A NOTE ON FORMAT

For the sake of uniformity and readability, Slideshow articles have been formatted using the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition, even in cases where the author’s original thesis work was formatted in AAA, APA, or MLA format. However, in recognition of the interdisciplinary character of these pieces, our authors were allowed to choose either Chicago’s Author-Date system (more characteristic of the social sciences) or its Notes-Bibliography system (more characteristic of the humanities) for their citations.

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Foreword

Welcome to Slideshow 2014! This year marks the tenth anniversary of Slideshow as well as the tenth anniversary of the first graduates of the Merle Kling Undergraduate Honors Fellowship. As such, this issue offers a rare opportunity to look back on all that the Kling Fellowship Program has accomplished.

The Undergraduate Honors Fellowship Program began in the fall of 2003, the same semester in which Washington University’s International Writers Center renamed itself the Center for the Humanities. In that year, as Professor Gerald Early wrote in his 2004 Slideshow Foreword, “one way that this Center’s advisory board thought that we could engage students [was] through encouraging and supporting independent research for a select number of students who majored in any of the humanities disciplines.” Thus, the new Center’s first fellows were undergraduates: five seniors who only spent a single year as Undergraduate Honors Fellows. Their Slideshow included not only articles crafted from their ongoing honors thesis research but also several pages of student-written descriptions and acknowledgments, a trend that our 2014 Slideshow continues with its student-authored Editor’s Note.

Beginning in 2005, the Undergraduate Honors Fellows applied to the program as rising sophomores and made a two-year commitment: their program was modeled after the University’s thriving Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, which was already more than a decade old. Between 2009 and 2012, Slideshow was published together with the Mellon Mays Fellowship journal, The Inquiry, and the two seminars occasionally met together. In 2009, the Center’s honors program acquired a new title: after the late Dean James E. McLeod suggested that the fellowship’s name should link it more closely to the University, the Undergraduate Honors Program was formally named after Merle Kling, a distinguished WU alumnus, professor, and provost who had passed away in 2008. Over the years, the Kling Program was unquestionably successful in fostering a love of humanistic scholarship: alumni tracking efforts indicate that an astonishing 50% of the 2004-2013 Kling Fellows went on to Ph.D. programs, with an additional 25% embarking on master’s programs.

Many aspects of the Merle Kling Undergraduate Honors Fellowship have remained constant for the past decade: each Fellow performs research under the supervision of a faculty mentor who advises them from the perspective of their chosen field or discipline, while the junior and senior Fellows meet together in a weekly or biweekly interdisciplinary seminar to offer mutual feedback on project drafts and to discuss the underlying fundamentals of humanistic scholarship. Dr. Mary Laurita, Assistant Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, has provided administrative coordination across the entire Kling experience, from sophomore recruitment to senior celebration and alumni outreach. Professor Gerald Early, the Merle Kling Professor of Modern Letters and the Center of the Humanities’ founding director, also remained the Faculty Director of the Kling Program for most of its first decade.

In 2013, when Professor Early stepped down as Center director and embarked on a well-deserved sabbatical, the current Kling seniors became some of the first Kling Fellows to experience a change of leadership. During calendar year 2013, the
role of Kling Faculty Director was expertly filled by Professor Erin McGlothlin, who brought her own rich experience in undergraduate teaching and mentoring to the seminar table. In the spring of 2014, as Professor McGlothlin in turn went on leave, the Kling Fellowship implemented a long-discussed plan and spent the semester meeting together with the senior colloquium of the Interdisciplinary Project in the Humanities under the adept direction of Professor Joseph Loewenstein. Each group has enjoyed an attentive new audience for their respective research projects in the combined seminar. Beginning in the fall of 2014, Professor Early will resume Kling leadership with the support of Center Director Jean Allman, J.H. Dexter Professor in the Humanities and herself a former Kling faculty mentor.

I joined the Center for the Humanities as Academic Coordinator in July 2010, and I have been co-teaching the Kling seminar and taking part in the Kling community ever since – not a very long tenure compared to those of Professor Early, Dean Laurita, and some of the three-and four-time Kling mentors on the Arts and Sciences faculty! This year, however, I am privileged to write Slideshow’s foreword not only as an historian but also as a person who has watched this particular cohort of six Kling Fellows grow and develop as they adjusted to new leadership and took on new responsibilities. They have worked together in order to ensure that the Kling Fellowship Program goes from strength to strength and that many Kling traditions are rethought while others—including Slideshow—remain vital. At the same time, each of them has conducted a highly successful individual research project from which these Slideshow articles are drawn.

Four of our senior Kling Fellows selected from their honors thesis work to produce traditional academic journal articles. Sarah Gallo uses a series of ethnographic interviews and observations to examine the ways in which people living with HIV in St. Louis are able to reclaim their personal autonomy through spiritual belief and practice, despite the series of bureaucratic and physical challenges they face. Nathaniel Hyman explores the interplay of tensions between Puritan theocracy and New England mercantilism during the first decades of the Massachusetts Bay Colony’s existence, analyzing the shifts in the colony’s self-understanding as its leaders formed, identified, and punished or expelled a series of religious dissenter with mercantile connections while remaining economically dependent on merchant trade. Maggie Ingell breaks down the prevailing American assumption that atheists lack a strong moral foundation through a detailed critique of faith development theory and the ways in which its theological assumptions unintentionally exclude and delegitimize atheism. Allyson Scher argues that the act of reading literature engages a special mode of cognition, one open to creative thought, pattern-forming, and new associations; she then describes the results of an experiment she designed and conducted in order to test the cognitive outcomes of reading different textual genres.

The remaining two senior Kling Fellows presented the fruits of their research in highly readable yet remarkably erudite pieces of long-form literary journalism. Eunhye Oak researched health policies, consulted the history of medicine, and inter-
viewed physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in order to explore the changing faces of health care in twenty-first-century America. Tianqi Wang uses her encounters with a series of well-known lexicographers as a frame to analyze the legacy of the twentieth-century “dictionary wars” and the linguistic debates that pervade contemporary Internet discourse as they affect the gradual shift of dictionaries from print to online media.

The six articles in this year’s Slideshow are remarkable for their ambition, for their maturity, and for their serious and sustained attention to the fundamentals of humanistic scholarship. Operating through a range of disciplinary lenses, the Kling Fellows provide substantive research to address important questions and show their tremendous promise as future scholars, whatever their terminal degrees. I know that all the WU faculty and staff who have supported these students over more than two years of Kling Fellowship share my pride in their accomplishments. But I also know that their articles are well worth reading on their own merits – and a very persuasive argument for another decade of Slideshow!

—Wendy Love Anderson, Ph.D.
Academic Coordinator
The Center for the Humanities
Washington University in St. Louis
Editor’s Note

Having inherited the task of editing this journal, we began to wonder why the journal was called Slideshow in the first place. After all, few images appear in this volume. It then occurred to us that Slideshow is perhaps just what it sounds like: a series of images, each a snapshot of time, spanning across the past two years of our intellectual pilgrimage. A passage from The Year of Magical Thinking comes to mind, in which Joan Didion wishes for a way to transcend the “impenetrable polish” of words:

As a writer, even as a child, long before what I wrote began to be published, I developed a sense that meaning itself was resident in the rhythms of words and sentences and paragraphs, a technique for withholding whatever it was I thought or believed behind an increasingly impenetrable polish. The way I write is who I am, or have become, yet this is a case in which I wish I had instead of words and their rhythms a cutting room, equipped with an Avid, a digital editing system on which I could touch a key and collapse the sequence of time, show you simultaneously all the frames of memory that come to me now, let you pick the takes, the marginally different expressions, the variant readings of the same lines. This is a case in which I need more than words to find the meaning. This is a case in which I need whatever it is I think or believe to be penetrable, if only for myself.

The journey of our projects from conception to completion has been anything but linear. Over the past two years, we have constantly turned to our mentors for guidance, tested our ideas on fellow peers in the seminar, drafted and scrapped countless snippets of writing, and, at the end of it all, produced tangible products that inevitably diverge to some degree from the courses we initially charted. Independent research is a narrative of change and academic self-discovery. For some of us, the evolution of our projects has been intricately tied to our personal development throughout college, during which we have grown as enamored of questions as of answers, and discovered not only the disciplines that we enjoyed learning, but also those in which we felt inspired to delve further—in inquiring.

Our methods of inquiry took various forms—reading the texts of past and present scholars, examining historical documents, performing experiments, conducting interviews, and even travelling. The year 2014 marks the first in which the Merle Kling Undergraduate Honors Fellowship has expanded its program to include projects in the genre of literary journalism. We have therefore divided this journal into two sections by genre: the first contains scholarly articles of the standard form, while the second comprises pieces of literary journalism.

The following pages form a highlight reel—or Slideshow—of the products of our research, and they are, we hope, as close to Didion’s Avid as a printed body of undergraduate articles can get.

—Eunhye Oak and Tianqi Wang
Editors of Slideshow 2014
Spirituality as an Act of Surrender in the HIV Illness Experience
Sarah Gallo

In this ethnographic study, I investigate the ways in which spirituality manifests in the daily experience of people living with HIV in St. Louis. My research explores how spirituality interacts with biomedical models and how spirituality shapes patients' relationships with their bodies, selves, and loved ones. Drawing from literature on spirituality in chronic illness, embodiment and psychological surrender, I argue that in the space created between the pharmaceutical technology of antiretrovirals and the daily lived experience of being on an HIV care regimen, spirituality facilitates an empowering process of "surrender" that allows people living with HIV to reclaim their autonomy. My research reveals that spirituality emerges as a tool for St. Louisans living with HIV to reclaim control over their bodies, identities, and personal lives.

A 2013 article in the *Atlantic* compares non-adherence to antiretroviral medication for people living with HIV to what they call "a common joke":

A faithful climber [is hanging] by a branch off the edge of a cliff. He turns away a rope and a helicopter rescue, and even declines to fly when he magically sprouts wings, each time proclaiming "God will save me!" Eventually, he falls, and accuses God at St. Peter's Gates of abandoning him.

"What do you want from me?" God asks. "I sent you a rope, a helicopter, and wings. You can't help some people."

The article describes the decision of a Pentecostal man who has chosen to trust God with the progression of his HIV rather than biomedicine, and this decision is depicted as a dangerous leap of faith. This scenario begs the question: must spiritual faith be at odds with biomedicine throughout the course of a person's illness? Can the two not form a mutually beneficial combination that helps people living with HIV to remain connected to their bodies, their loved ones, and their ambitions? Is it possible that a person who decides to share the burden of disease with a spiritual force is actually responding to the challenges posed by current medical treatment rather than rejecting its benefits?

An HIV diagnosis implies physical limitations as well as existential challenges that make some people feel as if they are teetering precariously on the edge of a cliff of their own. Though the virus itself can now be effectively managed most of the time with modern antiretroviral treatment, the experience of living with HIV cannot be reduced to merely its biological properties. In *The Illness Narratives*, Arthur Kleinman elaborates on the ways that chronic illness informs a person's entire orientation to the world around him or her, suggesting that "we can envision chronic illness and its therapy [as] a symbolic bridge that connects body, self, and society. This network interconnects physiological processes, meanings, and relationships so that our social world is linked recursively to our inner experience" (1988, xiii).
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“What do you want from me?” God asks. “I sent you a rope, a helicopter, and wings. You can’t help some people.” (Lahey 2013)

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living with HIV, a chronic illness, and adhering to its treatment must adjust not only to side effects like fatigue or diarrhea, but in addition to a new way of viewing their now-diseased bodies, their families’ responses to learning their statuses, and the possibilities and limitations of their futures.

For long-term survivors, who may have been told upon diagnosis that they had only months to live, adjusting to the fact that they could grow old can be difficult and confusing. While a positive HIV diagnosis once meant a quick and certain death, now the greatest challenge posed to people living with HIV is learning how to navigate the banalities they never expected they would live to see. One such man entering his late fifties explained to me: “For years I lived thinking I was going to die, that I couldn’t make plans. Now I have to get serious about planning my retirement.” His worries about when and if he can retire are common to many men and women of his age, as are his concerns about his teenage son staying out too late and getting too serious with his girlfriend. These worries, however, are embedded in the context of the severe fatigue he experiences as a result of his HIV and a drug regimen that includes taking eight pills a day.

From the moment individuals learn of their positive status, a variety of social and political forces begins to act on them and reconstruct their sense of personhood. Although antiretroviral medication can be very effective, the bodily side effects of treatment and the gaps in funding policy force individuals to surrender their jobs, hobbies, and identities to the disease and the structures that regulate the HIV illness experience. The often-prohibitive side effects of antiretroviral treatment coupled with the difficulties in funding medications can make many HIV-positive individuals feel powerless in the face of their disease.

In this paper I explore the forces that shape the experience of being HIV-positive in St. Louis through the narratives of seventeen HIV-positive individuals and thirteen leaders in the HIV care community, from the City Department of Health to non-profit organizations to churches. I collected these narratives over the course of eighteen months through observation and semi-structured interviews. This methodology allowed me to move past the existing literature and address questions of self-meaning in the context of illness, or how people living with HIV understand their identities and place in their particular social world. Previous studies have examined the effects of spirituality on disease outcomes and quality of life, often utilizing quantitative metrics. The goal of this study, however, was to illuminate the lived experiences of people with HIV, to breathe life into CD4 counts and prescriptions, and to capture a glimpse of the people who have been lost and found by their disease and their faith.

