however, there has been a remarkable shift in the way people consume and appreciate clothes. What once a valued, lasting good has become something disposable, a daily purchase that is lucky to last more than a year.

For every framework of sustainability that exists, fast fashion brands seem to pursue the opposite. Its overconsumption of natural resources, inhumane labor conditions, and vast amounts of waste and pollution in production and post-purchase make the garment industry one of the top most wasteful, unethical consumer industries in the world. Improving the garment industry is an essential step in solving the climate crisis and making daily actions more sustainable; to do this, it is necessary to understand what must be solved. The purpose of this paper is to examine environmental impacts of current methods in garment manufacturing as well as the various solutions that may serve as alternatives.

Dye Pollution

Pollution and waste have persistently been increasing concerns in garment manufacturing. There are several types of pollutants and waste that result from garment production, but let us first examine synthetic dye pollution. Today in large-scale garment manufacturing, synthetic dyes are used almost exclusively as compared to natural dyes. The garment industry is known for its excessive water usage in manufacturing, and much of this water is used during the dying phase, creating a type of waste water containing residual dyes, mordants, chemicals, and microfibers.

This polluted water is then carried by effluents and expelled into sewers, streams, rivers, and then larger bodies of water (Ranson, 2019). Although every environmental impact of clothing production should be seen as dire, water pollution as a result of chemical dyes is especially urgent as water systems affect all life forms on earth. Shabir (2019) discusses concerns pertaining to synthetic dyes and how they affect aquatic ecosystems and groundwater systems.

Polluted effluents that reach bodies of water cause various physiological disorders amongst aquatic life such as erratic swimming, hypertension, and renal damage. Aquatic flora suffer equally as photosynthetic processes are disrupted by dye-containing effluents, and in addition to its contamination of water ecosystems, many studies have been conducted on the effects of the textile industry's effluents leaking into groundwater and interfering with the growth of agricultural crops. Studies reveal that crop plants growing in areas of soil by dye-containing effluents bioaccumulate heavy metals and trace elements. These contaminants have a higher concentration in edible shoots than in roots, which can lead to health risks in consumers (Yusuf et al., 2017). Despite these disheartening finds, there are several potential solutions to consider.

Dye Pollution Solutions

When discussing potential solutions to water pollution caused by the garment industry, it is necessary to note the complexity of water systems. In this regard, there is no single correct answer to the issues. Methods for removing dyes from effluent streams already exist, such as physicochemical processes like coagulation and flocculation[1] . Unfortunately, these conventional methods have proven to be costly, somewhat inefficient, and unsustainable for high volumes of dye (O'Neill et al., 1999). Viable options to replace these conventional methods are bioremediation methods. These methods would utilize enzymes in living systems such as micro-organisms and plants to degrade refractory pollutants in water systems. Enzymes are both efficient and precise as catalysts, and their biodegradability makes them more environmentally appealing (Srivastava et al., 2022). Enzyme treatment methods are not only cleaner than conventional treatment methods, they are also plentiful. Bhatia and Devraj (2017) discuss several bioremediation methods in their book, Pollution Control in Textile Industry, including the use of microbial cells, use of plant tissues (or entire plants), cell-free enzyme extracts, and enzyme delivery in the form of different nanoparticles. Each of these methods has its perks and drawbacks; for example, microbial cells have high success rates for decolorization, but the process of using them for effluent treatment is time consuming. The main drawback of enzymesin effluent treatment is the high cost, which makes it a non-economically viable option.

An alternative to treatment methods would be preventative methods that can be taken to generate less waste. Natural dyes are a good way to start the conversation, since they are derived from biodegradable materials, meaning the wastewater they produce during the dyeing process is not hazardous. Natural color can also be extracted from inexpensive, renewable resources. However, there are currently several limitations to the natural coloration of textiles. Natural dyes may not be a reliable way to yield an accurate reproduction of color as potency and quality of natural materials can be inconsistent and dependent on environ-

mental factors. Perhaps the most limiting restriction is that natural dyes generally hold unstable bonding to textiles which makes them weak when faced with factors such as washing, sweat, light, and rubbing as compared to synthetic dyes. To make these dyes stronger, mordants become necessary.

Unfortunately most conventional mordants are metallic and prove just as hazardous as synthetic dyes. However, although metallic mordants are the most prevalent in large scale manufacturing, there are natural constituents that have proved themselves to be dependable mordant agents for natural dyes (Kasiri & Safapour, 2014). Once again enzymes prove to be a promising tool for cleaner dyeing habits. In a study by Vankar et al. (2007) enzymes protease-amylase, diastase, and lipase used with tannic acid resulted in enhanced dyeability based on colorimetric data. Liposomes are another natural dyeing auxiliary with low environmental impact. Wool dyed with liposomes were found to yield higher color strength values, exhaustion, leveling, and fixation percent (El-Zawahry et al., 2007). Similarly, tamarind seed coat extract has also been studied as a successful natural mordant to serve natural dyes on cotton, silk, and wool (Prabhu & Teli, 2014). At this point in textile sustainability research, studies are still somewhat limited, so the methods mentioned above may be an unexhausted list. The next step moving forward would be to continue research, test these methods on larger industrial scales, and — if successful— convince manufacturers to adopt these cleaner habits.

Microfiber Pollution

Although clothing and other textile goods appear solid, singular items to the naked eye, they are made up of fibrous materials that shed microfibers. These microfibers are considered anthropogenic[2] litter and end up in air, soil, and water bodies across the globe. With over 9 million tons of fibers produced annually (60% of these being synthetic), microfibers have become one of the most common microparticle pollutants and a growing concern for marine environments (Barrows et al., 2018).

Microfibers appear in various marine habitats including surface-level waters, deep sea sediment, arctic sea ice, freshwater habitats (Liu et al., 2021). Synthetic fibers are prominent in marine environments while microfibers found airborne or in freshwater are primarily natural ones (Stanton et al., 2019). Though these natural fibers seem safer due to their biodegradability, they will likely contain harmful dyes and chemicals.

The ability of microfibers to travel through water, land, and air is equally matched by their ability to invade and disrupt the bodies of living organisms. Synthetic fibers are resistant to dissolving in water. This gives them greater ability to absorb toxic, bioaccumulative chemicals such as oil residue from combusted fuel, and pesticides that leak into bodies of air, soil, and water (Suran, 2018). Because these microfibers are so ubiquitous, they have been found in places that pose an especially concerning threat on human health like drinking water (Eerkes-Medrano et al., 2019) and food products (Suran, 2018). Due to their miniscule size microfibers are quick to bioaccumulate through food webs. They are either ingested or absorbed in the tissues of aquatic animals and may eventually reach the bodies of land animals that rely on these contaminated seafood as part of their diets, including humans (Mishra et al., 2019). There has been an abundance of research surface in recent years that verifies concerning health effects of microfibers on several marine species (Knauss et al., 2022). A study by Jemec et al (2016) revealed that freshwater daphnid zooplankton mortality rates increased when exposed to microfibers. If this is any indication of how microfibers affect other species of zooplankton and phytoplankton, then this is yet another concern for both the health of marine life systems and Earth's atmosphere. Phytoplankton produce at least half of Earth's oxygen and are major contributors to carbon cycling. If zooplankton are adversely affected by microfibers they will inherently affect the health of phytoplankton. Since phytoplankton play a significant role in carbon cycling, their decline will

inevitably lead to more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. As for the effects of microfibers on human health, research is not abundant. What research does exist points to prolonged exposure to microfibers, either through inhalation or ingestion via seafood, linked to respiratory hormonal disruption, reproductive complications, respiratory inflammation, pulmonary fibrosis, cancer, and tissue damage of the nervous system, kidney, and liver (Mishra, 2019). Unfortunately, microfiber pollution seems to be treated as an out of sight, out of mind situation and tends to be left behind. As has hopefully been learned with the outbreak of a global pandemic, sometimes the seemingly invisible threats are the most damaging.

Microfiber Pollution Solutions

The first step in considering solutions to microfiber pollution is to understand where microfibers come from and how they are shed. However, because of their size, it is difficult to trace this litter's path, and direct sources of microfibers ending up in oceans and surface waters is a topic that is still largely unexplored. Though past studies have suggested laundry discharges released into wastewater treatment plants as a primary source of microfiber pollution in oceans, more recent studies do not support those conclusions, and in fact reveal wastewater treatment plants to be efficient in removing microplastics (Carr, 2017). Textiles shed fibers from the very beginning of their production, throughout their use, and after they are disposed (Athey & Erdle, 2022). To make any significant strides to decrease microfiber pollution, more definitive research is required.

It seems unlikely that the textile industry will be able to produce fabrics that do not shed microfibers in the near future, so the next best solution is a call for better regulation. According to a recently published environmental law review by Lea M. Elston (2020), current guidelines and regulations for effluents in the US fail to address plastic pollution explicitly. To successfully regulate microfiber pollution, guidelines must account for the microfibers shed from synthetic fibers; namely those of polyester fibers. Elston suggests specific regulations limiting allowable microfiber pollution from domestic laundry and wastewater treatment plants, as well as regulations on the manufacturing process of textiles sold in the US. A significant factor to note when considering microfiber regulation is that with the continuous rise of fast fashion, there is an increase in the production of cheap, low quality synthetic textiles. In tracing microfibers all the way back to the manufacturers of the textiles they come from, there might at least be an opportunity to decrease excess fiber shedding from poorly made fabrics. Research from the University of California Santa Barbara shows low-quality fleece sheds significantly more microfibers than that of high-quality materials (Hartline et al., 2016). Regulating the production of these low-quality materials may be a crucial step in mitigation.

Though it seems the future of microfiber pollution is in the hands of environmental policy and law makers, and textile manufacturers, there are still a handful of methods that consumers can do on their end to help control pollution. Buying or swapping used clothing would lower the demand for new clothing to be made. Garments shed the most microfibers during the washing process, but luckily there are emerging devices to aid domestic washing machines that would reduce water containing microfibers discharged into wastewater treatment plants. These devices may be used inside the machine such as laundry bags or the Cora Ball, or external filters attached to the outlet pipe of a washing machine (Ramasamy & Subramanian, 2021). As was previously discussed, many wastewater treatment plants can adequately remove microfibers from water, and the responsibility of mitigating microfibers should be heavily placed on the manufacturers' end. However, fibers are still shed throughout the duration of a garment's use, which makes this issue a shared responsibility.

Overproduction

The textile and fashion industries have become leaders in waste creation, and rapid rates

of clothing production are cause for alarm. Over the past two decades clothing production rates have doubled and the number of garments purchased by an average consumer per year has increased by 60 percent. Also, the amount of time people keep an average clothing item has almost been cut in half. (Remy et al., 2016). With large and ever increasing variations of cheap clothing options, people have the ability to not only expand their wardrobes, but to also renew them quickly and cost effectively. As these fast fashion garments have become cheaper, the gap between low-cost, poorly made clothes and equitable, well-made clothes has become larger and larger, making good-quality, sustainable clothing unaffordable for the average consumer. What's more, this data is from a 2016 article, and since then, the continuous rise of social media adds fuel to the flame by helping spread trends and introduce new ones fast and efficiently. It is clear that the massive quantities of garments being produced increase rapid rates of purchases (and disposal) and vice versa, creating a positive feedback loop that is generating more textile waste than ever before. In the US only 15 percent of textile and garment waste disposed of each year gets recycled or donated in some way. The remaining 85 percent, which averages to about 13 million tons, goes directly to landfills (Kalra, 2018). The name of the game in the fashion and garment industries—as they exist currently—is speed. With fast fashion companies trying to produce too much, too fast, with little concern about quality, ethicality, or environmental impact,massive amounts of "disposable" clothing will reach landfills after minimal use. Although leading brands are largely to blame, there is an undeniable responsibility on the consumer to choose if they want to support these brands, or change their habits.

Greenwashing, Slow Fashion, and the Role of the Consumer

There is hope for a greener, more ethical future in the production and consumption of clothing and textiles that calls for informed, conscientious consumers. Unfortunately, the garment industry's lack of transparency makes it increasingly difficult to know what really goes on behind the scenes of the label. As the demand for more sustainable, ethical goods increases, many brands have turned to greenwashing, a tactic wherein firms mislead consumers and stakeholders about their ethicality and/or sustainability by marketing themselves in a way that does not accurately reflect their practices (Pizzetti et al., 2021). While many eco-conscious consumers know not to trust every marketing campaign that claims green practices, their skepticism may result in a lack of confidence and overall confusion when making sound purchasing decisions (Szabo & Webster, 2021). Markham et al. (2014) acknowledges that while effective government regulation of greenwashing would be the ideal way to control it, the ability of the government to successfully apply and enforce regulation would be limited due to resourcing, cost, and ambiguity around what constitutes "green" performance. Government regulation may not be the most reliable way of controlling greenwashing due to a lack of success in existing consumer protection and competition laws.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may be a viable alternative to relying on government regulation to control greenwashing. More consumers are willing to make sacrifices for more ethical purchases, especially when it pertains to pro-environmental expenditures (Hoffmann & Hutter, 2012). NGOs are notably influential in shaping consumption behavior and in creating more sustainable, ethical, and responsible business practices (Lorek & Spangenberg, 2014; Markham et al., 2014). Instances of lawsuits have proved that consumers and NGOs are ready to punish corporations for engaging in "environmental false advertising" as was seen with a class action lawsuit against Honda (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). However, for large corporate entities, lawsuits may not be more than a slap on the wrist. In these instances, publicity and reputation may be more significant factors to utilize in encouraging transparency and eliminating greenwashing. A study on Greenpeace's 2011 Detox campaign by Grappi et al. (2017) revealed NGO campaigns to be

highly impactful in shaping consumers' judgements, blame, and purchasing behavior towards fashion brands that were involved in toxic chemical scandals. What's more, NGOs may also have the ability to not only "punish" brands at fault, but also reward brands by restoring credibility to those that have been defamed but are committed to fixing their faults.

It is imperative to note that transparency is not just about not lying, but about offering insights into supply chains and production processes for consumers, investors, and NGOs to see. Transparency may serve to create greener, more ethical supply chains and production methods. For the companies that choose to disclose this information, it could very well serve as a business strategy and marketing tool. For example, Everlane is a large-scale brand that has gained popularity through their radical transparency (Richards, 2021). As increasing numbers of conscientious consumers search for trustworthy clothing brands, adopting these habits of honesty builds trust, credibility, and will ultimately serve to benefit company, consumer, and environment alike.