“The goal of this study...was to illuminate the lived experiences of people with HIV, to breathe life into CD4 counts and prescriptions, and to capture a glimpse of the people who have been lost and found by their disease and their faith.”
context. Through my observations there and elsewhere, I was able to conceptualize the network of services available to people living with HIV and the evolving landscape of care, education, prevention, and activism in St. Louis. Over the course of eighteen months I observed at a housing facility for people living with HIV, at a non-profit organization offering case management in addition to a variety of support groups and programs, and finally, at an outpatient infectious disease clinic that provides care for over 1,800 patients, many of whom are HIV-positive. I shadowed a nurse practitioner in the infectious disease clinic and conversed with her patients both during their appointments and afterwards in the form of semi-structured interviews. During my time in the clinic, I observed both the humanity of caregivers and abundance of resources juxtaposed with homelessness, drug addiction, and debilitating social stigma. I saw that a disease that affects people of every gender, race, class and sexuality manifests itself differently in each of these groups as a result of their beliefs about spirituality and personhood.

In the context of these narratives, I argue that in the space created between the pharmaceutical technology of antiretrovirals and the daily lived experience of adhering to and funding an HIV care regimen, spirituality facilitates an ironically empowering process of surrender that allows people living with HIV to reclaim their autonomy. In contrast to the bureaucratic and physical surrender enacted by the politics of antiretroviral distribution and the HIV virus itself, the process of spiritual surrender can paradoxically help people living with HIV to navigate the uncertainty of living with a stigmatized chronic illness and mitigate feelings of alienation from their own bodies. My research reveals that spirituality emerges as a tool for St. Louisans living with HIV to reclaim control over their bodies, identities, and personal lives.

**Surrender, Illness, and Faith**

The disposition to abject surrender seems odd, however, since an HIV diagnosis no longer threatens to disrupt the life and goals of an individual to the extent that it did thirty, or even fifteen, years ago. HIV was once seen as a fatal and uncontrollable threat to the public welfare, but attitudes have shifted as now there are a variety of drug regimens customizable to the individual that if taken properly can manage the disease and promise a normal life expectancy. With effective antiretroviral treatment, the largest barrier to treating HIV is getting people tested and diagnosed. Once a person receives a positive HIV diagnosis, he or she is assigned a caseworker and referred to a clinic. There are food pantries, housing facilities, prescription deliveries, support groups, bus tickets, taxi stipends, and psychological and spiritual counselors available to ensure that patients get proper care. However, the structure of the care system itself regulates once autonomous individuals to a state of dependency that can be difficult for them to accept, and they reject many of these forms of assistance. Additionally, most patients are not dealing with HIV as an isolated issue, and these externalities may be barriers preventing them from best utilizing the resources at their disposal (Marx et al. 2001, 240). Nearly all of the HIV-positive people I
interviewed had experienced an intense depressive episode at some point in the course of their illness. Others struggle to remain in control of their disease because they are simultaneously trying to manage their syphilis, schizophrenia, extreme loneliness, single parenthood, and/or a lack of adequate financial resources that leaves them unable to afford food or shelter.

The practice of surrender lies at the heart of the narratives of the people I spoke to who are currently living with HIV. In “Surrender and the Body,” sociologist Kurt Wolff describes meanings of “surrender” to include “total involvement, suspension of received notions, pertinence of everything, identification, and risk of being hurt” (1974, 19). By this he means that one aligns his or her worldview, identity, goals, desires, and focus to a particular entity whose nature is not entirely fixed or certain. Surrendering to HIV, according to this definition, implies that a person views and perceives all events through the lens of his disease, allowing it to control and dictate his thoughts, identity, and decisions. Any beliefs or goals are suspended by a diagnosis with HIV, which often makes individuals powerless to shape their uncertain futures. In this situation, the individual relinquishes agency to disease over self and views himself or herself as an inherently ill person, unable to do things or be the person he or she was prior to receiving a positive HIV diagnosis.

Don¹ was a gardener in his late forties who was struggling to overcome the dominating effect of HIV on his physical abilities. He was noticeably uninterested in our conversation at the clinic; everything his illness touched seemed to be a source of frustration. He explained: “I’m healthy, but I get tired quickly. I can’t work as much as I used to and I’m usually wondering when something bad is going to happen.” Don felt that his future was dependent on his body’s reaction to his antiretroviral medication and that he had almost no control. When asked about his future goals, he replied, “Why bother? You never know when something bad is going to happen.” Don’s outlook demonstrates several aspects of Kurt Wolff’s idea of surrender, primarily identification and suspension of received notions. Even when asked about general goals, Don continues to see his HIV status as a prime marker of his identity and a filter through which all ideas and thoughts must pass. All of his previously held notions about his future are now suspended in response to his HIV status, which has contributed to his discontinuation of the activities that once gave him a sense of purpose and helped him to define himself.

Just as with Don, HIV’s effects often project beyond a weakened immune system to a weakened sense of self or altered social relationships. As a result, HIV is best understood as an illness rather than a disease, with credence given to the context of each patient’s ordeal. As in Arthur Kleinman’s The Illness Narratives, the term illness here refers to the full breadth of the experience of living with HIV, from the social stigma to the physical ailments and existential questioning that a chronic disease often incites. Disease, on the other hand, refers to the literal HIV virus and rests purely in the domain of biology and pathology. Kleinman de-

¹ All names are pseudonyms to protect the identities of the individuals who may or may not have disclosed their HIV status to others.
disclosed their HIV status to others. All names are pseudonyms to protect the identities who were struggling to overcome the dominating effect of HIV on his physical ties who was struggling to overcome the satisfactions or to receiving a positive HIV diagnosis. Ease over self and views himself or herself the individual relinquishes agency to dispose of anything bad is going to happen. Don’s surrender to the experience of living with HIV, according to this definition, represents the whole of the HIV experience, beyond the pathological, to its psychological side effects and the reshaping of one’s social world due to stigma, the anxiety of disclosure, and dependence on social relationships with their family, workplace, and selves due to its social and financial implications. Illness represents the whole of the HIV experience, beyond the pathological, to its psychological side effects and the reshaping of one’s social world due to stigma, the anxiety of disclosure, and dependence on loved ones for care and support. Kleinman continues, saying, “Illness is deeply embedded in the social world, and consequently it is inseparable from the structures and processes that constitute that world. For the practitioner, as for the anthropologist, an inquiry into the meanings of illness is a journey into relationships” (1988, 186). The relationships Kleinman speaks of can be among friends, family and/or a supernatural figure, rendering illness an inherently social experience that is both internal and external, and spirituality helps people living with HIV to locate themselves within both.

To clarify, in this context spirituality is used, very generally, to include both individuals who believe in the Judeo-Christian God as well as those who engage in meditation independent of any religious doctrine. Spirituality is typically considered that which is subjective, internal, referring to one’s direct relationship with God or whatever spiritual power with which/whom one aligns. Alternately, religion is usually more objective, relating to dogma and doctrine, and external to an individual. Religion is that tradition and set of beliefs that brings a group together, rather than bringing an individual to God (Hyman and Handal 2006). In my conversations, however, the lines between the spirituality and religion have been greatly blurred by the people who shared their stories and beliefs with me. Some would insist that they were spiritual and not religious, yet they had been members of a Christian congregation for twenty years and participated in services on a weekly basis. For that reason I use spirituality as an umbrella concept that encompasses religion as well (Kaye and Raghavan 2002, 232). Attempting to distinguish the spiritual from the religious does not have an obvious purpose because ultimately, as I argue, the spiritual surrender that empowers people living with HIV is shaped by church communities, religious texts, personal prayer, and lived experiences. Spirituality and spiritual surrender here are defined by a belief and trust in something external to what one can see, hear, or touch that is more powerful to himself or herself. Through this conscious belief in something beyond the earth and its afflictions, the individual recognizes the power of something greater than illness and its consequences, creating a constructive experience of surrender.

Alternately, Don’s surrender to the physical limitations placed on him by his illness is constitutive of a destructive surrender due to the way in which he has awarded agency to his disease. Both HIV and spiritual belief meet the requirements of surrender in alternately destructive and constructive ways. In order to place these narratives of surrender in context, to acknowledge the full breadth
of the illness experience of the people living with HIV with whom I spoke, we must explore the story of both HIV and religious responses to HIV in St. Louis.

**HIV and Spirituality in St. Louis**

In 1968, Robert Rayford, a fifteen-year-old African American boy, was treated for chlamydia at Barnes-Jewish Hospital at Washington University in St. Louis. Robert displayed a variety of additional symptoms that his doctors struggled to interpret including swollen lymph nodes and “swelling of the legs, lower torso and genitalia for no apparent reason” (Kolata 1987). In 1969, with a depleted immune system, Rayford developed bronchial pneumonia and died. An autopsy revealed that he had Kaposi’s Sarcoma, one of the most common opportunistic infections later found in HIV-positive gay men in the early eighties. In 1987, an additional autopsy found that Rayford’s tissues tested positive for HIV. To date, the first recorded AIDS case in the United States remains not in California or New York, where much of the early press regarding the epidemic was focused, but rather in St. Louis, a city in which the epidemic is still widespread and yet lacks visibility.

In St. Louis and across the nation, the first years of the HIV epidemic were dominated by fear—fear of transmission, fear of gays, fear of death, fear of diseased bodies. Part of this fear arose as a result of lack of information. The HIV virus itself was not known until 1985, though diseases like Kaposi’s Sarcoma and PCP² had been found in rapidly increasing numbers among gay males since 1981 (CDC 1981, 1-3). In the early 1980s when HIV/AIDS first visibly surfaced in St. Louis, Father Gary Braun was a newly-ordained Catholic priest at a congregation in St. Charles, Missouri. Braun explained to me in an interview that his first contact with the epidemic surfaced when he was asked to preside at a funeral for a man who had died of AIDS. “There was a lot of fear…of whether or not to tell people. The family wanted to be open about [his cause of death] but others in the congregation ostracized them…nobody knew what caused AIDS so people were freaked out.” The family faced opposition not only from parishioners but from church authorities as well. “When he died, we couldn’t find a mortuary that would embalm him. Some priests organized and [stormed] the funeral parlor, like a strike.” Braun struggled with this lack of compassion, this intolerance and condemnation of individuals grappling with disease, as he saw it contrary to what the Catholic Church stands for “at its best.” During this time, Fr. Braun seized the opportunity to speak about HIV: “[This experience] affected my preaching a lot because I wanted to believe a Catholic community would be open to this person. Fear is not enough of a reason [not to be compassionate]…Down the road the Catholic Church made a statement about the rights of AIDS victims and the fact that they needed to be cared for.” This call to social justice intrinsic to the Christian tradition juxtaposed with the church’s teachings on sexuality led to widespread confusion and disagreement about the proper role of the church during the early days of the epidemic.

In spite of the judgment that some churches cast on those afflicted with

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2 PCP: Pneumocystis pneumonia.
AIDS in the beginning, in some cases, churches were also the first organizations to spring to action in offering support to AIDS patients. I met Chuck, a native of Belleville, Illinois, in a coffee shop to talk about the HIV ministry he coordinates at a local nondenominational church; this ministry wasn’t started until the late 1990s. Across the river, he explained, the Lutheran church was the first to offer food and social resources to the people living with HIV in that community because there were no government efforts until much later. He watched the epidemic strike friend after friend until he was diagnosed in 1989. Chuck described himself as a deeply spiritual person: “I don’t know how someone could handle something this serious without it.” This belief in the utility of religion as a calming and reassuring force in the context of chronic illness is hardly new.

Religious ritual and institutions gain relevance and appeal during painful crises as they strive to support their members as they navigate life’s challenges. According to Clifford Geertz in “Religion as a Cultural System,” “there are few if any religious traditions, ‘great’ or ‘little,’ in which the proposition that life hurts is not strenuously affirmed, and in some it is virtually glorified” (1973, 103). Religion, in this sense, creates an expectation of and a framework for suffering which both prepares its constituents for hardship and offers advice in how to move through it. Geertz continues,

As a religious problem, the problem of suffering is, paradoxically, not how to avoid suffering but how to suffer, how to make of physical pain, personal loss, worldly defeat, or the helpless contemplation of others’ agony something bearable, supportable—something, as we say, sufferable. (1973, 104)

There was and is no shortage of suffering implicit in being diagnosed with HIV although now that suffering no longer ends at death, but purportedly with treatment. In the face of the frustrating externalities of HIV treatment and funding, however, spirituality and religion are still highly relevant tools for coping with the illness.

Each individual with whom I spoke who identified as religious or spiritual had a different experience of church and community throughout the course of his or her illness experience, primarily shaped by the varying degrees of stigma among local churches. I spoke to Melissa, an African American woman in her mid-thirties. Melissa had a refreshingly gentle way about her. When we first met in a café near her home, she stood up from her chair and squeezed me. “I’m a hugger,” she whispered almost inaudibly. She didn’t say much until she became passionate about the conversation. To me, Melissa’s quiet strength quickly became obvious: diagnosed in 1995 at the age of eighteen, in a single appointment she found out she was both pregnant and HIV positive. She explained that her faith helped her to accept a diagnosis that seemed undeserved and unfair, primarily because she has been part of a community that did not explicitly exclude or condescend to her as a result of her positive HIV status. She explained that many people in her church were aware of her HIV status. Although religious communities can dwell on the implications of sexual immorality wrought by a positive HIV diagnosis, Melissa...
explained that “they can’t judge—we all fall short in some way. Lots of married people become infected…and no one is better than another.” This attitude has been crucial to her in her journey of coping with HIV because it fosters relationships of support between her and other members of her congregation: “Just because other people in a church community aren’t going through the exact same thing, they have all been through trials and can help each other out.” Melissa acknowledged, however, that despite her experience of support and acceptance, churches still had a long way to go in addressing the stigma that surrounds HIV and sexuality in general. Post-HAART\(^3\) and HIV’s shift from a death sentence to a chronic disease, the religious climate in St. Louis and its activity with regard to the epidemic have not taken a clear and definitive path.