Pursuing a more sustainable future in the garment industry entails a change in consumption habits. This responsibility should not be placed entirely on the consumer, but it is worth noting that consumer choices are highly influential on the garment industry and the businesses within them. The slow fashion movement is an alternative approach to garment production that attempts to counteract fast fashion by shifting the focus of production from quantity to quality (Fletcher, 2007). Slow fashion is not necessarily concerned with the speed of production, or lack thereof, but rather urges a shift in the mindsets of both creators and consumers that will yield higher quality items, and encourage consumers to buy less often (Jung & Jin, 2014). Eliminating time and increasing quality would allow suppliers to predict orders, and slowing down consumption demands would better allow for the earth's regeneration of natural materials to take place, ultimately creating less waste (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015)

This paper analyzes several aspects of the garment industry's environmental effect across the lifespans of textile goods, from production, to use, to waste. There are several topics of environmental concern related to the garment industry that this paper does not address, but this does not imply that they are any less valuable to study. The garment industry is vast, its processes are lengthy and complex, and its impacts are deep and extensive. In this regard, even seemingly small efforts towards change are notable, but in order to build and sustain the momentum for change, research, knowledge, and awareness around the garment industry's current state must be at the forefront of the effort. Achieving higher levels of sustainability in the garment industry necessitates the expansion of its discourse amongst consumers, designers, producers, and businesses alike. Every day, billions of people around the world get dressed. As an inevitable factor of life, clothing should be a pivotal feature in the discussions towards greener, more sustainable futures.

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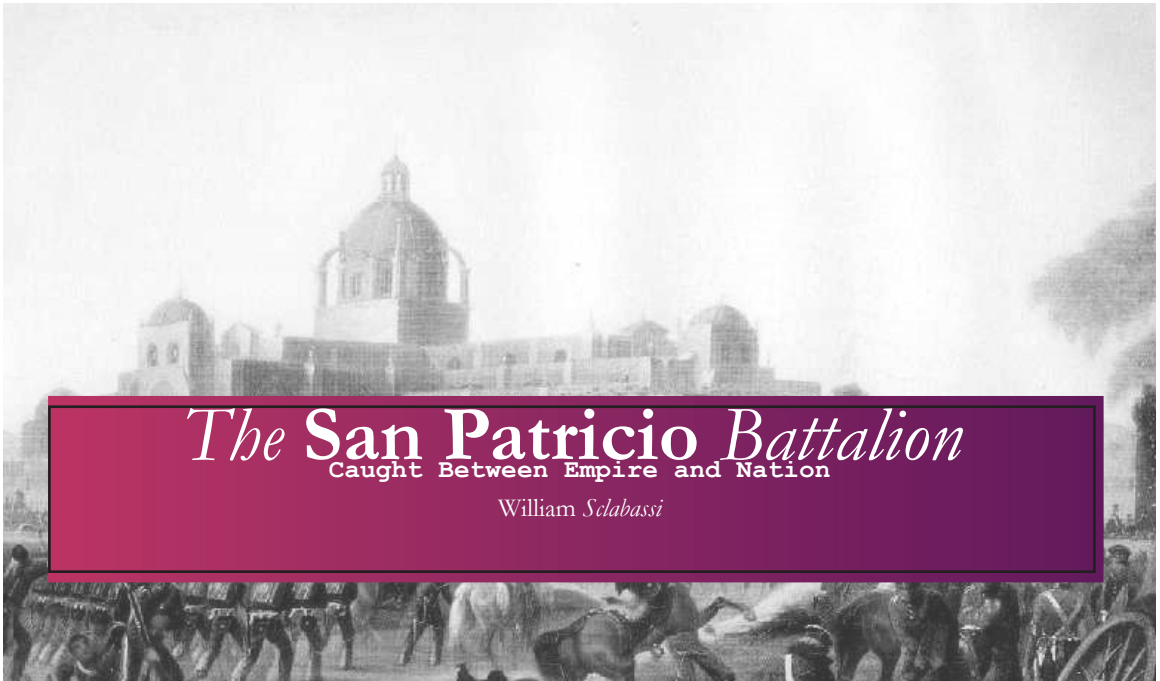
The **San Patricio** *Battalion*
Caught Between Empire and Nation

William *Sclabassi*

Introduction

Plaza San Jacinto in Mexico City is like the many other plazas that dot the most populous cities in North America. Bumpy cobblestone streets lead to a two-block long park with walk-ways that cut between patches of grass and run under shade-giving trees, providing oasis within the hustle and bustle of the city. A fountain bubbles on one corner of the park, where people lean on fences or sit on the sidewalk, chatting up friends or waiting on a bus. The back of Parroquia San Jacinto, a Catholic church, faces the plaza, and on its wall is a giant plaque that pays tribute to over a 100 names, members of the San Patricio Bat-talion. Amidst the regular comings and goings in the heart of Mexico City stands a stat-ue of Comandante John Riley, leader of the San Patricio Battalion. The bust was gifted to Mexico from the Irish embassy to honor the centenary of the Mexican Revolution. Residents of Mexico City walk daily amongst memories of the Irish soldiers who fought for Mexico, and the average passerby is likely to miss the significance of one of the most infamous episodes in Mexico-United States history.

The San Patricio Battalion was a military outfit in Mexico's Foreign Legion during the Unit-ed States – Mexico War of 1846-1848 made up of deserters from the United States army who were primarily Irish Catholic immigrants, constituting the largest military desertion event in United States history. Historical accounts vary, however one of the first historians of the battalion, Robert Ryal Miller, established that there were 127 known San Patricio sol-diers, 49 of whom were hung by the United States military for desertion in September 1847 (Miller). Their role in the war is minimized by a proportionally small English-language scholarship. As members of the target recruits for Manifest Destiny and whiteness, they constituted a unique episode in history for their resistance to these national projects.

At the end of the most recent book-length scholarship on the San Patricios – The Rogue's

March: John Riley and the St. Patrick's Battalion, 1846-48 – Peter Stevens details how the United States military actively suppressed the release of documents pertaining to desertion in the war by obscuring public access until the 1970s (Stevens 300). Since then, historians have neglected the San Patricios, resulting in the rogue battalion's relative absence from much of the scholarship on the war with Mexico. Analyzing the history of the San Patricios with a focus on nationality, citizenship, and Manifest Destiny in the context of Irish politics and immigration to the United States provides a rich study of transnational solidarity against empire and strengthens our understanding of citizenship and the construction of whiteness, a fabricated racial category utilized by Anglo-Saxon Protestant settlers to solidify their social power in the United States. This paper examines the San Patricio historiography using military desertion and commemoration as popular history to establish that the San Patricio Battalion offers material lessons for resisting the project of whiteness from the heart of transnational empire.

Desertion in a War Between Two Young Republics

The United States Congress approved war with Mexico on May 12th, 1846. The conflict goes by two names; in United States scholarship it is referred to as the United States – Mexico War, in Mexico it is referred to as the War of United States Intervention. The former implies that the military conflict was simply the result of failed diplomatic relations over territory resulting in a war between states, whereas the latter reveals bitter truths pertaining to longer trends in U.S.-Latin American foreign relations and intervention. This military conflict was situated at an important intersection in United States and Mexican history, as neither country was yet one hundred years free from colonial rule. After Mexico secured independence from Spain in 1821, United States slaveholders were permitted to settle in Texas. However, Mexico abolished chattel slavery in 1829 and attempted to curtail Texan autonomy, refusing Texas'

claims to independence. After Texas seceded from Mexico and petitioned for annexation by the United States in 1845, Mexico risked losing much of its territory to an invading young republic – the United States – and the two nations both had young and vulnerable national identities. The ensuing war between these two nations would serve as training grounds for military and political figures who would gain prominence in the following United States Civil War.

United States army troops began amassing among the Rio Grande, the physical and political border between Texas and Mexico, in early 1846. As soldiers conducted drills, they created an intense atmosphere of nativism and discipline that characterized army dynamics. Nearly half of the United States army was made up of foreign-born soldiers, and among them half were born in Ireland (Miller 9). On April 2nd, 1846, before the outset of war, Mexican General Ampudia had ordered leaflets printed in English addressed to the "English and Irish under the Orders of the American General Taylor," enticing foreign-born soldiers in the United States army to remember the hostility between the United States and Great Britain, claiming that "the United States is committing repeated acts of barbarous aggression against the Mexican Nation…" and welcoming deserters into the Mexican ranks with "good treatment," and that any "expenses shall be defrayed" until arrival in Mexico City (Miller 17). On April 12th, John Riley, an Irish soldier in the United States army, sought permission from his captain to attend a Catholic Mass in a nearby Mexican town across the river, and never returned. He later became the leader of the San Patricio Battalion (Miller 29).

Irishman John Riley had military experience from his time in the British military in Canada, which he deserted from in favor of work in the United States. Like many other enlisted soldiers, Riley enlisted in the U.S. army primarily to earn a wage. However, before war had even been declared, Riley deserted once again while the U.S. army was camped out in Texas

army, a privilege not afforded to Irish soldiers in the United States army, and was eventually promoted to the commander of the foreign legion. Riley was emblematic of other deserters who fought in the San Patricio Battalion: Catholic, gun-for-hire, immigrant, and a contested recruit for the project of whiteness. The San Patricio Battalion was largely responsible for cannonry during many of the major battles and would not see much close-range combat until their fateful and final battle at Churubusco. Their effectiveness with artillery was noted by military leaders from both sides. Mexican General Santa Anna once declared that if he had had an army of San Patricios, victory would have been secured against the invading United States army.6

As the San Patricios rained hell on advancing United States troops at the battle of Churubusco, U.S. soldiers were explicitly ordered to target the Irish battalion and take out the cannons. Many of the San Patricios were captured at Churubusco and were charged and found guilty of desertion. When soldiers deserted the United States army, they did so under threat of death. United States General Zachary Scott unprecedentedly ordered deserters to be shot if caught in the act,7 yet the San Patricios were the only deserters to receive death sentences upon their trial for desertion.8 Some, including John Riley,9 were given reduced sentences. These rebels were branded, whipped, and forced to bury their hanged comrades. These punishments were excessive by the standards of 1847.10

When the San Patricios joined the Mexican army, they gambled their chances at a better life in a different army, and the likelihood that the Mexican side would be victorious. United States soldiers were often treated horribly by their superiors for arbitrary infractions, and daily activities were conducted in horrid conditions of squalor. As low-ranking soldiers, the poor treatment of the deserters who formed the ranks of the San Patricios was compounded by their identity as immigrant Catholics in an otherwise largely Protestant and Nativist social context.

Mexican desertion recruiters targeted Irish Catholic soldiers highlighting anti-Catholic sentiments in the United States army in their pamphlets appealing for desertion, as well as promising greater pay and better conditions for deserters. United States Army General Scott employed two Catholic chaplains for the first time in United States military history in an attempt to secure the loyalty of Catholic soldiers,11 highlighting anxieties about specific demographics and awareness of growing sectarian tensions within army ranks.

A Historiography of the Culture of Desertion
Scholarship on the San Patricio Battalion struggles to come to terms with why the soldiers deserted the U.S. army and joined the Mexican army due to a lack of primary source material from the soldiers themselves. Studying the social context of enlistment in the U.S. armed forces in the 1840s reveals why immigrants signed up to fight in the U.S. – Mexico War, what they expected to materially gain from the endeavor, and how they perceived their enlistment as a form of labor subject to negotiation. Desertion then can be understood as a valid response to unsatisfactory workplace conditions, akin to a wildcat strike or simply walking off the job. Noel Ignatiev's study of Irish immigrants in mid-1800s Philadelphia in How the Irish Became White illuminates a political landscape that limited work in the ports and docks across the eastern seaboard, implying that Irish immigrants were left no other option but enlisting for military service. In A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair: Soldiers and Social Conflict During the Mexican-American War, Paul Foos characterizes the immigrants who made up the majority of the army as career soldiers seeking opportunities for better work, part of a "roving international proletariat" who reserved their right to negotiate contractual terms as enlisted soldiers, similar to laborers in any other particular trade.12

Desertion from the United States army began before war was even declared, and before some regiments left home for the front. Out of a total 26,922 enlisted regular army soldiers,

2,849 of them deserted during the war, and 3,900 of the 59,00 volunteers deserted as well.13 Roughly 10% of all enlisted soldiers deserted, and about 6.6% of all volunteers deserted, or, about 7.85% of the United States armed forces. Stereotypes abounded about the deserters, and Nativists were quick to blame the Irish, though one Boston newspaper – The Pilot – provided data on desertion showing that the Irish deserted less than other demographics in proportion to their numbers.14 However, The Pilot remained silent on harsh discipline suffered by Irish volunteers by Nativist officers. The American public needed a scapegoat for the issue of desertion, and the Irish were an easy target.

Incidents of desertion, revolt, and insubordination by Irish soldiers provided support for narratives surrounding Irish disloyalty. One company of Irish volunteers in Boston revolted upon receiving orders to board a ship bound for the front, demanding advanced pay and a final goodbye to their families. The company marched back to their barracks and refused to board the ship, initiating a standoff with another company sent to bring them in line. Bribed with liquor and promises of money, the Irish company agreed to march back to the ship, and several volunteers took their chances and deserted during the march and re-boarding.15 As Manifest Destiny ushered forward the American frontier, Irish Catholics found they were undesirable in factories, ports, and military barracks.

The San Patricios can be understood as a particular group amidst a trend of desertion from both sides of the war. Mexican General Santa Anna had undergone a campaign to convince indigenous peoples in Mexico to take up the national banner, peoples who had not traditionally been considered in the Mexican national character.16 Military payments were irregular, and with families to feed and support, Mexican soldiers also deserted to better provide for their families. Santa Anna mobilized forces despite an incomplete Mexican national identity, which stood on uneasy ground in the wake of independence from Spain.17 Falling

under threat from an invading foreign power helped to mobilize and form a unified national identity as every political group opposed the foreign intervention.18 The United States, however, recruited through promised compensation and visions of Manifest Destiny. While patriotic ideals were not a prerequisite for enlistment in the army, deserters experienced criticism on this basis as if they had betrayed a nationalism they had never sworn to protect.