At present, the local network of HIV activism and services can appear fragmented as a result of both the apathy of the larger public and the diminished sense of urgency surrounding the spread of the virus following the advent of antiretroviral treatment. Nearly every person I spoke to, from priests to people living with HIV, asserted that people don’t fear the infection anymore—that because with HAART one’s life expectancy can be fairly normal, HIV and unsafe sex have become less of a threat. No longer a death threat or a “gay disease,” HIV is struggling to redefine its space in the public consciousness. The epidemic’s demographics have shifted from the gay community (whom it still affects, though in lower numbers than during its onset), to the urban black community. Although Black/African Americans represent 19.4\% of the St. Louis region’s population (as defined by the Missouri Department of Health), they constitute 54\% of HIV cases (DHSS 2012). This disproportionate representation of blacks in the local HIV-positive population has made the presence of the epidemic less visible to predominantly white suburban churches whose resources are then often directed to Africa where they believe there is a more pressing need. Non-profits like St. Louis Effort for AIDS, for example, depend on fundraising, which becomes an increasingly complex task when the population with the most resources is not aware of the depth of need just miles from their homes.

Although many religious institutions in St. Louis choose to direct their energy and resources at causes other than HIV, there are also individuals working to make religious communities more supportive of individuals as human beings living with HIV and to move them out of the category of charitable cause altogether. At the Metropolitan Community Church, the Ezekiel Project is a ministry that serves the spiritual needs of men living with HIV, offering monthly gatherings and a retreat to discuss their challenges and well as develop their spirituality. Faith Communities United (FCU) is an organization that strives to foster compassion in religious communities in St. Louis for people living with HIV, create dialogue, and educate people about both HIV and services available. Their biggest event each year is The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS in early March, mobilizing prayer as a common thread among all

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3 HAART: Highly Active Anti Retroviral Treatment, the multi-drug cocktail that was made available in 1996.
denominations, genders, sexualities, and CD4 counts to bring people together. This event addresses perhaps one of the greatest challenges to the HIV care community in St. Louis, its lack of cohesion. While the event has grown immensely over the past twenty-five years, this unity is not necessarily sustained outside the event. For example, one of the people I spoke with who is actively involved in FCU had never heard of the Ezekiel Project, the former largely serving the black church and the latter a primarily white LGBT community.

In the context of the area’s religious and socioeconomic diversity, it is no wonder that the role of spirituality in the HIV illness experience in St. Louis is highly specific to each individual. Regardless of race, sex, neighborhood, or occupation, the entire HIV-positive community finds themselves surrendering: to their bodies, healthcare providers, medications, the bodies that determine how they can afford and access those medications, and sometimes, constructively, their faith. To further understand how a surrender to spirituality helps narrow the breach between patient and disease in a constructive way, allowing these HIV-positive individuals to reclaim a sense of self, we must first explore one of the agents to which they must destructively surrender: their bodies.

**Bodily Surrender**

The first category of surrender that I will examine is surrender to the developments of biomedicine, namely antiretroviral medication and its consequent side effects on the body. Throughout the history of the HIV epidemic, the fate of positive patients has been at the hands of scientists and doctors. Before 1987 when AZT was first approved to treat infected individuals, the only advice doctors could offer people diagnosed with HIV was to avoid infection: eat well, sleep, and if they were so inclined—pray (Zuniga 2008). Following the development of effective treatments for HIV, some patients now take comfort in placing their trust in the medical system. In one of my first interviews, I asked James, a long-term survivor diagnosed in 1985 and consistently in treatment since the approval of AZT in 1987, if he identified as religious or spiritual. He responded, “I believe in science. Science is my religion.” One other person (of the seventeen interviewed) responded similarly. When I first contacted him about speaking with me, James did not hesitate to identify himself as an atheist. He questioned whether his experiences would contribute anything to a study on spirituality, not realizing that his own experiences of surrender, albeit to a different force, echoed those of his more religiously spiritual peers.

More often, though, the HIV-positive individuals I spoke with surrendered to the medical system less through a relationship of trust, but rather out of fear of living in an uncontrolled diseased body. Reliant on medication to stay alive, their bodies’ reactions to these same drugs dictated their abilities to carry on life as they had imagined before they were diagnosed with HIV. In fact several patients who initially responded that they felt “normal” on their antiretroviral medication later went on to describe symptoms

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4 Azidothymidine, the first FDA-approved AIDS treatment.
such as diarrhea or fatigue that impeded their participation in activities they once enjoyed or prevented them from seeking employment. For example, diarrhea itself is not what Joseph, an unemployed, single man in his late forties, finds so troublesome about being on antiretroviral treatment, but rather the fact that his inability to control his diarrhea has cultivated a fear of leaving the house and has induced a serious depression because, in his words, “I live the life of a hermit.” Joseph’s powerlessness to mitigate the social consequences of his HIV shapes his illness experience.

Additionally, Joseph can no longer work due to his chronic fatigue. When asked about the most difficult aspect of being HIV-positive, Joseph responded, “Not having the energy to work” because “I loved what I did.” The betrayal of Joseph’s desires and goals by his diseased body invokes a tension between him and his physical self, echoing Kleinman’s assertion that the experience of having a chronic illness separates us from our bodies:

Chronic illness is a betrayal of that fundamental trust [with our bodies]. We feel under siege: untrusting, resentful of uncertainty, lost. Life becomes a working out of sentiments that follow closely from this corporeal betrayal: confusion, shock, anger, jealousy, despair. (1988, 45)

With chronic illness, the individual becomes conscious of his or her body since it appears to have plans that are beyond the control of the person in his or her mind. In this situation, surrender to one’s body implies suffering and/or defeat.

What I mean here by “surrender to one’s body” begins with the consciousness of one’s physical form. Until the body begins to betray an individual (for example, with fatigue or diarrhea brought on by HIV and its subsequent treatment), the body exists as a shell through which she lives out her daily activities. In the event of a chronic illness like HIV, the physical body becomes another character entirely in her life that she may even believe herself to be fighting against. The unpredictable, uncontrollable nature of an unwell body creates a distance between the person and her physical form that may invoke feelings of betrayal. Surrender can then be defined as an acceptance of the agency of one’s illness as dominant over one’s own.

Spirituality, however, can aid the HIV-positive person to negotiate these feelings of betrayal, reclaim his or her autonomy, and move forward. For Jerome, a black man in his late forties who had been positive for over ten years, his body had become his enemy. He explained to me that the most challenging aspect of the disease for him was that “You can not be yourself or do what you want to do…I used to be a carpenter but I am not working now…I started feeling tired. It was hard to get up. I lost my appetite. Little things.” Jerome continued, explaining that he felt liberated by his daily reading of the Bible: “It has really helped…in that way I’m not worried like I used to.” While his disease at first created a loss of identity and a constant concern for his health, narrowing his daily experience to one dominated by his disease, his faith helps him manage these stresses and gives him hope for the future. But the diseased body is not the only object to which people living with
HIV surrender. Their medications also can often cause harm in the midst of a greater good, and the government organizations that determine when they take their ARVs and how they are funded can evoke similar feelings of powerlessness and defeat.

The Politics of Antiretroviral Distribution

The struggles as well as possibilities for HIV patients are directly influenced by available antiretroviral medication and dictated by the structures that determine patients’ access to the pharmaceuticals responsible for keeping them alive. As of 2013, the decision to go on antiretroviral treatment is no longer made by physician and patient once the HIV-positive patient’s CD4 levels have dropped below a certain level, but rather made from the moment of diagnosis, as now mandated by the CDC in order to reduce transmission rates (Panel 2013). Beginning medical treatment at any stage in one’s disease progression can be a serious financial undertaking. Both low-income individuals and those with private insurance have access to affordable antiretrovirals, but for those who fall in neither category, treating their HIV means manipulating their income to fall below a certain threshold, and some will quit or change their jobs in the process. For many individuals, their job or ability to support their family is essential to how they view themselves; in losing their control over how much and in what job they work they surrender to the policies that fund their antiretrovirals.

Most recently, CDC legislation has removed a CD4 count threshold at which treatment should begin in favor of starting ART from the moment a person learns he or she has tested positive. The CD4 count is an important numerical indicator of the state of a person’s immune system. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, a healthy person has a CD4 count between 500-1000 cells/mm³ (AIDS.gov 2010). The HIV virus weakens the body’s immune response by destroying T-cells (immune cells), lowering the infected individual’s CD4 count and making that person more susceptible to an array of other infections. A patient is said to have entered the AIDS stage when his or her CD4 (or T-cell) count has fallen below 200. Current antiretroviral treatment can help patients rebuild a decreased CD4 count while also decreasing the proliferation of the HIV virus in the body, lowering the “viral load” and chances of transmitting the disease to others. According to the nurse practitioner I shadowed, once the multi-drug antiretroviral cocktail became available in 1996, a patient’s CD4 count had to fall below 350 cells/mm³ for treatment to be deemed necessary. The ceiling was then raised to 500 cells/mm³, and most recently it was abolished altogether in favor of starting people infected with HIV on medication as soon as possible. What this policy in particular neglects is the fact that with each failed attempt at adherence, the individual becomes resistant to more types of antiretrovirals and his or her particular strain of HIV becomes stronger and more aggressive. Many of the people I spoke to struggled to see the purpose in their medications at first when they were still feeling relatively

5 CD4 cells are immune cells, also known as T-cells.
healthy. Additionally, beginning to take meds means acknowledging that one is diseased. Requiring that people infected with HIV begin treatment immediately takes all power surrounding treatment out of the hands of doctors and patients and brands their bodies as unhealthy, subsequently making them wards of the CDC or Medicaid.

Autonomy is also diminished by the policies that regulate how antiretroviral treatment is funded. When asked, Kevin, a man in his late thirties, responded that the most frustrating aspect of being HIV positive was “having to apply for funding. That whole process. If you work, you don’t qualify for Medicaid.” Kevin has worked in food service for years, most recently as the manager of a coffee shop. Ever since he started on antiretrovirals three years ago, he has struggled to keep his income low enough to qualify for subsidized medications and high enough to make ends meet. Through Medicaid and the Ryan White CARE Act, individuals who are HIV positive in Missouri can receive free or low-cost medications as long as they make less than $34,720/year (a value that varies by state). The Ryan White CARE Act was first enacted in 1990 to fund antiretroviral treatment for low-income, uninsured, and underinsured Americans. The Act was named for Ryan White, a teenager who contracted and eventually died from AIDS in the 1980s as a result of a hemophilia treatment (HRSA 2013). However, the Ryan White CARE Act does not guarantee funding for uninsured individuals whose earnings surpass the $34,720 threshold.

This policy leaves many uninsured middle-income HIV-positive people without resources in addition to creating a situation in which there is little-to-no net gain for an HIV-positive person who desires to work and does not have private insurance. James, the long-term survivor, explained that the structures in place that allocate funding are such that he would have less income if he were to go back to work. This discouragement from working employs a limitation of freedom that can dramatically affect one’s view of self. Machado defines freedom as “the human capacity to create oneself through decisions” (2012, 13). Although James is relatively healthy, all of his freedoms lie within the confines of being a 50+ HIV-positive man, including the implications of his working. His decision-making abilities are determined by the persons in Congress who edit and renew the Ryan White CARE Act and Medicaid every few years. The fact that he has a higher income not working is a major source of his frustration about being HIV-positive at this point because his job helped him to form an identity apart from his illness and to focus on other things. As long as he could work, being HIV-positive did not control James’s identity or income.

Although government programs are largely responsible for keeping many of these patients alive, like James, some struggle with this dependence. David, a Caucasian man in his fifties, has been HIV-positive for four years and told me he is frustrated by “how much [he] take[s] out of the world rather than give[s] to it.” For David, his surrender to government programs as a means of survival signals a loss of freedom and a loss of purpose. This relates to Wolff’s (1974) idea of the “suspension of received notions.” As a result of being HIV-positive, David now must suspend his pre-
viously-held convictions concerning the boundaries of his role in the public welfare system in order to stay alive, an obstacle that has exacerbated his preexisting depressive issues. “I am now one of those people,” he explained, referring to those who use government resources without adding to them. “Is one person worth that much?” David’s disappointment at not being able to contribute to the workforce demonstrates some of the painful aspects of the HIV illness experience, and ultimately the ways in which forced surrender is detrimental to one’s sense of personhood. David copes by meditating for an hour each morning, but still struggles with self-doubt.