The personal motivations of the San Patricios have escaped the historical record. Most of the San Patricios were illiterate, thus first-person written correspondences or records are limited to San Patricio leader John Riley and the autobiographies of English immigrant soldiers who remained in the ranks of the United States army. Other written records consist of courts martial trial records, recorded when San Patricios captured at the battle of Churubusco were tried for desertion.19 While admitting that these circumstances likely shaped the appeals of the San Patricios, Guardino still takes them at face value when contending with allegations of coerced recruitment by John Riley.20 Luis Camnitzer, a German-born Uruguayan artist who created a 1992 exhibit on the San Patricios, faulted historians for privileging coerced statements (made with a death sentence awaiting them) over correspondence from John Riley that expressed an explicit political ideology in his actions.

Reasoning that many Irish immigrants had followed a path towards greener pastures by immigrating to the United States in search of stable work – including taking a job in the army when other work was unavailable – it is reasonable that they would continue this search for desirable labor conditions by deserting and joining the Mexican Army.22 However, Guardino makes one challengeable assumption, that "working class foreigners were not accustomed to living in such poverty"23 as found in Mexican society. Guardino overlooks the decades of famine in Ireland that pushed immigrants to cross the Atlantic in search of

work and better living conditions, missing important context for Irish soldiers in the army. Guardino's analysis of the deserters' motivations illustrates a trend within scholarship on the San Patricios; historians limit their perception of the Irish deserters to the context of the United States or Mexico, but rarely the context of mid-nineteenth century Ireland. Envisioning the unique position of the deserters and their politics within a bi-national war requires complicating the convenience of a dichotomous narrative by inserting a third-party: Ireland under British colonialism.

Ireland In Their Hearts

Analyzing the political turmoil of mid-nineteenth century Ireland enhances understanding of the motivations of the Irish San Patricios. While the Battalion organized themselves around the theme of national anti-colonial struggle and solidarity with Mexico,24 the prominent San Patricios scholars Peter Stevens and Robert Miller wrote-off their political motivations. The first San Patricio historian Dennis Wynn described the San Patricios as weak, pitiful, traitorous thieves.25 Michael Hogan gives them more agency but still fails to give their politics full consideration. Enlarging the scope of the historiography when addressing the San Patricios allows us to consider them as a case study in the historiography of transnational anti-imperial struggle.26

While the United States undertook preparations for its invasion of Mexico with an encamped army at Corpus Christie, about 175 miles from Matamoros on the Rio Grande, Ireland was in the throes of an economic upset and crop failure that would result in the deaths of millions and many others fleeing the country. In the decade leading up to the famine of 1845, poverty ran rampant throughout the United Kingdom, which included all of Ireland. Poverty was viewed as an individual failure, and relief from the government was hard to attain, if not impossible. Severe crop failures rocked western Ireland in 1838 and 1842,27 including John Riley's hometown of

Clifden, County Galway. Irish immigrants were predominantly poor, Catholic, single adult males who came to the United States in search of better economic conditions than what was available to them in Ireland.28

Studying the history of Catholic emancipation struggles in occupied Ireland during the 19th century provides parallels to the U.S.-Mexico War as well as insight to the political motivations of the San Patricios. Irish Catholic emancipation demanded that Irish Catholics have a say in their national politics through representation in parliament and voter enfranchisement. Political resistance manifested in all levels of Irish society and class, highlighted in the historical record by those who were lettered and prolific in their words by speech or paper.

One such resistance leader was Daniel O'Connell, an Irish lawyer born in County Kerry in 1775 nicknamed The Liberator for his role in securing Catholic emancipation in 1828. This nationalist political activism won O'Connell a cult-like status throughout Ireland, which he continued to mobilize for support of his National Association for Repeal of the Union – also known as Home Rule – which sought to liberate Ireland entirely from colonial British rule.29 O'Connell was known for adherence to civil disobedience, disavowing violence entirely. A new anti-colonial nationalist group formed alongside O'Connell's Repeal Association, Young Ireland. Committed to democratic reform and the spiritual identity of Ireland (regardless of religion, notable for an increasingly polarized society), Young Ireland came to ideological blows with O'Connell's Repeal Association in 1846 by refusing to accept what they viewed as a limitation on the struggle for Irish independence and ultimately withdrew from the Association entirely.

As men who picked up the gun in trade for a paycheck, the San Patricios with Irish nationalist tendencies likely felt greater affinity with the Young Ireland camp of the Home Rule debate, as opposed to Daniel O'Connell's attachment to civil disobedience. In desert-

ing to fight for Mexico, they returned to a politic of militant anti-colonial resistance denied them by O'Connell's Repeal Association. The Irish San Patricios fled imperialism and Catholic persecution under Britain's colonial rule, only to find themselves fighting the same ideological forces but under different nations: American imperialism flexed on Catholic Mexico. Their presence in this war reveals an overlooked parallel where a wealthy imperialist and Protestant nation endeavors to attack and occupy an economically upset Catholic one. The established San Patricio scholars overlook these historical contexts and parallels and fail to see their overt politicization.

The San Patricios, Anti-Colonial Transculturation and Public Memory

The San Patricios are remembered in contemporary commemorations by Mexican and Irish governments and populations. By analyzing the presence of the San Patricio Battalion in commemorative events in Mexico and Ireland, we can see that the impact the San Patricios had on history resonates with trans-Atlantic populations who have long struggled against imperialism, and thus are provided with a partial explanation for their absence in hegemonic narratives.

Commemorations to the San Patricios serve as celebrations of public history as well as exchanges in foreign relations between Ireland and Mexico, complicating the bilateral conceptions of the war between the United States and Mexico. A post on Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs website summarizes the role the San Patricios played in the U.S.-Mexico War, stating "the soldiers of the Batallón are still viewed as heroes in Mexico today." In acknowledging the importance of the San Patricios to the people of Mexico, the Embassy of Ireland to Mexico gifted a bust of John Riley in 2010. It stands across the street from a plaque reading, "In Memory of the Irish soldiers of the heroic San Patricio Battalion, martyrs who gave their lives for the cause of Mexico during the unjust U.S. invasion of 1847." The plaque is explicit in revering the

deserters and decrying the United States invasion, foregoing any semblance of historical objectivity.

Looking deeper into the actions of the San Patricios and their implications, we can don a Foucauldian lens – the San Patricios may have known what they did and why they did it, but they could not have known the extent of the impacts of their actions. While the San Patricios were locked up in pre-trial detention in Mexico, residents brought food and clothes to the prisoners to ensure comfort during confinement.31 Priests and social elites filed petitions for their release.32 While negotiating with the United States army for a treaty during a ceasefire, General Santa Anna spent months demanding the release of the San Patricios into Mexican custody. Whether driven by religion or transnational solidarity against empire, or some of the more selfish concerns that have been suggested, the effects of the San Patricios' desertion inspired sustained solidarity and amnesty campaigns at all levels of Mexican society near the front. Intended or not, the San Patricios revealed how unjust the War of Intervention was for the Mexican population – unjust enough to inspire some to fight for the other side.

The San Patricios are commemorated every September 12th at Plaza San Jacinto in southern Mexico City, where many of them were executed by the United States army. This plaza also hosts the statue of John Riley that was gifted to Mexico from the Embassy of Ireland, as well as a plaque on the back of a Catholic church listing the names soldiers in the battalion.

Bust of John Riley, commander of the San Patricio Battalion

Catholic church; plaque commemorating the members of the battalion tried for desertion

Ceremonies are also held in Monterrey, Saltillo, and the Museo de las Intervenciones in the Coyoacán neighborhood of Mexico City.33 Commemorations for the San Patricios have also occurred in Ireland. World renowned Irish folk band The Chieftains, winners of 6 Grammys who have released over 40 albums since 1964, collaborated with United States folk artist Ry Cooder for the 2010 album "San Patricio." Irish actor Liam Neeson appears on the song "March To Battle," reading a poem in tribute to the soldiers "across the Rio Grande." This album didn't disappear into The Chieftains' massive repertoire of music either, as they performed "March To Battle" as recently as their 2018 performance in Oslo, Norway.34 Annual commemorations also occur in John Riley's hometown of Clifden, County Galway in the Republic of Ireland.

In his 2013 visit to Mexico, Irish President Michael Higgins participated in a wreath-laying ceremony for the San Patricio Battalion at the Museo Nacional de las Intervenciones in Mexico City. In his opening remarks, he related the events of 1847 in both countries as memories of darker times and significant historical resonance, explicitly recalling the Great Famine and the war with the United States. He goes on to remark how "the San Patricios were reviled and cruelly punished by one side in the conflict, but cherished and remembered by the other."35 Imbricating histories of colonial subjugation as well as immigration, President Higgins articulates the cultural and material linkages between Mexi-

can and Irish people perhaps more succinctly than many of the scholars writing on the San Patricios have.

Through formal recognition and commemoration of the San Patricios, Ireland and Mexico practice and enact international relations with each other through acknowledging a shared history of subjugation and militant resistance to empire. Through Ireland's explicit acknowledgment of the unjust motivations of the U.S.-Mexico War, a sense of legitimacy is offered to Mexico. This acknowledgment does more than legitimize a historical perspective; it constructs national identities of solidarity and commonality between Mexico and Ireland. These expressions are not just enacted at the state level but at the public level as well when St. Patrick's Day is observed throughout Mexico, demonstrating a discourse that has enveloped these societies from the bottom up.

By shifting focus from how the San Patricios articulated themselves (or failed to) to how Mexican and Irish people perceive the San Patricios, a transnational history emerges. In deserting the United States army, the San Patricios ideologically deserted from Manifest Destiny and Nativism, rather than seek to find their place as citizens of the United States. The mechanisms of whiteness were not complete at this time and would require implementing new tools to develop the racial category, like military enlistment as a political obligation of citizenship. In their solidarity and amnesty campaigns, the Mexican people identified the imprisoned San Patricios as their own, pleading for the United States to release them to Mexican citizenship. Now targets of empire rather than tools, countrymen to Mexicans rather than hired guns, the San Patricios emerge as fellow rebels against empire by committing treason to citizenship. Given the lack of primary source material, the scale of contemporary memorialization of the San Patricio Battalion in Mexico and Ireland contrasts the lack of historical importance granted to them in the traditional scholarship.

Militarily effective and deadly, loyal to their religion, and committed to securing better conditions for their trade, the deserters who joined the San Patricio Battalion were fierce canonists remembered by U.S. military historians as cruel traitors. Contemporarily, they are memorialized by Irish and Mexican governments and popular culture alike as daring heroes who sacrificed themselves in service of the transnational struggle against empire. Their episode in history serves to deepen understandings of United States nation-building and Mexico's self-perception under foreign intervention, as a nation and its populations. The San Patricios exhibit how the Irish in diaspora saw themselves as actors within transcontinental imperialism, having fled British politics of famine in Ireland to arrive in the United States, ripe with Manifest Destiny and Nativism. The San Patricios were proletarian race rebels, opposing American imperialism and whiteness by politicizing their trade in fighting for Mexico against the invasion of the United States.

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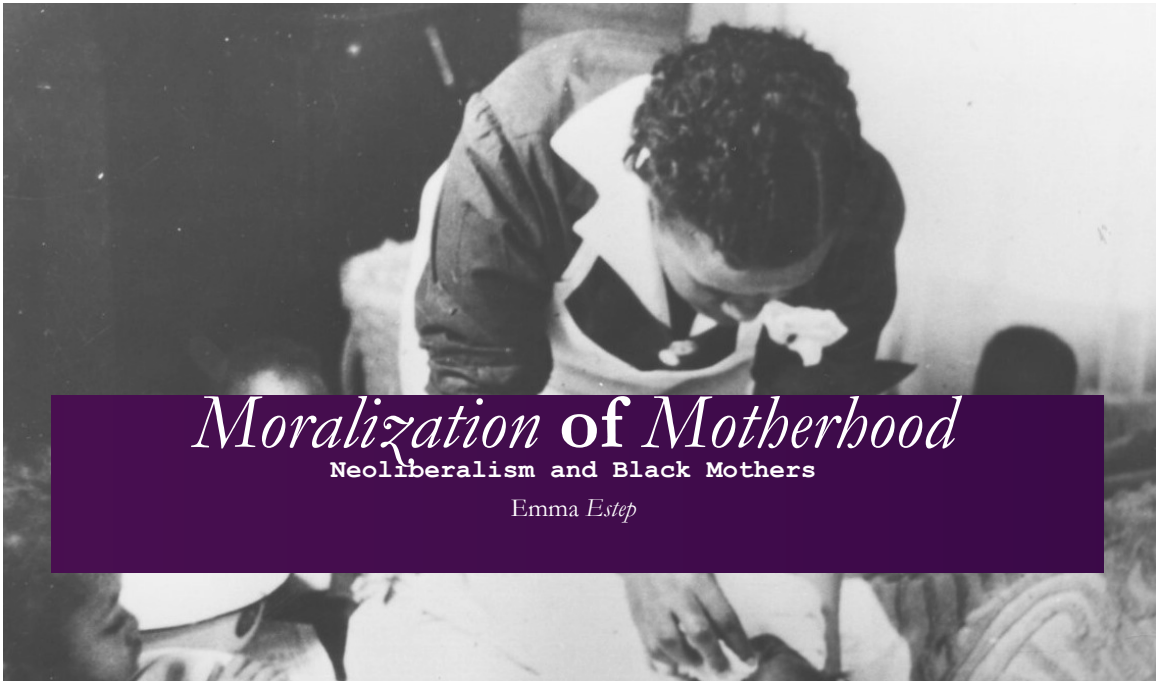
Moralization *of* Motherhood
Neoliberalism and Black Mothers
Emma *Estep*

Introduction

Throughout history, from chattel slavery to present day , our institutions have been embedded with mechanisms to seize and withhold Black autonomy. Though slavery is socially deemed abolished, the persistent effects of racism on an institutional and societal level hint that the racist grounds for slavery remain present in modern-day policies and the treatment of Black people. For instance, the War on Drugs that accelerated in the 1970s with an emphasis on crack was especially harmful to pregnant Black people because it perpetuated systems of oppression and systemic racism through its methods of enforcement. This war was constructed to curb drug abuse and drug-related impacts on children, but was instead used to prosecute pregnant Black people for drug use with punitive measures, such as incarceration, rather than with aid and rehabilitation.

This paper examines how the policies upheld by the state perpetuated systemic racism by placing the blame on the individuals and punishing them rather than taking on the responsibility of supporting directed victims of addiction. These policies disproportionately targeted Black pregnant people as irresponsible parents and drug users which enabled the government to perpetuate negative anti-Black stereotypes and legally punish a Black person's choice to carry a pregnancy to term. Last, but not least, these policies harmfully tied the medical system to the legal system for the purpose of restricting Black peoples' bodily autonomy, and the effects are still felt today in the health disparities present among Black communities.

In order to understand how the persecution of drug use escalated, we must examine the rise of neoliberalism and its core assumptions about welfare, governmental support, parenthood, and reproduction. This era coincided with the costs associated with the Vietnam War, rising manufacturing costs and high inflation rates, the oil crisis, and increased unemployment due to factories moving offshore. In response to these critical changes, the government made swift cuts in welfare assistance, healthcare, and education. These economic changes were driven by the neoliberal belief that business interests override individual interests, such as civil rights or social justice. This means that claims for racial and gender identity, sexual freedom, and the rights of disabled people were not viewed as economically sensible because they required a redistribution of wealth, while the elites and corporations sought to consolidate and secure wealth, keeping the market unregulated in their favor. In order to convince the public to resist welfare programs, redistribution of wealth, and regulation of the market, the upper-class used the motto "individual freedom" against "big government" to garner public support for an unregulated market by highlighting the importance of individual economic freedom without interference from the government (Ross and Solinger 99). This was a strategic move by the upper-class and business elites, because as corporations could expand without a cap while services to aid individuals, such as public education and healthcare, were underfunded and overlooked.

During this time, the tensions between the government and public grew, as well as the tensions between races and classes due to the ways governmental policies did or did not support individual freedoms such as civil rights. For example: "economically and culturally stressed" whites associated their own economic turmoil with the government's support for "special rights" to underserved communities, who were individuals facing multiple intersections of oppression (Ross and Solinger 100). At a time with high unemployment rates and declining federal aid, some people felt threatened by welfare programs that would require a redistribution of wealth, mainly by regulating the market, and services that would allow certain people more independence, such as access to contraceptives.

Although the Harrison Narcotic Act was passed in 1914, the War on Drugs which began in the 1970s has been most damaging to Black populations, specifically to pregnant drug users. The emphasis on drugs as the source of America's problems effectively diverted attention from policy welfare changes, and justified incarcerating disproportionate numbers of people of color. The 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which criminalized a ratio of one hundred grams of powdered cocaine to one gram of crack cocaine highlighted the class and racial discrimination behind this law: powdered cocaine was more expensive and typically used by middle-upper class whites, whereas crack, which was stereotyped as the 'inner-city' drug, was disproportionately used by people of color (Stanley, 1:24:12). Persecuting the same drug, but in different forms and at different levels, makes it clear that racism was at the root of the accelerated criminalization of crack use in Black communities. Concurrently, the incarcerated population exploded, which correlated with the prison industrial complex becoming privatized and largely for-profit . Unlike public prisons, these facilities answer to private shareholders rather than the public's interest and have a duty to maintain profit as their bottom line, meaning keeping more members of the population incarcerated is in their best interest . Also by incarcerating large numbers of people, the government was able to further their hold on population control, especially due to the laws on individual rights restricting full citizenship to people who have served time in prison. Instead of places for rehabilitation, prisons became housing for what was considered a disposable part of the population, namely marginalized people (Ross and Solinger 104). Consequently, between the years 1985 and 1995, there was a 707% increase in Black people incarcerated for crack use and possession (Stanley, 1:18:13).

Though the War on Drugs impacted all intersections of marginalized people, pregnant Black people became the main antagonist in the narrative portrayed by the government and the anti-crack campaign . Black mothers' failure to meet societal expectations of motherhood, fueled by core neoliberal beliefs, made them an easy victim for prosecution (Roberts 183). Standing at the intersection of racism and sexism, typically relying on welfare, and often unable to meet societal expectations of motherhood, pregnant Black people became the enemy of corporate interests and neoliberalism efforts. Prior to the War on Drugs, the

fetus had not been considered independent of the mother. However, this was contested in order for the state to claim interest in the fetuses that was strategically against the well-being of the mother. In this case, the fetus was portrayed as an "innocent victim of crack addiction" positioning the parent as irresponsible and criminal for the harm they caused to their unborn child (Tivis 37) . This new standpoint of the fetus as independent of the parent is important to examine for its irrationality, as the focus would not solely be on crack, but also other commonly used drugs known to cause harm to the fetus, such as tobacco and alcohol, if the government's intention was to protect the unborn from harm .

Concurrently, the knowledge that alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy caused fetal harm was already available within the medical field. To illustrate, from a 1961 study, "…prenatal alcohol exposure is the most common[ly] known cause of [cognitive dysfunction] in this country… In addition, researchers have held cigarettes responsible for a greater reduction in infant birth weight than crack, as well as for a larger number of affected children" (Roberts 307). However, if prosecutors did charge people for smoking cigarettes during pregnancy, there would be a disproportionate number of pregnant white people arrested-- in 1995 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that "18 percent of white mothers smoke cigarettes during pregnancy, compared with 14 percent of Black mothers" (308). These statistics demonstrate that singling out crack use amongst pregnant women disproportionately criminalized Black people. The government's decision to discern crack and therefore pregnant Black people perpetuate the racist stereotypes and violence Black people have faced since slavery. By targeting a group of people already labeled as adversaries, it was easy for the government to gain public support of the anti-crack movement because it allowed individuals to ta ke a stand against Black parenthood.

The War on Drugs continued to perpetuate systemic control of Black bodies by regulating and criminalizing their reproductive capacities. The governmental policies behind this anti-drug movement utilized racism against Black people to maintain control of Black bodily autonomy: "Portraying Black mothers as irredeemable drug addicts who are their children's worst enemy supports the view that population control is the only answer to Black people's plight" (Roberts 311). The mea-

sures taken to control Black fertility and punish Black people emphasizes how the goal wasn't to protect Black babies from harm like the dangers of crack, or to help people recover from addiction and poverty induced health issues, but rather to maintain systems of oppression by incarcerating Black people and taking away legal and social claims to their children .

Furthermore, the controlled negative images of Black women and their babies is a key component used by the government to justify their criminalization. The images of the Mammy, Jezebel, Matriarch, Welfare Mother/Queen, and Crack Ho seek to maintain harmful labels of Black mothers with the purpose to portray them as poor mother figures and serve to justify the removal of their children and further punishment . While each stereotype has a different set of defining characteristics, such as the Jezebel stereotypically being young and hypersexual, versus the Mammy being older and undesirable, each one strategically paints Black women as poor mothers. The belief that motherhood was a class privilege was instilled by the Reagan administration and created distinct definitions of legitimate and illegitimate mothers based solely on the factor of income. The moralization of motherhood by politicians and the lack of protections for marginalized individuals led to the assertion that only some people can be mothers and the policies regarding health and reproduction unequivocally reflected that belief. (Ross and Solinger 95-96). Reagan specifically emphasized the image of the 'Welfare Queen' because denouncing Black mothers pit the public not only against them, but also against the welfare and governmental support many Black mothers relied on, conflating welfare with Blackness, and condemning both. The notion that Black fertility is "not only nonessential but also possibly dangerous to the values of our country" was used extensively, framing Black parents as immorally reliant on public aid programs and justifying budget cuts to said programs (Tivis 35).

Not only were negative images strategically utilized to vilify Black motherhood, but they also functioned to instill fear for the safety of the country when Black mothers and their children were represented as poor workers, criminals, and taking advantage of welfare programs. This can be observed in the stereotype of the crack baby: afflicted with health problems and growing up as the next generation of crack addicts and criminals, the image of the crack baby was used to promote

fear just like the crack ho; "Permanently damaged and abandoned by their mothers, they would require costly hospital care, inundate the foster care system, overwhelm the public schools with special needs, and ultimately prey on the rest of society as criminals and welfare dependents" (Roberts 167). The crack baby is one of many stereotypes intentionally used to liken Blackness with welfare that made middle-class whites fear for their economic stability and personal safety.

To further disparage and pit the public against them, media representations of crack cocaine on Black mothers and their babies were based in unreliable, poorly executed, bias driven , and cherry-picked studies to misrepresent Black mothers as irresponsible and abusive. The lack of controlled variables in the studies, compounded with the selection of subjects living in urban areas with high-risk pregnancies meant the individuals already had multiple factors working against their odds of a healthy pregnancy. One of the core claims by the anti-crack campaign was that prenatal crack use led to underweight babies and premature births. However, this is already a disproportionate phenomenon among Black obstetric patients-- according to the Black Women's Health Imperative, they are three times more likely to have an underweight baby and two to three times more likely to give birth prematurely which is a disparity that still exists today among Black birth-givers. While using crack during pregnancy is not considered healthy, Roberts asserts that the media hyperbolized the degree of harm it caused to the fetus (168). The negative images of Black families, especially the crack ho and crack baby, fueled the misrepresentative and disproportionate studies denouncing crack use during pregnancy and resulted in the prosecution of pregnant Black people.

Equally important, the policies that tie welfare programs to law enforcement act as a pipeline from these programs such as healthcare to prison. Notably, the 1989 Interagency Policy was a policy created in South Carolina to address higher rates of crack use among pregnant women perceived by a local nurse. The nurse, Shirley Brown, approached Charles Condon, the local solicitor, who met with law enforcement, child protective services, staff at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), and the Charleston County Substance Abuse Commission to identify a solution to address the perceived higher rates of crack use in pregnant people. Their decision was to drug test patients without their consent, report positive drug tests to the local police, and utilize arrest and child abuse charges as forms of punishment. This policy was developed for a specific hospital, which primarily served an impoverished minority population, and it only applied to patients using Medicaid, who were disproportionately people of color.

Despite the perceived subject being pregnant drug users, it became clear that the Interagency Policy was constructed specifically to prosecute people of color: "MUSC's own record showed that drug use among pregnant patients was evenly distributed among white and Black women. Yet nearly all of the women the hospital reported to the solicitor were Black"(Roberts 183).

The Interagency Policy resulted in the arrests of forty-two women, all but one of whom were Black. The exception was a white woman, and her medical chart had noted that her partner was Black. Significantly, the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Health and Human services (HHS) found that this research had not been federally approved or mandated (Roberts 178-179). The Interagency Policy attempted to test the hypothesis that pregnant drug users would stop using drugs during pregnancy if they were presented with threats of incarceration, but there was no protection of the patient's rights to confidentiality as their medical information went directly to law enforcement without their knowledge or consent. The policy was found to violate civil rights by the NIH and HHS, and the program was dropped in 1994, likely because MUSC was under the threat of losing millions of dollars of funding . This stands as one of many occurrences of the unjust loss of bodily autonomy Black pregnant people have faced due to racism's presence in the medical system.

Moreover, the opportunities for drug addiction treatment were limited, furthering the cycle of oppression Black individuals faced, due to a gender-based belief that men are more likely to become addicts than women or people able to bear children. Additionally, punitive approaches, such as incarceration and loss of legal claims to children, were carried out at higher rates than supportive approaches, despite the fact that punitive approaches have been shown to be less effective, and even induce more harm towards the individual, often leading to more discrimination and lack of access to necessary care visible in the poor-quality healthcare in prisons and in the use of shack-

ling during childbirth. Supportive approaches on the other hand, seek to eliminate barriers to necessities, by providing prenatal healthcare and other forms of social and economic support to alleviate monetary disparities. Many in favor of the War on Drugs changes to governmental policy support the incarceration of pregnant addicts because they believe rehabilitation is readily available. However, not only are drug treatment centers few and far away from each other, but they often refuse pregnant patients due to the extra care and associated higher costs they require. In South Carolina, when the Interagency Policy was in effect, not one drug treatment center was available in the state for individuals to seek help (Roberts 198). Additionally, drug treatment and rehabilitation centers have historically excluded women due to the gender-based belief that drug addiction was a "male problem" (Roberts 198). In 1979, the National Institute on Drug Abuse found that only a quarter of publicly funded drug treatment centers were geared towards women A decade later, a survey of hospitals in large metropolitan areas showed that two-thirds did not have anywhere to refer pregnant drug users, further stressing that pregnant people of color are even less likely to receive the help they need and proving the cycle of incarceration to rehabilitation is broken.

During the era of human chattel slavery in the U.S., Black individuals were deemed inferior by their oppressors and pregnant-capable people were "valued" based on their reproductive abilities. Enslavers used violence to violate Black bodies and widen the margin of power they held. Shackling is the use of handcuffs, leg irons, and waist chains in order to restrain pregnant incarcerated individuals and restrict their ability to move during labor by shackling them directly to the bed. This forceful theft of bodily liberty has more than lingered in the U.S.: I n thirty-four states, the use of shackling on incarcerated individuals during labor is permitted without justification, despite that the American College of Obstetricians and the United Nations opposes it on the basis of human rights and fetal safety (Oparah 202). Additionally, incarcerated pregnant people have little autonomy regarding their birthing methods as they are often scheduled for C-sections without outside communication and against their will.

After giving birth in prison, individuals are at an increased risk for sterilization, often without understanding the implications or being given

the option to refuse. Though sterilization was first ruled as a violation of human rights in the 1942 Skinner vs. Oklahoma case, where the defendant was a white man, sterilization has nonetheless persisted as a method of reproductive control against people of color (Ross and Solinger 180). For example, one study found that California prisons sterilized inmates without state approval between 2006 and 2010 (Oparah 203). In addition, long-lasting beliefs about Black people and their health stemming from experiments on slaves permeates the treatment of Black people by the medical system today. Diagnostic lapses, or "when medical professionals minimize the perception of the gravity of a severe medical situation by others " can appear in many forms, such as ignoring a patient's concerns, or perpetuating myths about the health of certain bodies-- but all its manifestations are harmful and contribute to medical racism. One particular belief about Black bodies that prompts diagnostic lapses is "obstetric hardiness" (Davis 95-98) which can be attributed to the experimental and torturous work of Dr. James Marion Sims on enslaved people in the mid-nineteenth century. Sims' experiments are the foundation of an overwhelming portion of knowledge on obstetrics and gynecological practices that inform today's practices. The "father of gynecology," Sims experimented on enslaved women without providing anesthesia and repeatedly performed surgeries on the same victims, recording his findings in great detail. Sims did not use anesthesia on his Black patients who were often forced to him by their owners- under the false assumption that Black people naturally have a higher pain tolerance than white people. This myth still runs rampant throughout the medical field today: in a 2016 survey of 222 white medical students, half of them endorsed at least one myth about physiological differences between Black and white people (Villarosa 40).