An interesting facet of the theme of labor, contribution, and identity was that all of the HIV-positive individuals who talked about the difficulty of having their career choices limited by the disease and the discomfort of depending on public aid were Caucasian males who had graduated from high school and had some form of post-secondary education. Among the women who had left their chosen professions (one even a teacher with a Master’s degree in education), there was markedly less of a sense of urgency and disappointment with the situation. Many of these women sought out ways to educate youth or peers about HIV or got involved with support groups as a means of filling their time or devoted their time to being caregivers for children or grandchildren. These findings underline the struggle to conceive an identity outside HIV and not to suspend one’s former ideas about one’s relationships, goals, and life trajectory. In addition, the findings reflect traditional gender roles. While the men were frustrated at the idea of income dependence, the women more easily adapted to the situation at hand. This ability to trust in external structures also translated to spirituality; every woman interviewed believed herself to be spiritual. Of the men, seven of the ten considered themselves religious or spiritual. Those that mentioned volunteering or getting involved did so with AIDS service organizations, which doesn’t necessarily provide an opportunity for the men to form an identity independent of their HIV status. On the other hand, exploring spirituality and religious communities, for many, was another opportunity to develop their sense of identity and place their trust in something constant, a surrender that, as I will explain, was strangely empowering.

Spirituality: The Empowering Surrender

Despite the frustration and powerlessness attributed to the act of surrender to the superstructures of medicine and government, many HIV patients find peace and relief in the act of handing over the burden of their disease to their spiritual faith. Of the seventeen patients interviewed, thirteen believed in God, and each of those acknowledged a peace or hope for the future that came directly from their faith. When asked how religion has benefited him, Jerome asserted: “In that way I’m not worried like I used to.” Anita, a woman in her early forties who was diagnosed more recently, explained, “I know I can take control...because God is my first and foremost, he is my protector,” reflecting a strengthened sense of personal agency and trust that has not always characterized her daily interactions and decisions.

Anita, who has struggled with drug
addiction and mental illness in addition to HIV, serves as an example of religion serving to help one reclaim her own freedom. As a result of her increased faith, she has been “making better choices…not hanging out in the streets anymore. I been making new friends, everything is new.” Anita was not actively seeking to develop her spiritual faith at the point of her diagnosis, however. She described her experience: “At first it was dark to the extent that I was suicidal. Between alcohol, drugs, cutting…I felt my life was already over. I had a relationship with God a long time ago though and I had to find my way back.” Her ability to use her faith as a resource for improving her health in ways that her medication never could demonstrates the potential for spirituality to bridge the gap between the biology and lived experience of being HIV-positive. Through her faith, Anita developed a sense of personal agency and realized she wasn’t completely powerless in the face of her HIV or her addictions and unhealthy relationships.

The liberating effects of trusting one’s disease to God were strongly exemplified by Rose, an African American woman in her late forties who has been HIV-positive for twelve years. Trusting God to manage the burden of her disease and give her strength helped to relieve the stress of coping with HIV; at the same time Rose used her belief in the supremacy and healing power of God in her life to justify her lack of sustained adherence to antiretroviral medication. In the twelve years since her diagnosis, she has been on three different drug regimens, none of which she has used properly for more than two months. “This is the third time I’ve started ’em and I’m hoping to make it last,” she told me. Rose had an unshakeable faith in God as her ultimate healer, saying, “I have to believe that one day…God will heal me. I could come in any day and [my nurse] could tell me I was healed…I know this is not my fight. I just going to do my best one day at a time and move forward.” Rose’s overall demeanor and attitude were refreshing; she was nothing if not warm. The consequences of Rose’s faith and the ways they inform her decisions about antiretrovirals, however, are manifold. By trying and failing consistently to use multiple regimens, her body has become resistant to them. Her high viral load increases her chances of transmission, and the multiple-drug-resistant virus is much more threatening were she to transmit it. Rose’s attitude that the fate of her life with this disease ultimately lies with God is not uncommon, but her total surrender presents a public health threat as it endangers not only Rose but any of her potential partners. It is important to note that not all spiritual people living with HIV live out their spirituality in the context of being HIV-positive in this manner.

Another woman, Rhonda, of a similar age and demographic, has always taken her medication but said she knew of many people like Rose. Rhonda had a more pragmatic interpretation of God’s role as a healer, saying, “In the Gospels, one of the writers was named Luke. Luke was a physician. I believe since God had Luke to be a physician, he had doctors here to help heal his people” and explained her trust in pharmaceuticals: “There’s a spiritual quality to what comes from the earth…medicine uses materials coming from the earth.” Rhonda’s statements allow for a connection between the spiritual and the biomedical,
treating doctors as an extension of God himself. Rhonda’s attitude and actions still fall within the boundaries of Wolff’s definition of surrender, as her belief in God and faith still frames her reality. In “Religion as a Cultural System,” Geertz (1973) constructs the idea of God as “templates for producing reality” (95) and affirms the possibility for these vastly different executions of the same doctrine, explaining that “what men believe is as various as what they are” (122). Religious or spiritual faith can hardly be generalized and therefore must be understood within the context of each patient.

Although patients such as Rose in their complete surrender to spiritual faith may neglect the advice of doctors, Rose has also maintained a stronger sense of self and a palpable aura of peacefulness. She asserted: “I got no worries even though I don’t work, I know [God’s] going to take care of me… I don’t have aches and pains, I live my life one day at a time knowing it’s going to be okay.” Rhonda echoes this idea, explaining, “There is a higher power that can and does help, not just [with] HIV but anything.” She credits her survival with the disease for nearly twenty years to God because she was initially given a maximum of three years to live at the time of her diagnosis. In this way, Rhonda is able to use her faith for emotional strength. Her spirituality provides a lens for her daily life that predates and is separate from her HIV-status, demonstrating that she has not surrendered to the disease, but rather to her Christianity, placing her trust in medications and the people who administer them as an extension of God.

Spiritual growth was more than merely private for Rhonda. Her social involvement in the church enabled her to reclaim the sense of contribution and self-importance that David lacked. In spite of the stigma and intolerance that still surround HIV/AIDS in most religious communities, Rhonda has taken up a role of HIV activism and education in her community:

I bring people to the test. I bring people [to my church] to share their stories. I’ve learned that the whole purpose of God is that God is love and we’re supposed to love others, everyone… we have some unsupportive ones though, you know.

Rhonda’s devotion to her faith and HIV prevention effectively allowed her to surrender to something besides her HIV. Although she spent a minute or so talking about her history with antiretrovirals, she also told me that she is able to trust God with her worries and that the thing most on her mind is how long she will be single, or if she will get married again. Rhonda and several others found that their faith helped them to take charge of their lives, helping them move out of a position of victimhood into one of new possibilities.

Melissa, a thirty-something woman positive since the mid-1990s, described a years-long struggle with understanding why she was stricken with such a disease, eventually finding an answer in her faith. The paradigmatic questions of “Why me?” and “What can be done?” that Kleinman (1988) tells us most often plague people suffering from a chronic illness were most effectively mediated by a faith in God. She explained that several years ago, while reading the Bible, she was suddenly faced with a new question: Why not me? “HIV works on your
brain,” she continued, “and my brothers or my sisters...they couldn’t cope with this. But I can.” Realizing this, Melissa became involved in HIV outreach work and started a support group for HIV-positive women in the area that is now spon-
sored by a prominent non-profit organi-

zation.

Another long-term survivor, Linda, explained that she was “angry at God for a long time. I didn’t do anything wrong!” Linda contracted HIV from her husband, who passed away from the ill-

ness in 1995 at age 30. “But God knew I couldn’t take care of him and my lit-
tle boy...God has a purpose for me. He

knows I’m strong and I can handle this.”

As Park and Folkman explain, “searching for and finding some reason why an event occurred and who/what is responsible for its occurrence can help people make sense of their unfortunate/traumatic ex-
periences” (1997, 126). If individuals are able to reconcile their understanding of God with the reality of their situation, the act of surrender of one’s condition to God can be an ultimately constructive experience.

Unlike a surrender to biomedicine, identifying as a spiritual being, mem-
ber of a congregation, or child of God provides much more solidarity and com-
fort than looking at oneself as merely a diseased body. The framing of one’s reality and placing of trust in a religious figure was shown to be more consistently affirming than relying solely on medica-
tion, whose side effects were at times detrimental. However, to most effective-
ly cope with HIV, one cannot use reli-
gion as a form of denial. Anita explained how she is using the one to manage the other: "I’m taking control—I’m not go-
ing to live in fear or intimidation of any-

one or of this disease. God is my first and foremost, he is my protector...but I got to use our relationship to help me do the things I got to do for myself.” Spirituality is a framework through which many people understand and cope with illness that does not necessarily imply a blind spot in the area of adherence to proper care.

Conclusion

HIV is now a very treatable disease, but the fact that it is no longer what used to be described, quasi-juridically, as a death sentence does not negate the fact that living with HIV is uniquely chal-

lenging on physical, psychological, and social levels. In addition to the ever-pres-
ent social stigma and inevitable strain on family relationships and resources, the quality of life and physical capabilities of many people living with HIV have been greatly diminished by the virus itself.

Medication can have devastating side effects, and the routine of taking so many pills a day can be overwhelming to many people, especially those whose lives are consistently marked by crises independent of their HIV. Additionally, accessing medication is not always easy, and there are many patients for whom paying for medication becomes a serious struggle. However, adherence to medi-
cation is the only consistently successful way to slow the progression of the HIV virus. Patients may have to surrender their bodies to forces they can’t control, but they do not necessarily have to sur-
render to their bodies. Juxtaposed with this debilitating surrender, surrender to one’s spiritual faith can actually help to rebuild one’s autonomy and sense of self. By a happy irony, although the clinical
and pharmaceutical landscape of HIV care in St. Louis forces patients to surrender their bodies, a religious surrender can help HIV-positive individuals reclaim an identity and independence that medicine threatens.

I am not arguing that spirituality is more important than medical treatment or even necessary for prolonged survival with HIV, but rather that it has a significant role in shaping the illness experience for HIV-positive people in St. Louis that cannot be ignored. Religious and spiritual people described an ability to trust that God will lead them to the next step in their lives and take care of the minutiae so that they are still able to be active in the ways that they choose. Although Rose remains an exception to this “rule,” belief in God did not disincentivize any other patients from adherence to antiretroviral treatment. Most importantly, spiritual patients had a strong sense of identity apart from being ill and spoke about their dreams for the future.

Anita’s story counters the anecdote with which I opened this paper. As a result of the strength she claimed to derive through her relationship with God, “I changed [a lot] over the last few months. I’m making better choices, not hanging out in the streets anymore. I’m making new friends…everything is new. God may not take care of it all at once, but he does it.” A surrender to one’s faith does not require a passive adherence to external doctrines, but rather can help individuals to find the courage to overcome other challenges and find their place(s) in the midst of an illness whose reality can be either devastating or empowering depending on how one chooses to live it.

Bibliography


The Antinomian Crisis: Revisiting Power Dynamics in Early Massachusetts Bay Colony

Nathaniel Hyman

Massachusetts Bay stands out as something of an enigma within the context of colonial history. The Colony was not settled for economic reasons, and owed its growth and success over the first decade to a desire amongst its population to create a more holy society, rather than a wealthier one. Massachusetts’s earliest leaders strove to ensure the continuing success of this central principle. This paper explores one of the most serious challenges to the authority of these early Puritan leaders, the Antinomian crisis, and examines why this challenge represented a particularly dangerous threat to the Puritan ruling elite. My study explores the rise of dissident religious thought within Massachusetts Bay, and ties these new ideas to Massachusetts’s growing mercantile interests.

New England’s existence as a formal colony was an accident precipitated by bad weather and poor planning. William Bradford, the leader of a radical element of the Puritan religious movement within England known today as the Pilgrims, sought to form a Puritan society near English settlements at Jamestown in the fall of 1620. Blown horribly off course and facing the beginnings of a New England winter, Bradford and his disciples found themselves on Cape Cod in December of 1620. Plymouth plantation was the result, and colonization within New England had begun. While the location of Plymouth plantation was anything but auspicious for the Pilgrim settlers, Bradford viewed the turn of events in a divine light, stating:

What then, could now sustain them but the spirit of God, and His grace? Ought not the children of their fathers rightly to say: Our fathers were Englishmen who came over the great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness; but they cried unto the Lord, and He heard their voice, and looked on their adversity… Let them therefore praise the Lord, because He is good, and His mercies endure forever.¹

Bradford’s passage demonstrates the religious fervor with which the Pilgrims viewed their undertaking. Separatists in every sense of the term, the Pilgrims had put their faith in God. It was not that Jamestown’s earliest settlers were less religious as a body than the early Pilgrims. Indeed, much of the philosophical justification for colonization revolved around notions of Anglican evangelicalism, and where the Spanish had brought Catholicism.

¹ For all of Bradford’s discussion of being blown off course, the Pilgrims actually benefited from ending so far north; out of immediate range for Spaniards and out of the eye of English interests in Virginia, the Pilgrims were able to set up the separatist community they desired at Plymouth.

² William Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2006), 44. The plantation’s location was not fortuitous due to the New England climate; during the first several winters, settlers unaccustomed to the ferocity of New England storms died at rates approaching 50% of the colony’s population due to starvation, disease, and exposure.
cism to the natives of Central and Southern America, early Virginians tried to and often succeeded in converting natives to Anglicanism.³ The difference between Pilgrims’ views on religion and Virginians’ views on religion was one of priority; Virginians viewed religion as one amongst many important factors, while early Pilgrims viewed their relationship with God as the highest priority.