The effects of these deeply ingrained beliefs about race and physiological divergences contribute to health disparities Black individuals feel today, particularly birth-giving parents and their children. Prior to 1992, it was widely believed that class was the major factor influencing the health and mortality rates of infants and their mothers. However, when a new study came out in The New England Journal of Medicine that isolated race as a risk factor for poor birth outcomes, the effects of race and racism on health rang clear: the researchers "…found that infants born to college-educated Black parents were twice as likely

to die as infants born of similarly educated white parents" (Villarosa 73). This study revealed racism as the culprit of disparity, and consequently, spurred a paradigm shift regarding the medical comprehension of infant and maternal mortality rates by proving that while education and class are important factors regarding health, they do not replace the significance of racism within our medical institutions.

Due to the racism that subsisted in the nation, the Reagan administration disproportionately prosecuted pregnant Black people during the War on Drugs using legal recourse and policies steeped in racism that mirrored the control of Black bodies during the first era of enslavement in the U. S. The justification for criminalizing disproportionate numbers of pregnant Black people during the War on Drugs acted as a continuation of control over Black bodies and systemic racism that further harmed and marginalized Black individuals and set up the mistreatment and reality Black people face in the future. By examining the Neoliberal era and the War on Drugs, we can predict future consequences of systemic racism in the nation. Not only is it vital for pregnant Black people and other marginalized groups to receive equal levels of care permitted to the most privileged groups in society, it's also imperative for the government to reconcile with historically oppressed communities and support Black-led reproductive justice collectives that seek to increase life-sustaining resources to Black individuals and populations by centering them in the processes that directly impact them. By making directed efforts to uplift Black liberty in institutes of medicine and healthcare, a reality where Black obstetric patients are treated with humanity, dignity, and empathy is possible. This is merely a step in the path to dismantling centuries-old systems of bigotry and racism burrowed deep in the skin of our society , but it's a worthwhile path when we become conscious of the ever-present truth that bigotry is not static; it's a disease that none of us are immune to. Emphasizing the voices of Black people and recognizing the historical violence inflicted onto their bodies entitles them to agency surrounding their health where more people are able to achieve bodily autonomy and resist the infection of systemic racism.

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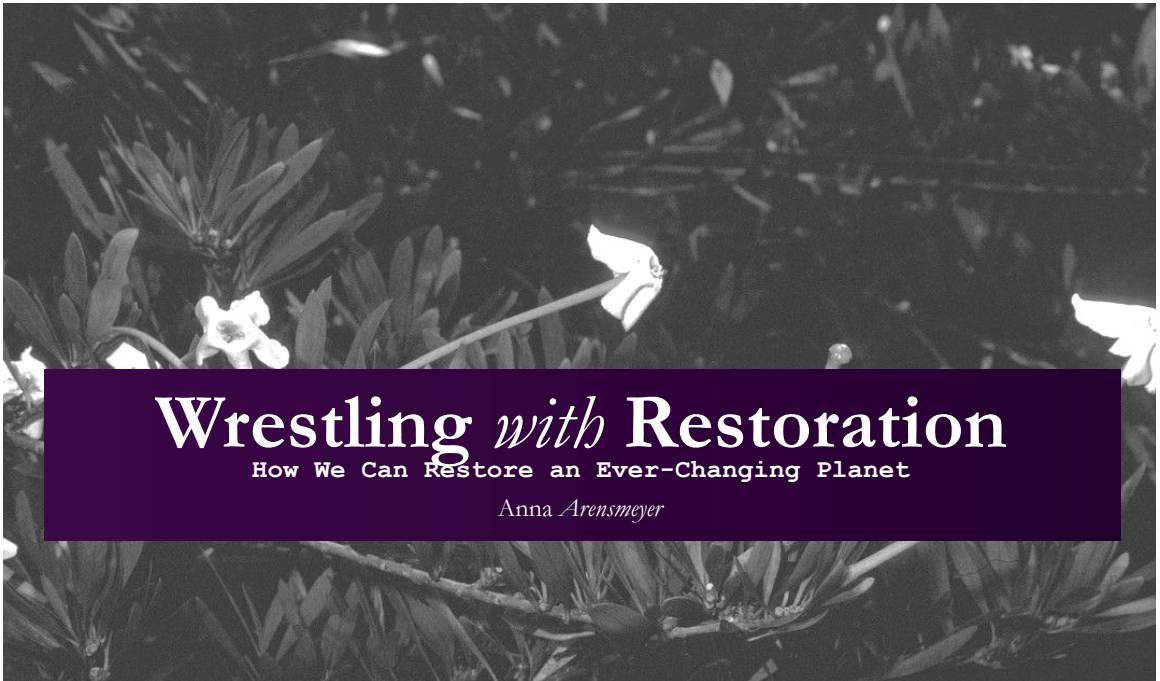
Wrestling *with* Restoration
How We Can Restore an Ever-Changing Planet

Anna *Arensmeyer*

Introduction

The state of the natural environment is at the forefront of national affairs, global concerns, and our minds. A myriad of environmental crises have triggered a worldwide state of alarm, causing a slew of political, social, and psychological consequences. Among the distressing headlines, fervent protests, and fanatical debates, a potent sense of grief has emerged due to the immense losses the planet has suffered. "One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds," echoes 20th century conservationist Aldo Leopold, illustrating that this grief resides in both our present and our past. As members of the environmental field tackle demands to "save the planet," that grief has been expressed in our drive to restore the environment to a time before human actions invoked such widespread destruction.

The field of ecological restoration is relatively new and rapidly transforming. Since its inception in the 20th century, the methods behind restoration have gradually shifted as we learn more about ecosystems and their dynamics (Guerrini & Jordan, 2014). However, in light of present-day realities, the initial stages of a major shift within the discipline have emerged. This new paradigm is rooted in the acknowledgment that many of our current beliefs and attitudes about the environment are legacies of archaic ideas not always supported by scientific evidence. Many restorationists argue that we must abandon the idea of pristine wilderness and historical baselines, as well as radically change our outlook on exotic species, if restoration is to be effective. Adopting an approach to restoration that uses a holistic view of the environment and focuses on restoring ecosystem function when it has suffered significant adverse impacts will ultimately make restoration more effective in this time of rapid global change.

As human impact on the natural world continues to increase, restoration has become an important tool in our care for the environment. A meta-analysis of restoration projects showed that ecosystem recovery is achieved in most cases, demonstrating that restoration is generally an effective technique when dealing with degradation (Murcia et al., 2014). With the knowledge of

this importance and the rapid rate of ecosystem deterioration, the UN has declared 2021-2030 the "Decade on Ecosystem Restoration," putting this field in the global spotlight and highlighting the need for a united and established methodology (UN Environment Programme, 2021).

According to the Society for Ecological Restoration primer, ecological restoration is defined as "the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed." In other words, restoration is seen as a response to ecological harm. But the terms "degraded," "damaged," and "destroyed" do not have a unanimous definition within the scientific community, and disagreement about how and when to diagnose an ecosystem as deteriorated is at the core of the ongoing debate surrounding restoration philosophy.

Exploring Past Conventional Thought
Until recently, the philosophy behind restoration was in part adopted from popular Western attitudes surrounding the environment and conservation. This outlook includes the notion of pristine wilderness, fidelity to historical baselines, and a hostile opinion toward exotic species. These concepts are found throughout ecological disciplines, are entrenched in our culture, and influence our society's relationship with the environment. In practice, however, these concepts ultimately hold back restoration projects and hinder us from utilizing restoration to its full potential.
Many people believe pristine wilderness exists as places that are completely removed from humans. The fascination with finding and preserving untouched wilderness can be traced back to the ideals held by well-known conservationists such as Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir, around the time that the National Parks system was established. During this period of history, what is now referred to as "The Yellowstone Model" was developed. Put simply, the model involves setting aside "pristine wilderness" areas and banning all human influence on the land. Many national parks are founded on the idea that we can keep sections of the wilderness unspoiled while the surrounding areas become increasingly degraded due to hu-

man presence (Marris, 2011). The general attitude permeating our culture is that untouched, remote areas are where one finds nature in its purest form, unsullied by humans . Only in these virgin wildernesses can we find nature in its true and "proper" state.

Also ubiquitous in popular thought is the belief that if we alter an ecosystem, we have a duty to restore it back in time to a pre-disturbance state, referred to as a "historical baseline" in restoration ecology. Many environmentally focused studies assume some type of baseline as a reference state for an ecosystem; in the Americas and Australia, pre-European contact is a common baseline for restoration because European settlers significantly altered the environment. In Europe, Africa, and Asia, however, there is not such an easily definable baseline, but ecologists generally think   of it as the time in human history before we were capable of extensive environmental modification (Marris, 2011). Palaeoecological data derived from lake sediments and tree rings are vitally important to our understanding of baseline ecosystems, especially when historical records are sparse, unreliable, or nonexistent (Davis et al., 2011). It is commonly thought that before or at this baseline point in time an ecosystem was more "pristine" than in the post-baseline era, during which time the ecosystem is in an unhealthy or wounded state. There is a popular attitude that human society has a moral obligation to fix these ecosystems and revert them to how they "should" be.

Finally, exotic species are near-universally regarded as a serious cause of damage. Many studies have been conducted to quantify and analyze the negative impacts of exotics, with several particularly noteworthy invaders causing major concern (Vitousek et al., 1996). These studies have resulted in a harsh attitude toward exotic species, leading most people to form a predominantly negative opinion of these organisms, and causing a rigid conventional native-alien dichotomy to develop in ecological disciplines and broader discourse.

Restorationists have come to realize that these beliefs and attitudes require significant adjustment if we are to have any success in the field. Key assumptions behind popular attitudes fall apart under scientific evaluation, and others are culturally ingrained beliefs that influence our

scientific work. Restoring an ecosystem to a pristine, baseline state limits restoration practice and is ultimately counterproductive because the environment is an ever-changing, dynamic system. Abandoning or substantially modifying some of our current beliefs allows us to more productively and proactively face an uncertain future.

Deconstructing The Pristineness Wilderness Model

Present-day realities have forced us to realize that there is no pristine wilderness. We have reached a degree of influence that can no longer be geographically limited to leave some areas untouched. While we have not influenced all ecosystems directly , by tampering with nutrient cycles, altering species distribution and land use, causing a loss of biodiversity, releasing toxic chemicals, and exploiting resources, we have inadvertently affected every area on the globe (Hobbs et al., 2011). Ecosystems are rarely geographically isolated from one another, so causing change in one area does not mean that surrounding areas are unaffected. Migration, shared waterways, and alterations in species composition are just a few ways that environmental change propagates geographically. Additionally, global forces such as anthropogenic climate change affect the whole earth, causing major transformations that we cannot contain regionally.

Restorationists further question the concept of pristineness by asking when and how we developed this concept. Our society views the environment through a dichotomous lens, assuming that anything "human" is inherently isolated from anything "natural." This translates into the idea that any given geographic area is either pristine—natural—or degraded—human— with very little room for an ecosystem to exist in between these two states. With this lens, the Yellowstone Model was established and operates under the assumption that we must sequester parts of the wilderness away from humans, who are the inherent enemy of nature (Marris, 2011). The concept that nature is imbued with a certain level of purity has been carried on to the present day , and restorationists have been tasked with slowly

unweaving this unhealthy belief.

In fact, with the aid of anthropologists, many restorationists have called into question the assumption that there was ever pristine wilderness. Humans have historically influenced nature to a greater degree than we once presumed, and there may not have been a time in ecological history that we could consider "pristine" unless we take a very substantial leap back in time. Between hunting, food cultivation, pastoralism, prescribed fire, and selectively planting and moving favored species, our prehistoric effect on the natural world was certainly notable (Hobbs, 2016).

The abandonment of the "pristine" concept does not negate or criticize the idea of setting aside land in something like a National Park system, but instead critiques the idea that these areas are kept completely free of change. Limiting human influence on select geographic regions is a crucial goal in conservation, but we must remember that we are limiting, not halting, change. Tying this discussion back into restoration practices, we must acknowledge that we live in a deeply managed world in which every area has been altered by human activity. Removing the pristine wilderness lens liberates us from the expectation that we must return an area to a "perfect" natural state, and we can instead begin to think of every area as having some degree of human influence. This gives restorationists a much more accurate perspective on the land in question and can ultimately make them more conscientious practitioners.

Critiquing Historical Baselines

Intimately linked to the idea of pristineness is the notion that restoration must return the environment to a historical baseline condition. We are often emotionally invested in restoring an area to how it "used to be" because this is seen as undoing harm we have caused, but we cannot forget that the environment is a naturally variable system, and baselines are not as straightforward as they might seem.

Ecosystems are not static; they are dynamic and experience constant spatial and temporal change, making them quite slippery when we try to define them at a certain location or time. According to Jackson and Hobbs, "perhaps the most natural feature of the world in which we find ourselves is its continual flux" (2009, p. 567) . For this reason, ecological restoration cannot operate by simply returning all the elements of the environment to a previous state. Environmental conditions have inevitably changed during the time elapsed between the target baseline and the present day, and it's possible that what once existed in an area can never occur again. Endeavoring to restore the environment to a historical baseline is comparable to aiming at an invisible, moving target.

If we attempt to restore to this uncertain target, how are we to know where the ecosystem would be in its "correct" trajectory? A vast range and combination of natural disturbances and changes could have altered the structure or function of an ecosystem in the time between the baseline and the present day. Without witnessing how the trajectory unfolds, how are we to know where it "should" be today? No matter how much palaeoecological data or historical information we have, many details about how an ecosystem used to be are still guesswork, and considerable gaps remain. Ecosystems are so complex and detailed that it becomes nearly impossible to know exactly what we are restoring to, or in what direction an ecosystem's trajectory was headed. Furthermore, how far back should we establish a baseline? Pre-industrialization? Pre-European contact? Pre-human? At what point in time do we establish that human actions ceased to be "natural" environmental events? In this way, baselines become a slippery slope of deciding which historical human disturbances merit our intervention and which do not.

Factoring in anthropogenic climate change truly causes us to reconsider the historical baseline approach to restoration. The altered biophysical setting human impact has created will cause many ecosystems to move in latitude or elevation, with the rate and extent of change increasing over time (Harris et al., 2006). There are predictions of novel climates by the year 2100, which will logically be followed by ecosystem shifts (Williams & Jackson, 2007). Considering anthropogenic climate change completely negates many historical baselines because, even if we did achieve restoration to a historical state, there is little guarantee that the climate of the near future will support those ecosystems. This has dire implications for the effectiveness of restoration as a discipline. If the scientific community cannot predict what types of ecosystems will be supported at a certain location, is it even worth restoring them right now? While only the coming decades can provide us with an answer to this question , at present we know that using solely historical references is going to prove increasingly difficult and may lead to the overall failure of a restoration project (Harris et al., 2006).

Change is a constant and innate phenomenon for the environment, so restoring to a historical baseline can, in some situations, be the equivalent of trying to turn back time. An ecosystem can stray away from its historical appearance but still maintain integrity and health, therefore not degrading . Difference does not always mean decline , and just because an area has experienced transformations does not mean it is inherently destroyed (Hobbs, 2016). Of course, there are some situations in which a baseline may be an appropriate restoration target, particularly where there is a specific, definable, and recent event that is the cause of degradation, such as a toxic spill or similar environmental disaster; the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is a prime example (Hobbs et al., 2011). However, given that these baselines are relatively recent, they may not truly be classified as "historical."

We should not completely disregard the history of a particular area, as it is a vital tool in the restoration of our planet's ecosystems; we have simply misused history

by assuming that any deviation from a selected point in time is inherently negative. Placing value on the past when it may not be an accurate indicator of our future could ultimately hinder restoration by failing to acknowledge that natural and anthropogenic change must be accounted for when considering the environment (Harris et al., 2006). As we face continued and escalating rates of change within our ecosystems, it will be increasingly important to use the past as a guide, not a baseline. These new strategies have been referred to as ecological "rehabilitation" instead of "restoration" due to the relative absence of historical continuity.

Rethinking Exotic Species

We have attached a predominantly negative label to all organisms outside their historic range. Yet for every harmful invader, there are many more relatively innocuous non-native species, and restorationists have begun to explore how we may make peace with, or even benefit from, these newcomers (Davis et al., 2011). Non-native species are defined as those that are outside of their historic range but have relatively little effect on their new environment, while invasive species are those outside their historic range that cause biological, social, or economic harm (Schlaepfer et al., 2011). This distinction is important because it acknowledges that not all exotic species are inherently harmful. The terms "exotic" and "newcomer" species are used here to refer to all species outside of their historic range, regardless of their invasive or non-native status.

Nativeness is not an indicator of evolutionary fitness, nor does it mean that a species has exclusively positive effects on its surrounding environment. This has sparked debate about whether we should evaluate species based on their native status or on some more holistic measure (Davis et al., 2011). Only a fraction of exotic species establish themselves and cause a substantial degree of harm, notable examples being the Eurasian zebra mussel (Dreissena polymorpha) and the golden

apple snail (Pomacea canaliculata), which are estimated to have caused billions of dollars in overall damage (Vitousek et al., 1996).
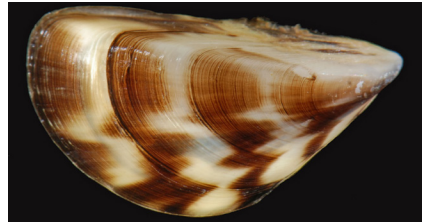
Zebra Mussel (Dreissena polymorpha)

Golden Apple Snail (Pomacea canaliculata)

Regardless, it seems as if every species known to be outside of its historic range is treated as a threat without adequate evidence to justify this outlook.

While some researchers emphasize that non-native and invasive species are a major reason for biodiversity loss and environmental harm (Vitousek et al., 1996), there is a debate within the restoration field as to if these species actually cause such severe destruction. Davis et al. argue against the claim that exotic species are a major threat to biodiversity, stating that this allegation is not backed by data and is unnecessarily causing us to treat all non-natives as a threat (2011) . There is some evidence that non-natives can increase biodiversity because they can improve the structural heterogeneity or complexity of an area, which causes a rise in species abundance and richness. F or example, native plants in Puerto Rico can better establish themselves in groves of non-native plantation trees than in sparsely vegetated areas. There are also documented examples in which non-natives hybridized with native species or caused novel evolutionary lineages

among native species, resulting in an overall increase in biodiversity. New species could also act as source material for future speciation events in response to external environmental change, such as an altered climate. In other words, exotic species may be the most likely to succeed in supporting native species because they are an avenue for genetic diversity and ecosystem adaptation (Schlaepfer et al., 2011).

Researchers find that, in some scenarios, non-native and invasive species can assist in restoration. Newcomer species can provide critical habitat or food to native, and sometimes endangered or rare, species. Non-natives can also fill a niche that a closely related native species occupied prior to its extinction, acting as a kind of trophic substitute (Schlaepfer et al., 2011). They could be used in restoration to provide, augment, or reinstate some ecosystem function that was lost, such as nitrogen fixation or erosion prevention. This could, in turn, aid in native species recolonizing an area once the environmental conditions are improved and therefore act as a catalyst for restoration (D'Antonio & Meyerson, 2002).

The general bias against exotic species causes a disproportionate number of studies to measure the negative impacts of non-natives, leaving few to measure possible environmental or economic benefits and therefore impeding our holistic consideration of these species (Schlaepfer et al., 2011). The scientific and cultural perception of non-natives has resulted in a management approach that ultimately wastes resources trying to eradicate species that may not be all that harmful. Completely removing exotic species is a very resource-intensive process, and some reserve managers report spending an enormous amount of their annual budget on exotic species control, often totaling millions of dollars (D'Antonio & Meyerson, 2002).

With our current technology and resources, remaking exact historical species assemblages may not be possible or worthwhile. Exotic spe-

cies removal and prevention must be ongoing to be effective, as simply removing all the unwanted individuals from an area will rarely result in eradication because plants build up seed banks in the soil and animals can migrate (Davis et al., 2011). To achieve removal, an area must be routinely cleared of the species of interest and, when dealing with plants, a revegetation process must occur following the removals to prevent further colonization. Subsequent monitoring of the area is necessary to ensure eradication. This continuous process is resource intensive, and many restoration projects likely do not have the necessary room in their budget to be successful.

Just as species introduction has ecological effects, so does species removal. Restorationists must acknowledge that non-native and invasive species may have altered the structure or function of the system they are in and removing them from the ecosystem may lead to a cascade of consequences. Sometimes, removal of a species can stimulate the establishment of other exotics (D'Antonio & Meyerson, 2002). If the species has naturalized to its surrounding environment—especially in locations with multiple exotic species established—re moving it from its ecosystem may leave that niche unoccupied, resulting in unintended effects because species interactions may be significantly altered (Schlaepfer et al., 2011). Newcomer species also have the potential to change abiotic factors, such as soil chemistry or topography, which are exceedingly difficult to reverse (D'Antonio & Meyerson, 2002). The cost of eradication and the impracticality of returning an area to a pre-invasion baseline state has caused some restorationists to question if it is justified or wise to attempt complete removal. When combined with the emerging research about the potential positive effects of non-native species, it becomes evident that there may be a better way of managing species that are outside of their historic range.

A more balanced and unbiased approach may ultimately serve us better than our current attitude by helping us use our resources more

efficiently. Instead of attempting to remove every exotic species, a restoration project could judge species based on their overall ecosystem impact rather than their location of origin. This would allow a project to focus precious resources more intensely on species with a negative impact and therefore increase the probability of success in managing them. We must take action to remove invasive species that have been found to cause harm, but it must not remain the norm to put this hazardous label on every exotic species. Restorationists are realizing that it is imperative to examine empirical evidence of harm to the environment, human health, or the economy before acting.

A New Approach

Restorationists could benefit from taking a step back and adopting a broader perspective on where our efforts are best placed to ensure effective restoration. Many restoration ecologists are calling for an abandonment of our perceptions of what an ecosystem "should be" and are instead advocating for the consideration an ecosystem's value based on its current state and context. In doing so, we are presented with the opportunity to adopt more pragmatic attitudes and methods than we have traditionally held . Ecosystems and the societies that depend on them are rapidly transforming, so it would be proactive to begin anticipating change and making decisions with the assumption that change is certain. Ridding ourselves of our current dichotomies surrounding ecosystems will allow us to use what we have to the best of our ability, capitalizing on anything that has an overall positive function. While this approach may involve restoration projects that return an area to something resembling a past version of itself, we cannot guarantee it. Dismantling the "human versus nature" mindset requires considering both these entities within restoration projects. Restoration ultimately impacts both humans and the natural environment because the two are an integrated system. Care must be taken to consider both our needs and our impacts as a part of natural processes instead of viewing ourselves as an isolated

system . The time has passed to strive for places with no human impact, but we can lessen our impact in many places. In doing so, we begin to consider our actions as part of a greater system with many stakeholders, producing restoration plans that mutually benefit human and non-human species (Hughes et al., 2017).

Restoration should occur when a consequence arises or a threshold is crossed that causes significant adverse effects on the function of the ecosystem, not because the area is no longer "pristine." This would emphasize a more functional, rather than structural, approach when analyzing ecosystem change, underscoring ecological processes and dynamics instead of static patterns. Many researchers argue that function, not structure, will prevail as we step into this new paradigm (Harris et al., 2006; Jackson & Hobbs, 2009). Utilizing this process-oriented methodology will direct restoration efforts toward ecosystems whose balance has been upset rather than center focus on the historical accuracy of an area. If there is a case when a structural approach would be more suitable, caution should be taken to avoid recreating the exact historical structure. A more functional approach to restoration ultimately benefits ecosystems because it allows restorationists to use the past as a loose guideline and involves both native and non-native species in the process of recovery (Jackson & Hobbs, 2009). This focus will ensure that we do not become preoccupied with resurrecting the past, but instead consider the relative and inherent value of each ecosystem.

In realizing this new strategy, it is critical to have specific goals for each restoration project. Having clear functional objectives such as restoring ecosystem goods and services, providing habitat for endangered or at-risk keystone species, or restoring the function of a contaminated area will ensure that a project is not attempting to merely recreate a historical structure. A restorationist's goals should be decided on a case-by-case basis and tailored to each ar-

ea's unique requirements, including factors such as budget, community and tribal needs, species of interest, important ecological functions and services, and land use history.

Restorationists should also be mindful of eco-systems' remarkable resilience. Some systems resolve problems if given an initial jumpstart and some time (autogenic recovery) or with the removal of external pressures (passive resto-ration) (King & Hobbs, 2006). There is also evidence that species or species assemblages have the capacity to adapt to rapid changes (Murcia et al., 2014). Some palaeoecological data show that even sensitive species have persisted through periods of environmental transformation by tapping into genetic vari-ability to adapt to systemic shifts (Quat-trini et al., 2020). If it is likely that an ecosystem in question does not have a high degree of resilience, we could fortify it by ensuring genetic diversity and potential for migration, providing species the opportunity to roll with the punches as future changes occur (Harris et al., 2006).

Conclusion

As the earth rapidly transforms, so must our methods of restoring it, and the grief that seeps from our awareness of the environment and its losses is a testament to the necessity of a new approach. Our cultural and scien-tific norms surrounding restoration must con-tinue to evolve if we are to keep pace with environmental change. Previous conventional restoration methodologies are insufficient be-cause they attempt to reverse inevitable eco-system alteration and are in part influenced by cultural perceptions rather than relying strictly on scientific knowledge. A less rigid approach to restoration would take prominent environmental issues in stride and use an eco-system's positive aspects to its, and our, advantage. Embracing a new paradigm will make us more effective restorationists and help us achieve healthy ecosystems. This updated methodology accepts the confines of our past—that we cannot undo the actions that led to so much change—but mitigates that change to the fullest extent.

1.0
• History as template
• Singular trajectory
• Compositional emphasis

2.0
→ History as guide
→ Multiple trajectories
→ Processual emphasis

+ Pragmatic goals to reflect livelihood means

Restoration

Fig. 1: Adapted from Higgs et al. (2014)

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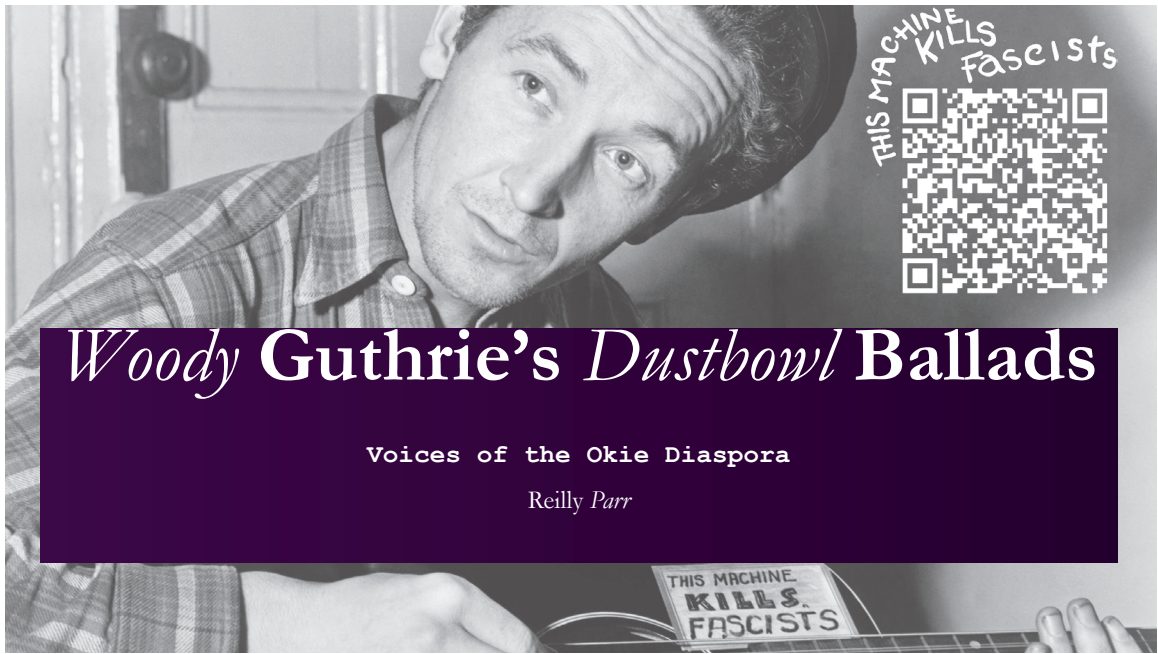
Woody **Guthrie's** *Dustbowl* **Ballads**

Voices of the Okie Diaspora

Reilly *Parr*

Introduction

American Folk singer Woody Guthrie contributed to the political climate of the Great Depression with his radical activist music, In a letter to Alan Lomax (American ethnomusicologist and a friend of Guthrie's), Guthrie recounted his use of folk music to convey a uniquely working-class struggle, emphasizing that folk music "ain't a song you can write down and sell. This song is everywhere at the same time. Have you heard it. I have." Within this music is an identity rich in political struggle against poverty and agricultural fascism. Woody Guthrie, his life rooted in the migration that brought thousands of working-class migrants to California in the 1930s, was a key player in representing Dust Bowl culture.