Encouraged by the Pilgrims’ success in the New World, and increasingly disillusioned with the political and religious reality of life within England, a larger swath of the Puritan population residing in England began to consider migration to New England as a viable possibility. These individuals had initially believed that England could be reformed from within, that there existed the possibility of creating a perfect religious society at home.⁴ Charles I’s decrees seemed destined to prove their hopes false, however, and the possibility of creating, or at least perfecting, a religious society within the New World was increasingly alluring.⁵ It comes as no surprise, therefore, that after decades of battling against religious persecution in England, many of those coming over to the New World believed they were coming in search of a more godly existence. Such individuals wished to live by a new set of rules of their own making; they sought their own social contract. In a speech entitled “A Modell of Christian Charitie,” given aboard the Puritan ship the Arbella, John Winthrop, future governor of Massachusetts, laid out the framework of this new social contract:

[D]oe Justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God, for this end, wee must be knit together in this worke as one man… wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentleness, patience and liberality… allwayses having before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke… the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us… when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies… that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are upon us.⁶

³ As for the theoretical arguments associated with this evangelical push, Richard Hakluyt’s Discourse of Western Planting published in 1584 describes the religious benefits associated with colonization. Hakluyt was a strong advocate for English colonization in the New World, and was intimately involved in the colonization push in Virginia, becoming a lead adventurer early in the Virginia Company’s life and eventually providing the colony with its first chaplain. Excerpts of Discourse of Western Planting can be found online at http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/exploration/text5/hakluyt.pdf.

⁴ Edmund Morgan, The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop (New York, Pearson Longman, 2006), 21-24. Morgan describes the tension felt by many leading Puritans at the time; while they did not wish to abandon their allies in England, they also felt keenly the need to live in a more pure and perfect society.

⁵ Charles I initially came under severe fire from Puritan sympathizers in England after he began to have prominent Puritan ministers silenced throughout the country. Things grew significantly worse when Charles appointed Bishop Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. Laud, a conservative Anglican, went on the offensive against Puritans throughout England under orders from Charles. Laud was eventually executed by Puritans following the English Civil War.

Governor Winthrop and his fellow migrants were true to their word. Over the course of the next decade, in the lead-up to the English Civil War, tens of thousands of migrants came to the New World, many keen on fulfilling Winthrop’s goal of a more godly society. This paper follows the development of Governor Winthrop’s philosophies on liberty, equality, and freedom throughout the 1630s in Massachusetts Bay. The paper will focus heavily on the lead-up to and events of the Antinomian crisis and its effects on Winthrop’s philosophy, attempting to bridge the gap between the man preaching universal “meekenes, gentleness, patience and liberality” and the one who eventually ordered the banishment of many leading citizens of Massachusetts Bay. Winthrop became a harder man over the decade following his landing in the New World, and by examining the process by which Winthrop changed over time, we can hope to draw insights into both the development of Massachusetts Bay and also the rise of opposition forces within Massachusetts.

Framing the Question: Winthrop Before and After the Crisis

While the Pilgrims had come to the New World in search of religious purity and a break from the Anglican Church, Winthrop and his fellow migrants viewed their migration to New England in a slightly different light. Rather than seeking to separate themselves entirely from England, the Puritans hoped to design and perfect systems of religious purity that could be brought back to England and implemented in the home country. There were both religious and political reasons for this desire. The political rationale for not throwing off English bonds was rather straightforward; Winthrop and his fellow magistrates realized that their existence and right to govern derived from a charter granted them by the king of England. Even if that king’s religious views were heretical to many in Massachusetts, the Massachusetts settlers did not wish political separation from their mother country, and moreover, Winthrop did not wish the foundation of his power within the Colony to come under review. Massachusetts Puritans’ religious rationale for wishing to remain with England was more complex however, and elicited a good deal of debate amongst Massachusetts’s settlers. A key driving force within these debates was the hope, shared by many of the ruling elites, that some day Puritans would be able to return to England and reform its church.

Adding to the theological questions raised by their migration to the New World, other more worldly issues began to demand the attention of Winthrop and his fellow Massachusetts residents.

ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 14-15. Winthrop gave this speech as the first Puritan convoy was about to depart from England for the New World. Winthrop wished to accomplish two things in the speech: first, he wished to stake claim to the notion that the Puritans were leaving behind their existences in England, and second, he wished to lay out the rules for the new social contract coming into existence in New England. Winthrop’s address was notable for many reasons, not least because his language points explicitly to the role merchants would hold within the new society. Winthrop’s comments went on to become the basis for Colonial law, and several prominent merchants (among them Robert Keayne) eventually were brought up on charges pertaining to infractions in their conduct as merchants. A larger portion of the speech can be found in the appendix.
As the number of migrants to the New World climbed, some of the aspects of life the Puritans had hoped to leave behind in England began to creep back in to life in Massachusetts Bay. The most important of these issues revolved around the conduct of merchants, traders, and businessmen within the Colony. The thousands coming over from England during the Great Migration necessarily included many merchants and other wealthy landholders. These newcomers did not inherently violate the rules that the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay wished to live by, and many were themselves devoutly religious. In *Profits in the Wilderness*, John Frederick Martin argues that these wealthy, driven individuals were crucial to the development of new towns and enterprises within the nascent Colony. Not all of Massachusetts’s mercantile elite wished to operate under the strict guidelines for trade in existence within Massachusetts Bay, however. Some of these wealthy individuals pursued the growth of their own wealth to a greater degree than Puritan leaders desired, adding a volatile element to Puritan society and introducing new questions and new issues into the political and religious discourses of the Colony. In other developing English colonies throughout the Atlantic, mercantile interests came to dominate the political and social spheres of the Colony; in Massachusetts, merchants making similar attempts found themselves blocked by older existing political powers. Winthrop therefore appears prescient when expressly address-
authoritarian guise, however, in a speech given by Winthrop in 1645 entitled “On Liberty.” In this speech, Winthrop builds upon a distinction between natural liberty and civil liberty. Says Winthrop:

There is a twofold liberty, natural (I mean as our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists: it is a liberty to evil as well as to good… The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal; it may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions, amongst men themselves. This liberty is the proper end and object of authority, and cannot subsist without it; and it is a liberty to that only which is good, just, and honest… This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

The two passages above portray the bookends of the development of Winthrop’s notions of liberty as governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1630, Winthrop speaks of the issues of usury and lending in largely abstract terms, calling on man to be kind to his fellow man, and couching the entire conversation in Christian good. By 1645, Winthrop’s tone has changed substantially. Gone is the abstract idealist; by 1645, Winthrop has become a changed man. Such thoughts have been replaced by a discussion of authority and power in Massachusetts Bay.

The Early Years

To more fully understand the development of Winthrop’s policies and the rise of opposition forces, scholars find few sources as valuable as The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630-1649. Winthrop’s journal gives the reader access to Winthrop’s thinking on the major issues of the day and provides access to the happenings of the Colony on a monthly and often weekly basis. The beauty of the journal is that it allows the reader to view the development of Winthrop’s ideas over time. In a passage from February 18, 1631, for instance, he states:

February 18: Of those which went back in the ships this summer for fear of death or famine, etc., many

9 John Winthrop delivered this speech in 1645 after a prolonged legal battle in which he successfully defended himself against criminal accusations of wrongdoing. Winthrop had intervened in the Hingham Militia’s governance, and had been called to answer for his actions. The conflict served as a pretense for increasing and ongoing tensions between Massachusetts’s traditional elite, of which Winthrop was a leading member, and a more populist, younger, political contingent made up largely of deputies.


died by the way and after they were landed, and others fell very sick and low, etc. ... The provisions which came to us this year came at excessive rates, in regard of the dearness of corn in England, so as every bushel of wheat meal stood us at 14s. and peas 11s. etc.¹²

In this passage, Winthrop hints at his displeasure regarding price gouging. He makes no mention of action taken against the merchants in question, but he views the price of English corn as excessive; future statements and actions by Winthrop eventually yielded harsh penalties for such practices.

The early years of Winthrop's tenure as governor were filled with experimentation as he and other leading Massachusetts citizens crafted the code of laws under which they hoped to live. At several points in the text, Winthrop seems to have come across moments of crisis that challenged his existing thoughts regarding Christian charity. In the following passage, Winthrop describes two punishments doled out by a Massachusetts Court:

September 6 [1631]: At the last Court a young fellow was whipped for soliciting an Indian squaw to incontinency; her husband and she complained of the wrong, and were present at the execution and very satisfied. At the same Court one Henry Linne was whipped and banished for writing letters into England full of slander against our government and orders of our churches.¹³

Winthrop, as governor, would have presided over any major secular punishment in 1631, and was therefore no doubt involved in both rulings. The passage is interesting in two respects. The case of the man accused of trying to seduce an indigenous woman is interesting in the sense that it offers a window into the development of the penal code enacted and derived from Puritan principles. Perhaps even more interesting, however, is the punishment of Henry Linne, who was whipped and banished for his crimes against the Colony. Linne’s punishment is interesting as it sets up a precedent of significant proportions; in this passage, we see the Massachusetts Bay government punishing a man for threatening the good name of the Colony. While Linne’s words may not have touched on issues of religion (Winthrop does not provide us with the contents of Linne’s letters), Linne’s trial nevertheless offers the first step necessary towards prosecution on the basis of religious dissent. Linne’s case represents the first instance in Winthrop’s journal in which a man was banished from the Colony. Banishment does not become common in Winthrop’s journal until several years later, however; Winthrop seems at this point still wedded to at least the basic ideals from which he derived “A Modell of Christian Charity,” taking the lenient perspective with regards to most cases. While there is no explicit contradiction between “Christian Charity” and Linne’s punishment, it does at the very least demonstrate that reality does not conform perfectly to Winthrop’s hopes and dreams for his new Colony. Winthrop was notoriously lenient on offenders within the Colony, a fact that would raise controversy within the Puritan elite,
and so this banishment stands out as especially important. Winthrop’s extreme actions were undoubtedly taken in an effort to protect the Colony; the timing of Linne’s punishment corresponds with increased tensions between Charles I and Puritans throughout England, and Massachusetts Puritans feared reprisals should the Colony’s doings, especially with regards to church membership, be brought to the attention of the king.

Winthrop was clearly the dominant political figure within Massachusetts Bay during his first few years as Governor, and it becomes clear from his entries that certain other leading members of the Colony began to find Winthrop’s actions overbearing. In the following passages from May 1632, Winthrop describes a conflict with another leading member and future Governor of the Colony, Thomas Dudley:

Another question fell out with him about some bargains he had made with some poor men, members of the same congregation, to whom he had sold 7 bushels and ½ of corn to receive 10 for it after harvest, which the governor and some others held to be oppressing usury and within compass of the statute; but [Dudley] persisted to maintain it to be lawful and there arose hot words about it, he telling the governor that if [Dudley] had thought [Winthrop] had sent for him to his house to give him such usage he would not have come there, and that he never knew any man of understanding of other opinion, and that the governor thought otherwise of it, it was his weakness.¹⁴

At length, Winthrop continues:

After dinner the deputy then demanded of him the grounds and limits of his authority, whether by the patent or otherwise. The governor answered that he would challenge no greater authority than he might by the patent. The deputy replied that then he had no more authority than every assistant (except power to call courts and precedence for honor and order). The governor answered he had more, for the patent making him a governor gave him whatsoever power belonged to a governor by common law or the statutes, and desired him to show wherein he had exceeded, etc. In speaking this somewhat apprehensively, the deputy began to be in passion and told the governor that if he were so round he would be round too.³⁵

This entry for May 1632 offers numerous insights into the governance of Massachusetts Bay Colony over the period in question. First, Winthrop’s critique of Deputy Governor Dudley’s trade practices raises the specter of price gouging by high-level authorities within the Massachusetts Bay Colony government. The Colony had been instructed to operate under the rules in place in England, and no Massachusetts law was allowed to contradict English law. English law had rules against excessive usury, but Dudley’s case, and indeed the entire

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¹⁴ Ibid., 46.
¹⁵ Ibid., 46-47.
economy of the early Colony, failed to fit neatly into an English mold. English law on acceptable usury rates was in a state of flux in the early 1600s, as massive economic change and the beginning created a strong need for capital. In her “Money Lending on the Periphery of London, 1300-1600,” Marjorie McIntosh explains the development of usury within England, pointing in particular to the Tudor Act of 1571, which effectively set usury rates at 10%.\textsuperscript{16} That rate fell subsequently to 8% in 1624 with the introduction of the Act Against Usury.\textsuperscript{17} By these standards, Dudley was indeed involved in excessive usury. Dudley’s position within the Colony, however, combined with the desperate need in the early days of the Colony for wheat, created conditions under which Dudley and other Massachusetts settlers might have felt justified. Winthrop’s ability to go after Dudley for his perceived crimes therefore speaks to the authority Winthrop wielded within the Colony. This authority is manifest in the second portion of the passage, in which Dudley, clearly angry over Winthrop’s accusations, questions the extent of Winthrop’s authority within Massachusetts Bay. The debate between Dudley and Winthrop gets to the very core of Winthrop’s position within the government of Massachusetts Bay; in Dudley’s interpretation of the Massachusetts Bay charter, Winthrop is politically merely the first among equals when interacting with other assistants. Winthrop’s response is telling: far from accepting Dudley’s position as the proper state of affairs within Massachusetts Bay, Winthrop goes forward to argue that his position as governor affords him a powerful and important position within the Colony. By defining his authority as “the patent making him a governor gave him whatsoever power belonged to a governor by common law or the statutes,” Winthrop defines his role within the governmental system as far more than a first amongst equals; rather, Winthrop allows himself the fullest extent of power possible under English law. Dudley has succeeded in making Winthrop define the extent of his power within Massachusetts Bay, but by that definition Winthrop’s power remains vast. Winthrop’s tone is not conciliatory in this passage, and subsequent passages highlight the increasing tension between Winthrop and other members of the elite in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Winthrop’s interactions with Dudley point to the increasing distress Winthrop experiences with regards to perceived threats to the city on a hill he hoped to build.