Depictions of migrant identity are most commonly recognized in the foundational work of John Steinbeck, John Ford, and Woody Guthrie. However, Charles Shindo argues in "Voices of the Migrant" that Guthrie's attempt to generalize the migrant experience places him in opposition to the actual desires of migrants. While this might be true of the fictional adaptations produced by John Steinbeck and John Ford (neither of whom were actual dust bowl migrants) it is not true of Woody Guthrie. Though not every migrant had the same political motives, they generally desired economic stability from their low-paying jobs and relief from the debilitating system of capitalism. Guthrie shares this simple desire in his music and incorporates it with criticism of the larger political economy that kept migrant workers in poverty.

Guthrie's solidarity with migrants is the theme in his album, Dust Bowl Ballads, as he uses gallows humor and the "doom" trope to portray the resilience of migrants escaping from the Dust Bowl. His album made sense of the harsh conditions migrants faced; he laughed in the face of the dust, the crop-lien system, and the greater capitalist system that incited the California labor strikes of the 1930s. It is still common today for poor white folks, especially those living in the South, to be regarded with the "hillbilly" stereotypes seen in California. However, by reasserting agency to working-class people through folk music, Woody Guthrie gave voice to an American identity that is often forgotten in the collective memory

of United States history. This American identity is defined not by the dream of "getting rich," but rather the desire for basic economic stability in the exploitative capitalist system that kept people chained to agricultural tenancy. It is the desire to produce and harvest without the overarching control of a crop boss or a landlord - to be entitled to the goods that one's labor produces.

Woody Guthrie responded to the representation of Okie migrants as "backwards" or "freeloaders" in California's economic system in his writing and music. He dedicated his lyrics to the migrants, writing that "these here songs ain't mine. The Government says so, and so does Victor Records, but really they ain't… This bunch of songs ain't about me, and I ain't a going to write about me, cause every time I start to do that, I find that I run out of material." The portrayal of migrants as communities to blame or victimize was common in California during the 1930s. Woody's advocacy in his lyrics brought political agency to migrants with whom he shared a common experience. His direct experience in the migration and his participation in the subsequent labor strikes in California would lay the foundation for Woody Guthrie's folk music.

Guthrie's music plays a key role in representing the working class in Southern, Midwestern, and Appalachian cultures- areas that were heavily displaced by the Dust Bowl crisis. His participation in the historical Dust Bowl migration and subsequent labor strikes provided opportunities for hope and lamentation among migrant communities. This essay will examine the historical context of Woody Guthrie's folk music in the 1930s, migrant identity, the impact of the crop-lien system and the dust storms, religious reactions to the Dust Bowl tragedy, and Guthrie's socialist politics embedded within his lyrics and publications.

Roots in Oklahoma
Guthrie was born in Oklahoma in 1912 amid a transformative period in Oklahoma's collective class consciousness. Guthrie's father,

a prominent anti-socialist political figure in Okemah, Oklahoma, named his son after the newly elected president, Woodrow Wilson. However, as the folk singer describes in the "Awtowbiografie" of his first column, Woodrow Wilson Guthrie was "too much of a name for a country boy," so we know him simply as "Woody." Guthrie's early life was riddled with tragedy and bad luck, despite his recollection being somewhat joyful and carefree. Woody and his family were first hand witnesses to the rise and fall of oil money, due to the massive oil boom in Okemah. When his family fell apart, Woody was left on his own. He eventually moved to Texas to live with his father while he made money selling liquor and painting signs. He was talented from a young age, reading, writing, and learning how to play music. He began to write the songs that would eventually appear on Dust Bowl Ballads after the Great Dust Storm of April 14th, 1935, took Pampa, Texas, where he lived. He settled with some relatives in California in 1937, leaving a pregnant wife behind. It was in California that Woody would rise to the public eye and become a notable "Dust Bowl Refugee," hailing from the political scene in Oklahoma.

Guthrie was a witness to the previous labor movements in Oklahoma that set a precedent for the massive strikes in California; the "Green Corn Rebellion," the Farm-Labor Union, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the electoral success of Eugene Debs in 1912. One early song is reminiscent of Guthrie's upbringing in a politically radical Oklahoma setting. Written in 1935 before he stepped foot in California, Guthrie writes: "If I was President Roosevelt/ I'd make the groceries free/ I'd give away/ new Stetson hats/ And let the whiskey be."

Guthrie's music was reflective of his dissatisfaction with capitalism years before he arrived in California, indicating that there was something important happening in his early life that influenced him as a radical. Guthrie's father was a far-right political actor with sympathies towards the Ku Klux Klan and a disdain for workers' rights. Considering that Guthrie's father was known for his advocacy against socialism, his political tendencies were not created by the influential members of

his family, but rather, resulted from the conditions he witnessed and absorbed through his experiences with the political space around him.

Guthrie's Oklahoman identity was shaped by the radical political conditions he grew up in, which would later influence his advocacy for the proletariat class in his music. During the same year Guthrie was born, Eugene Debs, a leader of the American Socialist Party and candidate for the President of the United States, made the greatest electoral gains of his career in Oklahoma, where he held 16.42% of voters. The Okfuskee County, where Woody grew up, had over 30% of the vote in favor of Debs. Resistance had been churning in the hearts of Oklahoma's laborers and tenant farmers and spread through large-scale agrarian and proletarian radical movements. When Guthrie was five, the "Green Corn Rebellion" took place, in which hundreds of Oklahoma's tenant farmers organized a march on Washington. As the oil industry ramped up in Oklahoma, so did the organizing efforts of the Industrial Workers of the World, known popularly as Wobblies. Woody's identity as an Oklahoman was born from the hotbed of agrarian and proletarian labor organizing, and shared this identity with other Oklahomans who migrated to California once the Dust Bowl hit. His participation in the San Joaquin Valley labor strikes directly fueled his political alliance with proletarianism and his growing desire to advocate for the Okie migrant in his writing and music.

Escaping the Dust

Prior to the Dust Bowl disaster of the 1930s, dust storms were an occasional occurrence in the Great Plains. By 1930, conditions worsened as frequent and severe dust storms made it impossible to maintain agriculture, destroying the livelihood of thousands. The abandonment of farms and resulting financial ruin created widespread poverty and hunger. Dust Bowl historian Donald Worster has called it "the most severe environmental catastrophe in the entire history of the white man on this continent. In no other instance was there greater or more sustained damage to the American land, and there have been few times when so much tragedy was visited on its inhabi-

tants." The Dust Bowl was a social, political, and economic upheaval, not merely a natural phenomenon. Predatory, capital-intensive agricultural practices laid the ground for this devastation, stripping the Great Plains of its natural protective grasses. Newly-invented tractors powered by internal combustion and combine harvesters, the monocropping of cash crops like wheat and cotton, combined with severe drought and wind erosion produced a major environmental disaster that destroyed thousands of lives. However, blaming the dust alone for the major upheaval in Oklahoma would be an overstatement. In reality, it was the crop-lien system that would send thousands to seek work in another state.

As Guthrie comments, one could have endured these appalling conditions "if it was the dust alone, cause you're made of dust, and can take a lot of it for a little while, or a little of it for a long time," as most Oklahomans did in the years leading up to 1930. It was impossible to envision a way out when "you owe the bank money, you can't pay it, you can't get credit, you can't get fuel, coal, groceries nor a complete set of new stuff. A wealthy person could endure the storm more comfortably or could immediately afford a train ticket out of the dust. for the majority of people who did not have these luxuries, however, there was no solution but to leave their homes behind, often carrying everything they could on foot without the money to buy a train ticket. This class divide sparked an added consciousness of the system's failure to support working-class families in their pursuit of self-sustaining homeplaces.

The creation of this refugee crisis was not simply a result of the weather conditions alone, but the economic system that had failed tenant farmers years before the Dust Bowl took place. As Worster explains: "The expansionist energy of the United States had finally encountered a volatile, marginal land, destroying the delicate ecological balance that had evolved there. We speak of farmers and plows on the plains and the damage they did, but the language is inadequate. What brought them to the region was a social system, a set of values, an economic order." The agricultural sector was made up mostly of tenant farmers

who had years of poor harvests prior to the Dust Bowl. There was a larger economic crisis already present for tenant farmers, as well as other laborers and their families. They were indebted to the crop-lien system, in which farmers used their anticipated harvests to secure credit from merchants in order to purchase the supplies necessary for raising crops and surviving. This practice was extremely predatory to tenant farmers, as they had no chance of escaping the system once the crops stopped growing indefinitely. The Dust Bowl was the disaster that made the previously hopeless conditions impossible to withstand any longer.

It is politically significant that the term "refugee" is used in place of "migrant" in many of Guthrie's writings. "Refugee" describes someone fleeing violence, persecution, or a disaster, which is exactly what the refugees of the dust storms were running from. The people who were forced to flee the dangerous conditions of the Great Dust Bowl were also fleeing from an oppressive economic and social system. Guthrie's songs contain underlying messages of liberation, not only from the dust storms, but from the social order that kept workers chained to the crop-lien system which guaranteed a rapacious cycle of poverty.

The uncertainty of this fundamental shift left working-class agricultural families reeling, looking for some semblance of solidity to cling to. For many, turning to religion helped satisfy this desire. Guthrie acknowledged that the upheaval may not have been the direct result of all human sin, but rather, the result of destructive agricultural practices in an economic system that kept tenant farmers intrinsically tied to their debts. Guthrie's perception of sin does not blame his fellow Oklahomans, who were indebted to merchants and landlords. To Guthrie, sin was not an individual error of the tenant farmers, but rather, the agricultural practices and crop lien system that would lay the conditions for the Dust Bowl crisis.

The feeling that the dust storms were retribution for the sins of humankind was common in Oklahoma's deeply Christian population. These religious sentiments undoubtedly influenced Guthrie's depiction of doom in his words: "Human race ain't been treatin' each other right. And robbin' each other in different ways with fountain pens, guns, and havin' wars and killin' each other and shootin' around. So, the feller that made this world, he's worked up this dust storm…" Oklahomans saw their collective demise in the dust storms: Guthrie recalls that it felt like "the end of the world." Truly, this was an end for many Oklahomans who lacked the economic means to withstand the storms. It was an end to their lives as they had known them, an abrupt shift in the space that had once been home. Guthrie begins Dust Bowl Blues by creating a vivid image of uncertainty that circulated around families, writing: "Our relatives were huddled into their oil boom shacks, / And the children they was cryin' as it whistled through the cracks./ And the family it was crowded into their little room, / They thought the world had ended, and they thought it was their doom." Blaming the dust on sin provided a coping mechanism for unbearable grief. Oklahomans imagined a way to escape their retributions by absolving themselves of sin and escaping doom. They imagined that their suffering might end if they devoted themselves to Christianity, with the hope that their afterlife would be far from the hell that they saw in the dust.

Guthrie humorizes religious escapism in one of the best-known songs off of Dust Bowl Ballads through a preacher who capitalizes off of the lingering threat of death. In "Dusty Old Dust (So Long It's Been Good to Know Yuh)," Guthrie writes, "The churches was jammed / and the churches was packed / An' that dusty old dust storm blowed so black / Preacher could not read a word of his text / An' he folded his specs / an' he took up collection." Guthrie conveys the sheer terror of the Dust Bowl while incorporating a sense of irony with respect to this preacher. Through this ironic capture of a selfish preacher, Guthrie is making a political statement to fearful Oklahomans; that they must abandon their old ways of escaping and seek refuge in new paths. Thus, the humor in Guthrie's Dust Bowl Blues is liberating. Not only does it relate to the terror surrounding the dust itself, but it acknowledges the desperate conditions that existed prior and grounds itself in the eco-

nomic upheaval of migrants. The novelist Kurt Vonnegut, notable for his dark wit, describes gallows humor as the act of "laughing in the middle of political helplessness." This is exactly what Guthrie does in Dust Bowl Blues by sending his listeners an underlying message that ironizes their religion as escapism, depicting it instead as fraud: a worship of money and power. Oklahomans must abandon the preachers, landlords, and politicians who capitalized from their suffering and instead look within themselves and to one another to overcome this terror.

Throughout his time in California, Woody Guthrie maintained his empathetic voice for migrant workers. Not all of his songs spoke of the dark comedy of Dust Bowl experiences, depicting instead the true terror of the migrants' horrific suffering and loss. Yet, there is still resilience in Guthrie's depiction of suffering and uncertainty. In "Dust Cain't Kill Me," he writes, "That old dust storms killed my baby, / But it can't kill me, Lord / And it can't kill me." There is nothing funny here. Nonetheless, whether through humor or tragedy, they convey a message of resilience. Woody is a voice of dignity for those indebted to merchants, evicted by landlords, and thrown out into the dust.

Finding Refuge in California
Economic, social, and political tensions grew as migrants arrived in California from the Great Plains during the 1930s. Strict immigration laws passed in 1929 expelled the Mexican and Filipino workers who previously made up the majority of California's cheap labor supply, and the new migrants were now able to provide the agricultural sector with cheap labor. Migrants who traveled west were mostly white, while Black people living in areas affected by the Dust Bowl migrated North.