\textbf{Loss of the Governorship and the Rise of Factionalism in Massachusetts Bay}

In 1634, John Winthrop was voted out of office as Governor of Massachu-

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  \item \textsuperscript{16} Marjory K. McIntosh, “Money Lending on the Periphery of London, 1300-1600,” \textit{Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies} 20, no. 4 (Winter 1988): 558. According to McIntosh, the Church of England officially forbade usury, and so officially 10% was the cutoff for low or no punishment. Lending at below 10% resulted in small fines if caught; lending at higher rates yielded stronger punishments.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Judith Spicksley, “Usury Legislation, Cash, and Credit: The Development of the Female Investor in the Late Tudor and Stuart Periods,” \textit{The Economic History Review}, n.s., 61, no.2 (May 2008): 285.
\end{itemize}
setts Bay. Although he continued on in lesser roles within the Massachusetts Bay government, Winthrop's absence from the governorship yielded tension, and it is within the context of this increased tension that disagreements between different members of the Massachusetts Bay government came to a head in 1636, on the eve of the Antinomian crisis. Our lens into the conflict comes in the form of Winthrop's notes on a meeting called to discuss the importance of reconciliation and unanimity amongst high-level Massachusetts magistrates. Says Winthrop:

January 18: Mr. Vane and Mr. Peter, finding some distraction in the commonwealth arising from some difference in judgment, and withal some alienation of affection among the magistrates and some other persons of quality, and that hereby factions began to grow among the people, some adhering more to the old governor Mr. Winthrop, and others to the late governor Mr. Dudley, the former carrying matters with more lenity and the latter with more severity, they procured a meeting at Boston of the governor, deputy, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Wilson, and there was present Mr. Winthrop, Mr. Dudley, and themselves... Whereupon the governor, Mr. Haynes, spake to their effect: that Mr. Winthrop and himself had been always in good terms, etc.; therefore he was loath to give any offence to him, and he hoped that considering what the end of this meeting was he would take it in good part if he did deal openly and freely as his manner ever was. Then he spake of one or two passages wherein he conceived that [Mr. Winthrop] dealt too remissly in point of justice. To which Mr. Winthrop answered that it was his judgment that in the infancy of plantations justice should be administered with more lenity than in a settled state, because people were then more apt to transgress, partly of ignorance of new laws and orders, partly through oppression of business and other straits. But if it might be made clear to him that it was an error, he would be ready to take up a stricter course.

That the magistrates of Massachusetts

18 Winthrop lost the governorship for a variety of reasons. First, a large percentage of Massachusetts residents, while continuing to support Winthrop, believed that no one man should be allowed to stay in power indefinitely. Winthrop also faced political opposition from Thomas Dudley and John Haynes, both of whom believed that Winthrop was too lenient in punishment.

19 In 1636, John Haynes was governor of Massachusetts Bay. Haynes was an advocate for strict rule in much the same way that Dudley had been. Henry Vane, recently come to Massachusetts in 1636, would succeed Haynes as governor of the Colony in 1637. Vane believed in far more leniency than Dudley or Haynes, and would go on to defend and even support members of the Antinomian movement. Haynes would find that he could not live in Massachusetts, and went on to become a founding member and subsequently the governor of Connecticut, a position he served in from 1639-1654. Henry Vane left Massachusetts at the conclusion of his term in relative political disgrace after supporting Antinomian positions; he became a prominent player within Cromwell's England and was eventually given the death sentence during the English Restoration.

20 Winthrop, Journal of John Winthrop, 89-90. A continuation of this quotation from Winthrop’s journal, including the list of the nine agreed-upon articles describing the reconciliation process, can be viewed in the appendix.
Bay were forced to form such a concord speaks to the level of discord present throughout political discourse at the time. These men were supposed to represent a unified body protecting Massachusetts Bay against all that would seek to do it harm; instead, they found themselves bickering amongst themselves as to how best to run the Colony. As before, Winthrop’s disagreement with Dudley is apparent, for even though Governor Haynes called the meeting that brought Winthrop and Dudley together, it was Dudley who criticized Winthrop for being too lenient. The articles of this reconciliation meeting are telling; much of the agreement reads as a foreshadowing of events to come. Within these articles we find a requirement for stricter government, and here we also find a stipulation that authorized magistrates to attempt to sway constituencies towards the magistrates’ position before major votes. The reconciliation articles also called for cemented authority for the governor of the Colony and increased the punishment associated with offending a magistrate. Throughout the document, we can see a concerted effort to bring together the disparate members of the ruling elite, in the hopes of forming a unified force. Such a document speaks to the size of the divide that had arisen between different political players within Massachusetts Bay. It also begins to offer some insight into the contemporary political landscape in existence during the rise of the Antinomian movement. It was in 1634 that Israel Stoughton was barred from public office for three years for publishing a book calling for less power for the magistrates, and in this same year popular revolt led to the formation of the Deputy position, two years after the Watertown Tax rebellion. Both of these events speak to the tension existing throughout Massachusetts’s political system. The reconciliation articles are clear; Winthrop, previously chastised for being too lenient in matters of the court, had agreed to rule with a greater degree of severity. Where once Winthrop had held with notions of Christian charity, now he moved towards a more authoritarian system of governance.

The Antinomian Crisis

To fully understand Puritan rationale for remaining with the Church of England, and the rationale for separating from it, we must briefly review the major strains of Puritan thought operating in Massachusetts at the time, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and the Anglican system they were rebelling against. As the successor to the Catholic Church in England, the Anglican Church was in many ways a religious organization founded on a political compromise. Originally created by Henry VIII, the Anglican Church was subsequently banished by Henry’s daughter Mary, only to be brought back again under Elizabeth. In their Historical Dictionary of the Puritans, Charles Pastoor and Galen Johnson define Anglicanism in part by stating that the church was inherently flexible, allowing its members to hold any theological views they desired, so long as those views were not explicitly contrary to Scripture. Such a system was a polit-

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21 The articles of the agreement are available in the appendix, labeled as “Articles of Agreement.”

22 Charles Pastoor and Galen K. Johnson, Historical Dictionary of the Puritans (Lanham, MD:
ical necessity for Elizabeth and the early Stuarts, who faced powerful and ambitious Catholic and Puritan factions within their country. It comes as no surprise, however, that many Puritans disliked Anglicanism’s degree of freedom, calling instead for a further push away from Catholicism and towards a more holy state of existence.

Several similarities joined Presbyterians and Congregationalists together. Both believed in predestination, the idea that one could only be saved if God had preordained or elected one to be saved.23 This gift of salvation by God to an individual was known as justification. Presbyterians and many Congregationalists also believed in sanctification, the process by which members of the elect gave signs that they were members of the elect.24 Crucially, neither group believed that sanctification was necessary for justification, or salvation, but both believed the process nevertheless occurred. As this paper will explore, the doctrine of sanctification became a contentious one in Massachusetts Bay during the 1630s. Finally, neither Congregationalists nor Presbyterians believed that the Anglican governing system of bishops and archbishops should remain although Congregationalists and Presbyterians had different ideas regarding what should replace this system. Migrants of both sects came to Massachusetts Bay in large numbers, and while Congregationalists maintained the primary positions of authority throughout the Colony for the first several decades, both systems of religion influenced the development of Massachusetts Bay, culminating in the Cambridge Platform of 1648.25 Presbyterian positions are important for a broad understanding of Massachusetts Bay history and England, as Presbyterians became quite powerful in both communities at the end of the 1640s. This paper will focus primarily on the 1630s and early 1640s during which Congregationalists dominated Massachusetts’s religious life, and so it is the Congregationalist position and threats to it that will receive the most attention. It is worthwhile, however, to briefly touch upon other Presbyterian ideals. Presbyterians wished to replace Bishops with a hierarchy of church elders culminating in the creation of synods, which would hold supervisory control over all churches within their sphere of influence. Adherents to Presbyterianism rarely advocated for separation from the Church of England; because Presbyterians allowed for all people in full communion to join their churches, they were not immediately concerned with the ramifications of having non-elect members within their church system, and did not feel that the Church of England was inherently lost to reform or salvation.

Congregationalists believed that they should organize themselves in ways very different from those proposed by the Presbyterians. Unlike Presbyterians, Congregationalists believed that each congregation should have autonomy and independence, rejecting both Pres-

Scarecrow Press, 2007), 32.
23 Ibid., 250.
24 Ibid., 283.

25 Ibid., 71-72. The Cambridge Platform of 1648 laid out the principles for Church governance for Congregationalists in New England. The Platform was seen as a rejection of Presbyterian ideals in favor of Congregational ones within Massachusetts Bay.
byterian Synods and Anglican Bishops.\footnote{Ibid., 83-84.} Furthermore, Congregationalists were allowed to be in communion only with other members of the elect, “Saints by calling.” Church officials were elected, and Congregationalist Synods were non-binding, advisory councils. Congregationalism allowed each church flock to live by what they believed to be the proper standards for a religious existence, thus ensuring that the entire congregation could be made up of members of the elect. Individual congregations had the right to discipline and even excommunicate members of their congregations. By continuing as members of the Church of England, many Congregationalists feared that they risked dirtying their own individual, pure congregations. As a result, many Congregationalists were less opposed to separatism from the Church of England than Presbyterians. New England’s system based itself in large part on Congregationalism: only the elect were allowed to join congregations in full communion and individual ministers were given autonomy and power. Roger Williams, examined later, demonstrated what happened in Massachusetts Bay when a minister took his autonomy and authority to the limits of the tolerance of Massachusetts Bay’s ruling elite, and beyond. In a system built on Congregationalism, separatist desires frequently came to the fore, and as the leaders of the Colony were non-separatists, conflict frequently ensued. The issue was heated; many Puritans, Winthrop and other leading magistrates among them, had struggled long and hard in England attempting to reform the Church of England, and felt that abandoning it in Massachusetts would be an act of betrayal. These individuals believed that the Church needed reform, in many cases significant reform, but that it was not inherently misguided. Separatists, by contrast, held that the Church of England had become too corrupt and must be thrown off entirely in this new land. In its place, separatists argued, should be built a more pure form of existence and worship. Disputes regarding theological beliefs and organizational beliefs were intimately related; when Congregational synods in Massachusetts came down against Antinomian separatists for their views, many Antinomians believed that Congregationalism allowed for their continuing presence within the Colony, refusing to acknowledge outside interference into the workings of their church. Because Antinomians had attacked the doctrine of sanctification, however, and because Antinomians represented a very real political threat, in addition to the threat they posed to religious orthodoxy within Massachusetts Bay, Winthrop and his allies were forced to take action.

The Antinomian crisis represented the most significant threat to the Massachusetts Bay Colony government, and as it began in the same year that John Winthrop retook the governorship, it also represented an immediate test of Winthrop’s reconciliation principles. The Antinomian crisis represented the culmination of a series of threats to Massachusetts’s non-separatist Congregational authority. Over the course of the crisis, several prominent and charismatic separatist Congregationalists succeeded

\footnote{Morgan, \textit{Puritan Dilemma}, 100-105. Morgan’s descriptions of the Presbyterian-Congregationalist and Separatist-Non-Separatist distinctions are both well written and accessible.}
in attracting large followings, and these leaders challenged Massachusetts orthodoxy’s authority in several different ways. As will become apparent subsequently, however, what began as a purely religious movement rapidly acquired secular issues and adherents as well. Winthrop’s actions must therefore be interpreted as both a reaction to a growing heterodoxy within Massachusetts Bay’s churches and also a reaction to an increasingly powerful political threat. As a political entity, the Antinomians threatened not only the continuing power of Winthrop and his allies but also the very safety of the Colony. In a political environment in which any dissent against Charles I was deemed treasonous and prosecuted severely, the Antinomians played a dangerous game in calling for separation from the Church of England.

John Cotton, a prominent minister in the newly founded Massachusetts Bay Colony, represented the first major Antinomian challenge to Winthrop’s Massachusetts Bay. For Winthrop, society was to function based on the political and moral rules to which he and his fellow church leaders subscribed. The most important of these notions revolved around principles of sanctification and justification. Justification meant that one would achieve heaven upon death, and was to the Puritans a preordained fact for some and an unachievable dream for others. Only God could decide who would be saved and who would be damned, and all Puritans knew that any attempt to influence God’s decision would be futile. While it was impossible to influence one’s eventual outcome, many Puritans believed that one could occasionally determine who had achieved salvation by looking for sanctification, or searching for individuals acting in certain moral, godly ways. Increased reliance on a search for sanctification, however, ran the risk of reverting to a system of works; good Puritans could not allow themselves to believe that their actions might influence their eventual salvation. The issue of sanctification, and its importance in creating a godly society, would be the central focal point for much of the theological debate resulting from the Antinomian crisis. Puritans came to the New World to more perfectly live in God’s image, and so they held their particular beliefs on sanctification and justification as extremely important. Challenges to these beliefs were seen as highly dangerous to the continuing existence of the Colony as heretical views might breed corruption and decay, decreasing the likelihood of salvation for Massachusetts’s residents.

At least initially, John Cotton’s sermons deviated very little from Massachusetts’s doctrine, and Cotton did not come out explicitly against the teachings of Winthrop and others. Over time, however, residents of Massachusetts Bay noticed differences between Cotton’s teachings and those of other ministers, specifically regarding the issue of works:

28 For the purposes of this paper, orthodoxy will be defined as a religious belief that associated non-separatism with elements of Congregationalism. Such a position was held by the majority of Massachusetts ministers, the majority of Massachusetts magistrates, and also Winthrop.

29 This was the doctrine of predestination.

30 Morgan, Puritan Dilemma, 182.

31 Those who succumbed to this risk were known as Arminians; the group will be discussed in more depth with regards to Hutchinson’s trial below.
So that the children of the Covenant of grace will only tell you, that they are free from the Covenant of the Law, but not from the Commandment of it: for as it is given by Jesus Christ, and ratified in the Gospel; and as Christ hath given us his Spirit enabling us to keep it, we are under it so far, as to take our selves bound by the authority of it.\footnote{Hollinger and Capper, \textit{American Intellectual Tradition}, 21. Cotton is advocating for a Covenant of Grace, as opposed to one of Works.}

In Christian theology, the issue of “works” revolved around whether or not certain actions in life might assist one in achieving salvation. Men like Cotton argued that because salvation was completely preordained, works could never assist in achieving salvation. Rather, one lived by the word of the Bible, not to achieve salvation, but instead because God demanded that his people must. In this passage Cotton simply states that sanctification is not a necessary condition of justification, and this statement alone is not enough to label him a heretic. Cotton’s statement could be taken further, however, and it was; from Cotton’s statement, one might conclude that sanctification was totally unnecessary for justification, and that focusing on sanctification detracted from one’s holiness. Cotton was, even by Massachusetts Bay standards, a radical in this regard, and most ministers within Massachusetts Bay still believed that sanctification, if not a means towards salvation, was at least an important tool in forming a congregation. While Cotton’s objections to the teachings of some Massachusetts ministers were mostly theological, the implications of Cotton’s teachings were nevertheless worrisome for a unified system of belief within Massachusetts Bay. If salvation required only Grace, or preordained faith, then the importance of Massachusetts’s ministers and their teachings would necessarily diminish. Thus, while Cotton was not viewed as a particular threat to Massachusetts’s stability, he greatly influenced others who, in part influenced by his teachings, did attempt to upend the status quo.

Anne Hutchinson presents a particularly interesting case study of resistance in New England. Hutchinson bridged the gap in many ways between theological and economic resistance to Massachusetts’s governing authority. The wife of a prominent merchant and magistrate within Massachusetts Colony, Hutchinson came under attack and censure by Massachusetts authorities for her statements concerning religion and salvation theory. Hutchinson and her husband had migrated to Boston following John Cotton; Hutchinson believed Cotton represented one of the few true teachers of Christianity. Hutchinson migrated in 1634; by 1636 she had already come to Winthrop’s attention for her weekly discussions on religion. By 1637 Hutchinson and her supporters had formed themselves into the political and theological group known as the Antinomians, and by August of that year Winthrop and others had forced Hutchinson to stand trial. Hutchinson was accused of numerous crimes, including slander, entertaining seditious persons, preaching as a woman, and holding illegal gatherings, and was eventually banished from Massachusetts Bay following statements she made claiming direct holy intervention in which she likened herself to Daniel.
from the Bible. Hutchinson’s place in society afforded her a strong position from which to spread her thoughts, and she utilized these connections to a great extent when creating Bible study sessions that she organized at her house. Hutchinson argued that the majority of Massachusetts ministers seemed to embrace sanctification to too great of an extent, and that only John Cotton understood its true place in salvation hierarchy. By making such claims, Hutchinson explicitly argued against the authority of most of the Massachusetts ministers, pushing back against the rigid systems in place at the time. Hutchinson went further, however, claiming not only that Massachusetts ministers were wrong, but also that God had spoken to her directly, giving her prophetic powers. A transcript of the court proceedings from the trial against Hutchinson relays her statements to that effect:

[H]e that denies Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh is antichrist... The Lord knows that I could not open scripture; he must by his prophetical office open it unto me... He that denies the testament denies the testator, and in this did open unto me and give me to see that those which did not teach the new covenant had the spirit of the antichrist, and upon this he did discover the ministry unto me and ever since. I bless the Lord, he hath let me see which was the clear ministry and which the wrong. Since that time I confess I have been more choice and he hath let me to distinguish between the voice of my beloved and the voice of Moses, the voice of John Baptist and the voice of antichrist, for all those voices were spoken of in scripture. Now if you do condemn me for speaking what in my conscience I know to be truth I must commit myself unto the Lord.

By claiming direct inspiration from God, Hutchinson went further than sowing dissent amongst the citizens of Massachusetts. Rather, by claiming that God had made her a prophet, Hutchinson superseded Massachusetts Bay’s authority, becoming in effect a spokesperson for God. Existing notions of piety called for Massachusetts residents to live by certain rules and regulations in the pursuit of their own salvation, but Hutchinson’s individualistic relationship with God threatened to redefine Massachusetts Puritan notions of salvation theory. Hutchinson was summarily banished by a court led by Winthrop for her statements and heretical views.

Hutchinson was not the only individual banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony for heretical religious views. Roger Williams, eventual founder of Rhode Island, represented another strain of Antinomian thought. Whereas Cotton and Hutchinson attacked notions of civil liberty indirectly through a discussion of salvation, Williams went after Massa-

33 Hutchinson was accused of claiming that some ministers in Massachusetts Bay were preaching a covenant of works. Such accusations implied that some ministers were supporters of Arminianism, a response to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination that allowed for more human involvement in the process of salvation. For more on Arminianism see Pastoor and Johnson, Historical Dictionary of the Puritans, 35.

34 Hollinger and Capper, American Intellectual Tradition, 33-34. A slightly more complete quotation can be found in the appendix.
chusetts Bay’s religious authority itself. Williams’s statements indicate that he was partial towards separatist thinking. He also believed that governments had and deserved to have secular authority, but he believed that their influence should end there. Williams was particularly adamant about what he viewed as a strongly anti-Christian activity, namely, the persecution of other religious sects. In *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience*, Williams argues powerfully against such persecution:

*Peace.* Yea, but it is said that the blind Pharisees, misleading the subjects of a civil state, greatly sin against an civil state, and therefore justly suffer civil punishments; for shall the civil magistrate take care of outsides only, to wit, of the bodies of men, and not of souls, in laboring to procure their everlasting welfare? *Truth.* I answer, it is a truth: the mischief of a blind Pharisee’s blind guidance is greater than if he acted treasons, murders, etc… But this sentence against him, the Lord Jesus only pronounces in his church, his spiritual judicature, and executes this sentence in part at present, and hereafter to all eternity. Such a sentence no civil judge can pass, such a death no civil sword can inflict.

Williams explicitly attacks governments that seek to use civil authority to punish heresy in this passage. As it stands, the passage directly attacks Winthrop and his fellow magistrates. The implications of the statement are even more far-reaching, however; while the statements explicitly condemn Winthrop’s actions in this life, they also implicitly suggest that Winthrop, Williams’s “blind Pharisee,” might not achieve salvation due to his un-Christian actions. Such statements went far beyond those made by Hutchinson, and it comes as no surprise that Williams published his *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience* only after being expelled from Massachusetts Bay, and able to publish safely from London.

The Antinomian thinkers in Massachusetts Bay represented a threat to Massachusetts’s civil society, and as such were forcibly removed. It is not surprising that some chafed at Winthrop’s and other magistrates’ notions of society, but the speed at which rebellion occurred highlights underlying tensions within Massachusetts Bay. Anne Hutchinson was expelled in 1637, three years after arriving in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and only seven years after its foundation. By this time, Cotton had already begun to separate from other ministers, and though he was not expelled, clear tension exists in the transcript of Hutchinson’s trial between Cotton and the several Massachusetts ministers assisting in the trial. By 1644, Williams had already

35 An indirect attack such as described here might be found in Hutchinson’s rejection of Massachusetts Bay’s interference in her religious beliefs, as seen when she claimed divine inspiration. Hutchinson explicitly attacks the Colony’s authority to impose its religious beliefs on her, but implicitly challenges its authority to govern a religious community.
37 Antinomians were disarmed and required to leave Massachusetts Bay in short order after their trial in 1637-38.
38 Cotton was politically savvy enough to avoid being caught up with the Antinomians, but as the only individual not accused of Antinomianism and
been expelled from Massachusetts and had written his response, the provocative *Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience*. In a span of fifteen years, Winthrop’s idealistic conception of what a godly society should look like had already begun to fall apart.

*The Journal of John Winthrop* continues to offer a helpful perspective into Winthrop’s thoughts during and after the Antinomian crisis. As may be seen from the several Antinomian thinkers cited above, Antinomian thought did not come into existence over night. Rather, the movement built up over a several-year period, only coming to a head in 1637 and 1638. Winthrop’s first interactions with Antinomians occurred as early as April 1631, when Winthrop writes:

April 12: At a court helden at Boston (upon information to the governor that they of Salem had called Mr. Williams to the office of a teacher) a letter was written from the court to Mr. Endecott to this effect, that whereas Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England while they lived there, and besides had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the First Table, therefore they marveled they would choose him without advising the Council, and whitthala desiring him that they would forbear to proceed till they had conferred about it.\(^39\)

In this passage, Winthrop and the Court seem to have mixed views regarding what should be done about Reverend Williams. Winthrop and the Court were generally agreed that Williams’s teachings were antithetical to the teachings being advocated by other leading Massachusetts religious authorities. They were angered that Williams had refused to repent in his positions, and it is clear that their frustration at not being able to silence Williams was growing. Nevertheless, the Court’s handling of Williams is telling: although the magistrates in attendance did not agree with Williams in points of religion, they seemed reluctant to censure him sharply. Evidence for such a position can be seen in the magistrates’ eventual ruling; rather than taking harsh action against Williams, the Court initially decided to give him additional time to repent. All magistrates within Massachusetts had opinions on religion, but some barriers between elected politics and the clergy did exist. Ministers did not enter elected politics, for instance, and Congregational autonomy was usually respected.

Had Williams repented at that point and rejoined the greater Massachusetts flock, the Antinomian crisis and subsequent protest movements within New England might have been shaped quite differently. By 1635, however, Winthrop’s journal informs us that, far from repenting, Williams had continued to preach his heretical teachings and had

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succeeded in being made Minister at Salem:

July 8: At the General Court, Mr. Williams of Salem was summoned and did appear. It was laid to his charge that being under question before the magistrates and churches for divers dangerous opinions… and that the other Churches were about to write to the Church of Salem to admonish him of these errors… So, in fine, time was given to him and the Church of Salem to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the Court or else to expect the sentence. It being professedly declared by the ministers (at the request of the Court to give their advice) that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions (whereby a church might run into heresy, apostacy, or tyranny, and yet the civil magistrate could not intermeddle) were to be removed, and that the other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do. 40

Winthrop again lays out the charges against Williams, but now in far greater detail, perhaps indicating increased awareness of the issue and decreased hope for a quick resolution. Winthrop also discusses the debates that raged about what was to be done. In the previous passage, Winthrop places the majority of the blame on Williams; in this, the congregation at Salem is also seen to be in grave error. A shift can also be seen taking place in the magistrates’ presumed response to religious heresy. Whereas before, the magistrates did not believe severe punishment was necessary, we can now see a hardening of position against those who sought to disrupt the status quo of the Colony. In 1635 Winthrop had not yet sat down with then-future Governor Haynes and Thomas Dudley to reach an agreement about leniency, but one can clearly see where complaints of leniency and a movement towards a harsher code of punishment might arise in Williams’s case. Here we see the evolving rationale for secular intervention into religious life: by raising the menace of heresy and tyranny, other ministers involved with the Massachusetts governing synod felt justified to call for the removal of Williams, by none other than the Massachusetts civil magistrates. This passage represents the last major entry made by Winthrop before the Antinomian crisis began in earnest, and so offers insight into the perspective of Winthrop as the crisis approached. 41

The instigating event of the Antinomian crisis occurred when the government of Massachusetts Bay made the decision to begin seriously prosecuting on the basis of religious heresy in 1636. A charismatic minister named John Wheelwright had been brought to trial for preaching in error, and this trial, and the corresponding attack by authorities on the eighty-three theses of new thought put forth by Antinomian thinkers, began Massachusetts Bay’s religious

40 Ibid., 82-83. A fuller quotation, including four points listing Williams’s heretical beliefs, can be found in the appendix.