By the 1930s, Woody had become one of the most prominent Dust Bowl refugees outside of the notable representations of them, like the "Migrant Mother" photo or Tom Joad from The Grapes of Wrath. His talent brought him many connections within the local folk music scene and the Communist Party, building a community around him to rely on for support. Still, his numerous interactions with migrants living in farm labor camps informed his role as a representative for Okies and as a political activist.

Guthrie's songs reached a folk audience through his performative use of misspelled words and [Southern? Appalachian? Okie?] vernacular. Although he wrote this way in his public-facing lyrics, his private letters to friends and family reveal that he was well aware of proper spellings and pronunciations. Guthrie had more education than most of his fellow migrants, and his use of misspelling was an intentional rhetorical move to reach the common spaces of migrants. He used this clever vernacular to reach a certain audience, one he hoped could identify with his experiences.

In addition to his published music, Guthrie was a public voice for the plight of migrants among Communist Party members and their correspondents in People's World and the Daily Worker, as well as KFVD radio station in Los Angeles. He sang folk music and took breaks to tell stories. Letters flowed in from LA's large migrant audience. His casual and humorous style allowed him to speak intimately with his audiences as if they were close friends or relatives. After securing a consistent place at KFVD, Woody grew tired of the routine and responsibility, so he left Los Angeles to travel around California. It was at this time that he traveled to various labor camps, witnessing the conditions of the migrant workers as well as participating in the massive strikes that took place in the 1930s. Painting himself as a representative for Okies, Guthrie publicized the plight of migrants in hopes of turning the narrative away from representations of migrants as a cause of California's tensions, but rather, as victims of low wages and unsanitary conditions of agricultural work. While his music and writings were always politically charged, they became even more so after his time traveling California. In his writing, Guthrie directly criticized the growers, bankers, and politicians, steering clear of political jargon.

Stereotypes of the Okie Migrant

While people from Oklahoma made up only a small portion of the total migrant labor population, "Okies" became the focus of the political and economic tensions that had plagued the state of California. They were stereotyped as "freeloaders" of California's relief system, due to their lack of permanent settlement. Migrants were blamed by the state, corporations, crop bosses, and the media for high tax rates and their use of necessary relief programs. On the other hand, Dust Bowl migrants were characterized as victims through media depictions, a notable example being the commonly used picture of the "Migrant Mother;" a woman dressed in rags looking solemnly into the distance as her small children cling to her. The dichotomy portrayed between victim and exploiter in media representations like this often removed the agency of migrant workers and mythologized their authentic experiences.

One newspaper article struck a nerve with Guthrie as he wrote in his column, "Woody Sez," that the article's portrayal of migrants was "not to make you feel in your heart a genuine sorrow for your brothers and sisters of our American race that's got to live in such places, but try to make you believe that these underprivileged people are designing in their hearts to "Dig some Easy Gold"- off you Taxpayers." Guthrie's rebuttal is critical of the stereotypical portrayal of migrants for its blatant classism. He knew firsthand that migrants were not the cause of California's economic stability, rather, they were an example of the greedy system that kept people living in desperate conditions. He also was well aware that migrants were hard workers who desired stability, but their low wages diminished any chance to achieve this. He used his public influence to passionately defend migrant workers from the propagandized depictions of them.

The discrimination made it all the way to California's lawmakers who passed an amendment threatening jail time for anyone who assisted in the transport of migrants that were labeled as "indigent." Relief has often been refused to those who lack permanent settlement, as vagrancy laws are common throughout American history. The presence of thousands of migrants in California fueled the decades-old hatred for homeless people. Migrant workers were not to blame for California's dire economic conditions as they had not caused the poor conditions of the farm work, the unsanitary labor camps, and the low wages they received . Rather, migrant workers illustrated that these conditions were rampant, inciting the need for labor strikes.

Anti-Okie propaganda circulated throughout small businesses and corporations, newspapers, and the California legislature. Large corporations and crop boss organizations depicted Okies as perpetrators of "un-American activity" which translates to trade unionism. The idea of what it means to be an American was heavily contrasted between working-class unionists and the organizations that targeted them. For migrant workers, labor organizing was a collective effort to demand higher wages and better treatment by their employers. For these activists, the American Dream Was the absence of private ownership, with no boss to reap the benefits of one's individual labor. When they demanded this, they were met with state-sanctioned violence that was designed to target the communist threat. Because communism was considered a looming threat to the capitalist industry, U.S. government and corporate power continued to demonize working-class people who choose to organize.

Role of the State and Growers in the Political Economy

Prior to Guthrie's arrival, the Los Angeles Police Department erected a blockade to limit the movement of migrants into California from the borders of Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon. This blockade was unconstitutional,violating the restrictions laid out by LAPD's municipal jurisdiction, as they were working in places up to 800 miles away from Los Angeles. Migrants who could show proof that they had a lofty sum of money had a better chance of entering. Although before his entry, Guthrie references this in "Do Re Mi," describing that,

Folks back East, they say, is leavin' home every day,
Beatin' the hot old dusty way to the Califor-

nia line.
'Cross the desert sands they roll, gettin' out
of that old dust bowl,
They think they're goin' to a sugar bowl, but
here's what they find
Now, the police at the port of entry say,
"You're number fourteen thousand for today."

California is a garden of Eden, a paradise to
live in or see;
But believe it or not, you won't find it so hot
If you ain't got the do re mi.

"Do Re Mi" is a common teaching method to the
basic musical scale for children and musical
beginners. Guthrie uses a simple form of lyric
and guitar chord to convey a larger message
about the California government's hatred of
poor people, especially in his use of "do"
(pronounced doe) as an indicator of success.
He warns people away from their preconceived
perceptions of California through catchy and
memorable lyrics while painting a picture of
a corrupt system. Guthrie demythologized the
popular narrative that California was a place
for prosperity. Not only was California's so-
cial and political climate evident of the mis-
treatment of migrants, but it also exemplified
a corrupt system of crop-growing in which food
was owned and controlled by crop bosses; mi-
grants and laborers were entitled to none of
these crops.

Guthrie identifies a vital cause of labor orga-
nizing: to be employed but to still be poor.
For example, Guthrie writes, "I mined in your
mines and I gathered in your corn / I been
working, mister, since the day I was born /
Now I worry all the time like I never did
before / 'Cause I ain't got no home in this
world anymore." He reported directly from
within the migrant labor camps in California
and was a witness to the heinous labor con-
ditions of migrant workers. He contests the
wrongful characterization of migrant workers
as "freeloaders" in this song, fully aware
that employed migrants and their families
were still subject to poverty. Guthrie cor-
rectly identifies that hard work will not make
you rich but instead, will make you part of
a working class. He also hints at radical
solutions to these problems within his music.

The song displays the concept of a producer's
democracy, in which the person who works the
land reaps the benefits of their labor. Iron-
ically, however, the laborer who works the field
is not entitled to any of the crops. Through
his use of irony, Guthrie paints a vision of
a world where the means of production are con-
trolled by workers.

Woody Guthrie, A Voice for the Proletariat
Our modern concept of American identity re-
jects radicalism in favor of so-called "tra-
ditional values". This is defined in the years
following Guthrie's release of Dust Bowl Bal-
lads in 1940 when Washington DC embarked on
a mission to limit the rights and freedoms
of those deemed "communist agitators." Woody
experienced this violent surveillance first-
hand when he was kicked off of KFVD where he
held regular talk shows and performed music.
His presence on the radio became concentrated
with political radicalism once he returned
from his travels through migrant camps in Cal-
ifornia, his experiences fueling a new rage
for capitalism. He also publicly praised Sta-
lin and the USSR when they signed the contro-
versial Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Hitler's
Germany to prevent aggression between the two
states. This was a divisive subject for the
American left, who were contending with the
complexity of non-intervention ideology and
the resistance of fascism abroad. Guthrie
publicly grappled with these complexities and
was the subject of criticism by both those
within the American left and right.. Guth-
rie was no saint: his life was riddled with
inconsistencies and flaws. But his intentions
stayed true to building solidarity with work-
ing-class people and his music was represen-
tative of this idealism. He wrote and sang to
grapple with what he witnessed. His creations
were never meant to be perfect, but honest.
His words paint a picture for his listener
to imagine, an image that evokes feelings of
sorrow and irony. He makes accusations that
incite a unique message, one that does not
simply make victims of migrants but helps
them reclaim something that was taken. In
Guthrie's music, tradition and liberation are
never mutually exclusive.

Guthrie's Dust Bowl Ballads reminisces on the
traditional values of the American Dream, in-

cluding financial stability and self-sustaining homemaking. However, he does not end with that dream alone. He actively criticizes the capitalist system for hindering those values that hold importance to migrants from Oklahoma. Contrary to Shindo's depiction of Guthrie as hypocritical for politicizing the traditional minded migrant in his artistry, his radicalism is not necessarily at odds with the traditional values of those he represented. Rather, his use of radicalism within folk music makes sense of the conditions that separated working-class people from achieving economic stability. He writes about migrants: "Them folks are just a lookin' for one thing, and that one thing is what all of the books and bibles call Freedom…We're hard hit. We're hard hitters, but it's a dern cinch, we ain't quitters." Guthrie is the epitome of a working-class collective dreaming of something fairer and more sustainable than the resources available to them.

Guthrie does not stray from the traditional values of his fellow Dust Bowl migrants: he attempts to preserve them by advocating to expand the social and political status of migrants. As he traveled to and from various labor camps, Guthrie was a witness to the desolate conditions of the migrant family and a direct participant in the San Joaquin Valley labor strikes. Woody's active role in these major historical events allowed for a genuine representation of migrants, whether or not they truly represented each individual migrant. Other artists' portrayals either demonized or victimized Okies during the Great Depression, painting them solely as victims and giving them only a passive role in their own liberation. Although Woody Guthrie acknowledges their mistreatment he blames their conditions not on circumstances, but on the social, economic, and political system that hinders the prosperity of working-class people.

Negative stereotypes of poor working-class people are timeless, particularly if they are from the South, Midwest, or Appalachia. Poor folks are constantly individualized for their economic position. Rather than having critical conversations about systemic racism, corporate greed, or the exploitation of un-

documented workers, our attention is focused on the individual failings of poor folk. By enforcing these stereotypes still, we ignore the migrant history that Guthrie represented, in which migrants were active participants in their own liberation through their organization of massive labor strikes. Though our world is not an exact reflection of the one Guthrie witnessed, it is a continuation of the same system. Our political economy still favors those who are in control of capital. Our agricultural industry is rampant with exploitation of migrant workers carried out by corporate farms. Corporate farm workers have no control over the crops their labor produces and their undocumented status allows for their hostile working conditions to come under little scrutiny. Because no one is protecting workers from exploitation, it is reasonable to assume that many workers have no other option than to look for power within themselves, in the form of a union. Guthrie's lyrics contain messages that criticize predatory agricultural and labor practices, and advocate for a worker-controlled economy. Thus, Woody Guthrie's lyrics are timeless- but should they be?

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Sam **Hankins** is a senior at WWU studying Fine Art and Studio Art with a concentration in mixed media. Her favorite book is *Eileen* by Ottessa Moshfegh.

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Jannah **Hinthorne** - *Editor-in-Chief*

Hey there! I'm Jannah (she/her), Editor-in-Chief of volume 13 of Occam's Razor. I'm a senior at Western majoring in English with a literature emphasis and minoring in women's literature. When I'm not working, studying, or sleeping, I am gobbling up books– especially creative nonfiction and poetry. I'm passionate about collective learning and personal storytelling as practices of freedom, and I look forward to putting my pedagogy into action as a professor of English one day. My favorite book I read this year was This Here Flesh by Cole Arthur Riley– one of the most beautiful, life-shaping books I've ever read.

Eleanor **Scott** - *Associate Editor*

Greetings! I'm Eleanor Scott (she/her) and I will be going into my third year at Western. I am an English Literature major with minors in Theatre and Technical Writing. I enjoy reading, hiking, chess, and yelling at the Great British Baking Show with my friends! I don't have a career super-dream laid out yet, but one day I hope to get into professional editing or work as a book agent. My favorite book is East of Eden by John Steinbeck, and my favorite movie is, and has been since the fourth grade, Ferris Bueller's Day Off.

Nadia **Bartrand** - *Associate Editor*

Hi! I'm Nadia, I use they/them pronouns, and I'm a senior getting my BS in Sociology! I love learning about whatever topic(s) my brain has decided to let crash on its couch that week/month/year, and I've been on a huge animated media kick recently as well. My dream is to someday write an ethnography OR publish academic research centered on autism/neurodiversity—I'll take whichever one life offers me! I don't have a favorite book, but I'm currently reading Evicted by Matthew Desmond (highly recommend).

Edme **Guetschow** - *Associate Editor*
Hello! I'm Edme Guetschow (she/her) and this is my second
year as a History Major at Western. In my free time I love
to do art, along with writing, reading, archery, or any
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mine currently is to write a paper on the history of de-
tective stories across cultures, and a casual dream is to
learn how to play an instrument. My favorite book is hard
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Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston, and my favorite
movie is the 1977 animated adaptation of The Hobbit.

Ella **Woolsey** - *Lead Designer*
Hey!! I'm Ella (they/them) and I'm OR's Lead Designer and
a sophomore at WWU!! I've been an artist for about as long
as I can remember and have refined a pretty acute artis-
tic eye, so when I started screenwriting as a hobby, I
made posters for my own projects! Many of those I put into
a design portfolio, and now here we are. I love to write
all sorts of things and make music, someday I'd love to
write and direct a film/series, or direct and develop a
whole video game series. My favorite movie is Titane, and
you can find my creative work on Instagram @molotawv!! So
excited to be able to create some pretty pretty pictures
here.

Kenny **Phillips** - *Associate Designer*
Hello! My name is Kenny Phillips, I go by He/Him pronouns,
and this is my third year pursuing computer science at
Western! I love drawing and writing, at this point I can't
go a day without them, and dream of being able to design
my own video game projects! I hope to be able to delve
into creating other media like cartoons and books as well.
It's been so long that I'm not sure if my favorite book is
my favorite anymore, but one thing is for certain, Grass-
hopper Jungle by Andrew Smith is a book I have never been
able to forget.