41 As Williams represented an extremist-separatist threat that jeopardized the ongoing stability of the Colony, we must assume Winthrop’s guard was up regarding the threat posed by other heretics and separatists.
 crackdown.\textsuperscript{42} Winthrop’s journal from the last half of 1637 is full of his personal thoughts regarding the Antinomians, and the first such entry occurs in August of that year:

\[\text{T}he \text{ erroneous \ opinions \ which \ were \ spread \ in \ the \ country \ were \ read \ (being \ eighty \ in \ all); \ next \ the \ unwholesome \ expressions; \ then \ the \ scriptures \ abused. \ There \ were \ about \ eighty \ opinions, \ some \ blasphemous, \ others \ erroneous, \ and \ all \ unsafe, \ condemned \ by \ the \ whole \ assembly; \ whereto \ near \ all \ the \ elders \ and \ others \ sent \ by \ the \ churches \ subscribed \ their \ names; \ but \ some \ few \ liked \ not \ subscription, \ though \ they \ consented \ to \ the \ condemning \ of \ them. \ Some \ of \ the \ church \ of \ Boston, \ and \ some \ others, \ were \ offended \ at \ the \ producing \ of \ so \ many \ errors, \ as \ if \ it \ were \ a \ reproach \ laid \ upon \ the \ country \ without \ cause; \ and \ called \ to \ have \ the \ persons \ named \ which \ held \ those \ errors. \ To \ which \ it \ was \ answered \ and \ affirmed \ by \ many, \ both \ elders \ and \ others, \ that \ all \ those \ opinions \ could \ be \ proved \ by \ sufficient \ testimony \ to \ be \ held \ by \ some \ in \ the \ country; \ but \ it \ was \ not \ thought \ fit \ to \ name \ the \ parties, \ because \ this \ assembly \ had \ not \ to \ do \ with \ persons, \ but \ doctrines \ only… \ After \ the \ errors \ condemned, \ there \ were \ five \ points \ in \ question \ between \ Mr. \ Cotton \ and \ Mr. \ Wheelwright \ on \ the \ one \ part, \ and \ the \ rest \ of \ the \ elders \ on \ the \ other \ part, <which \ were \ after \ reduced \ to \ three,> \ and \ those \ after \ put \ into \ such \ expressions \ as \ Mr. \ Cotton \ and \ they \ agreed, \ but \ Mr. \ Wheelwright \ did \ not…\textsuperscript{43}

Here we see the battle lines being drawn. Wheelwright and other Antinomians took one side of the discussion, while the Massachusetts magistrates and elders took the other. Cotton, not fully content with the teachings of the orthodox Massachusetts ministers but fearful of outright dissent, remained on the fence. In this passage we can see that while the magistrates had not begun to charge specific citizens for their heretical views, they had at least begun to question ministers they believed to be teaching heresies. The plot thickened rapidly, and by September of 1637, the Massachusetts magistrates had begun finding fault with citizens as well as ministers, and had created the justification for a religious crackdown:

The last day of the assembly other questions were debated and resolved: --

1. That though women might meet (some few together) to pray and edify one another, yet such a set assembly (as was then in practice at Boston) where sixty or more did meet every week, and one woman (in a prophetical way, by resolving questions of doctrine and expounding scripture) took upon her the whole exercise, was

\textsuperscript{42} Wheelwright, who had married the sister of Hutchinson’s brother-in-law, came under attack as early as 1636, but formal censure and banishment occurred in 1637. These eighty-three supposed points of contention between Antinomians and traditional Congregationalists were subsequently narrowed down significantly to a few major disagreements between the two positions; inability to reconcile these positions led to the escalation of the conflict.

\textsuperscript{43} Winthrop, Journal of John Winthrop, 128-29.
agreed to be disorderly and without rule.

2. Though a private member might ask a question publicly after sermon, for information, yet this ought to be very wisely and sparingly done, and that with leave of the elders: but questions of reference (then in use) whereby the doctrines delivered were re-proved and the elders reproached, and that with bitterness, etc., was utterly condemned.

3. That a person, refusing to come to the assembly to abide the censure of the church, might be proceeded against, though absent; yet it was held better, that the magistrates’ help where called for, to compel him to be present.

4. That a member, differing from the rest of the church in any opinion which was not fundamental, ought not for that to forsake the ordinances there; and if such did desire dismissal to any other church which was of his opinion, and did it for that end, the church whereof he was ought to deny it for the same end.

In this passage, we see Winthrop referencing Hutchinson, if not by name then by position. Explicitly stated is the judgment that women should not preach publicly. Magistrates also agreed to limit discussion of sermons by lay individuals, and to limit public disagreement with ministers. Magistrates agreed to take proceedings against individuals even if they did not appear to stand trial, allowing for the punishment of men like Williams, who routinely failed to appear for Court and believed that secular governments had no role in policing religious affairs. While the events of September 1637 did give the Massachusetts Bay government unprecedented authority within Massachusetts to prosecute on the basis of religious belief, the actual individuals being prosecuted continued to be those preaching heretical beliefs. Yes, the proceedings against Hutchinson represented a break from the Court’s previous method of prosecuting only ministers, but by her preaching, Hutchinson had in effect become a minister herself, as is evident from the above passage. In November of 1637, however, the Antinomian crisis truly got out of hand:

There was great hope that the late general assembly would have had some good effect in pacifying the troubles and dissensions about matters of religion; but it fell otherwise. For though Mr. Wheelwright and those of his party had been clearly confuted and confounded in the assembly, yet they persisted in their opinions... Whereupon the general court, being assembled in the 2 of the 9th month, and finding upon consultation that two so opposite parties could not contain in the same body without apparent hazard of ruin to the whole, agreed to send away some of the principal; and for this a fair opportunity was offered by the remonstrance or petition which they preferred to the court the 9th of the 1st month, wherein they affirmed Mr. Wheelwright to be innocent and that the court had condemned the truth of Christ, with divers other scandalous
and seditious speeches, subscribed by more than sixty of that faction, whereof one William Aspinwall, being one and he that drew the said petition, being then sent as a deputy for Boston, was the same dismissed and after called to the court and disfranchised and banished. John Coggeshall was another deputy who, though his hand were not to the petition, yet professing himself to approve it, etc., was also dismissed and after disfranchised.45

After several years of restraint, the Massachusetts magistrates moved against their political and religious opponents forcefully. Wheelwright retreated to New Hampshire, while many of the other banished men migrated to Connecticut and Rhode Island. What could have caused such a drastic shift in policy? Before November of 1637, the only individuals prosecuted for religious crimes were those attempting to preach teachings heretical to Massachusetts’s leading clerics. In an August ruling regarding Antinomians, the Massachusetts Bay Court system indicated that the Court did not feel it appropriate to prosecute individual private citizens for their own opinions and refused to make the names of Antinomians public. And yet, in November, numerous private citizens, several leading members of the community, were banished from the Colony.

To best understand what forced Winthrop and his fellow magistrates to react so severely to the Antinomian crisis, it is perhaps important to determine exactly who was involved in the conflict. As the major breach in action occurred with regards to the private citizens punished for petitioning the Massachusetts Bay government on behalf of Wheelwright, it is to them that we must look. In these individuals Winthrop clearly saw a threat the likes of which he had not previously seen; only this can explain why Winthrop acted the way he did. The Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628-1686 provides the names of the individuals sentenced to be banished and also those punished by disarmament, a serious punishment in the time of the Pequot War.46 Seventy-five men in total were punished in some way for their role in the Antinomian crisis, according to the records. Of those seventy-five it was possible to ascertain the employment information for fifty-six individuals. Of the fifty-six individuals for whom information regarding employment could be ascertained, six were merchants and six served in the military (with the head of Massachusetts’s army chief amongst them). Thirteen had served or were actively serving as either deputies or town officers. Two of the men were ruling elders, and one was a deacon. Other Antinomians were bakers and millers, farmers and bricklayers.47 What the occupation data demonstrates is that Antinomianism had successfully permeated through all ranks of society. Antinomians were primarily focused in Boston, but were also found on

45 Ibid., 132-34.


the North and South Shores. Before the petition by Antinomians to free Wheelwright, Antinomianism was a threat to unanimity of church doctrine, but not something that directly threatened Winthrop’s control of the state. With dozens of prominent private citizens coming out in support of Wheelwright, an issue that had largely revolved around religious disputes rapidly became political in nature. Where previously Winthrop had faced a theological threat, now he faced concerted political opposition to his decisions. The threat of religious discord was not enough to make Winthrop crack down on dissidents, but the threat of political rebellion, especially during a period of hostility with the indigenous population of the surrounding area, represented too great of a risk for Winthrop. Moreover, Winthrop did not face the threat alone. By uniting behind a policy of opposition to Massachusetts ministers, Antinomians threatened to reduce the authority of Massachusetts magistrates, who derived at least part of their authority from the belief that they were protecting a godly society. Faced with the possibility of political turmoil and potential rebellion, Winthrop reacted rapidly, disarming those who he believed threatened the stability of Massachusetts Bay and in so doing creating a precedent for future leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Antinomian Crisis as a Lens: Winthrop’s Change Over Time Re-Examined

John Winthrop’s positions on authority, liberty, and power shifted dramatically during the first fifteen years of settlement in Massachusetts Bay. By examining Winthrop’s thoughts through the lens of his journal, however, we can hope to see the effect different events had on his changing perspectives. Winthrop entered governance with strongly held beliefs regarding the relationship between man and God. These goals come through perhaps most clearly in “A Modell of Christian Charity.” Events in the New World began to harden Winthrop, however, and as the realities of governance settled in, Winthrop began down the path towards stricter, harsher authoritarian governance. Not only had Winthrop become stricter, but he had also defined exactly how far Puritans would be able to deviate from the Church of England, and what would happen to those who pushed beyond those limits. The actions taken against the Wheelwright petitioners served another purpose; Winthrop demonstrated forcefully that his political will was not to be questioned. After being removed from the governorship of Massachusetts Bay, Winthrop hardened his views even more during reconciliation meetings with other leading magistrates. Arguing that Winthrop had been too lenient in the past, these magistrates forced Winthrop to concede that stricter forms of governance were necessary to keep Massachusetts Bay pure in the eyes of God. The Antinomian crisis of 1637 brought Winthrop’s transformation to light. While Winthrop and his fellow magistrates at first seemed reluctant to go after individual citizens for their beliefs, and instead focused the majority of their attention on heretical ministers, Winthrop’s policy on such things shifted suddenly with the introduction of a
rebellious tendency in the opposition. Faced with an attack on authority of not just a religious but also a political nature, Winthrop was finally forced to go on the offensive, disarming and banishing fifty-eight private advocates of Antinomian ideals. An analysis of the employment histories of those private citizens punished for their beliefs demonstrates that the assault to Winthrop’s authority came from a large and diverse portion of society. Disillusioned by the uprisings and still desiring at least the guise of a godly community, Winthrop shifted his position inexorably towards the belief system advocated for in “On Liberty,” requiring strict adherence to the rule of magistrates while disregarding and often explicitly fighting against popular sentiment.

Appendix: Excerpts from Key Sources

Continuation of passage from “A Modell of Christian Charity”:

Now the only way to avoyde this shipwracke and to provide for our posterity is to… doe Justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God, for this end, wee must be knit together in this worke as one man… wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentleness, patience and liberalita… allways having before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke… the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us… when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies… that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are upon us…

Articles of agreement between Winthrop, Dudley, etc. referenced in note #21:

Whereupon there was a renewal of love amongst them and articles drawn to this effect…
1. That there should be more strictness used in civil government and military discipline.
2. That the magistrates should (as far as might be) ripen their consultations beforehand, that their vote in public might be one (as the voice of God).
3. That in meetings out of court the magistrates should not discuss the business of parties in their presence, nor deliver their opinions, etc.
4. That trivial things, etc., should be ended in towns, etc.
5. If differences fall out among them in public meetings, they shall observe these rules: 1. Not to touch any person differing, but speak to the cause; 2. To express their difference in all modesty and due respect to the court and such as differ, etc.; 3. Or to propound their differences by way of question; 4. Or to desire a deferring of the cause to further time; 5. After

sentence (if all have agreed) none shall intimate his dislike privately, or if one dissent he shall sit down without showing any further dis- taste publicly or privately.

6. The magistrates shall be more fami- liar and open each to other, and more frequent in visitations to one another (without reserving any secret grudge), and shall avoid all jealousies and suspicions, each seeking the honor of another and all of the Court, not opening the nakedness of one another to private persons, in all things seeking the safety and credit of the Gospel.

7. To honor the governor in submit- ting to him the main direction and ordering the business of the court.

8. One assistant shall not seem to gratify any man in undoing or crossing another’s proceedings, without due advice with him.

9. They shall grace and strengthen their under officers in their places, etc.

All contempts against the Court or any of the magistrates shall be specifically noted and punished, and the magistrates shall appear more solemnly in public attendance, apparel, and open notice of their entrance into the Court.  

Winthrop’s Journal: July 8th

July 8: At the General Court, Mr. Williams of Salem was summoned and did appear. It was laid to his charge that being under question before the magistrates and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz.

1. That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the First Table otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace; 2. That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man; 3. That a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, etc.; 4. That a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament nor after meat, etc.; and that the other Churches were about to write to the Church of Salem to admonish him of these errors. Notwithstanding, the church had since called him to affirm of a teacher. Much debate was about these things. The said opinions were adjudged by all magistrates and ministers (who were desired to be present) to be erroneous and very dangerous, and the calling of him to office at that time was judged a great contempt of authority. So, in fine, time was given to him and the Church of Salem to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the Court or else to expect the sentence. It being professedly declared by the ministers (at the request of the Court to give their advice) that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions (whereby a church might run into heresy, apostacy, or tyranny, and yet the civil magistrate could not inter- meddle) were to be removed, and that the other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do.

Winthrop’s Journal: August 30th

[August 30] The assembly began

50 Winthrop, Journal of John Winthrop, 89-90.
51 Ibid., 82-83.
with prayer made by Mr. Shepard, the pastor of Newtown. Then the erroneous opinions which were spread in the country were read (being eighty in all); next the unwholesome expressions; then the scriptures abused. There were about eighty opinions, some blasphemous, others erroneous, and all unsafe, condemned by the whole assembly; whereto near all the elders and others went by the churches subscribed their names; but some few liked not subscription, though they consented to the condemning of them. Some of the church of Boston, and some others, were offended at the producing of so many errors, as if it were a reproach laid upon the country without cause; and called to have the persons named which held those errors. To which it was answered and affirmed by many, both elders and others, that all those opinions could be proved by sufficient testimony to be held by some in the country; but it was not thought fit to name the parties, because this assembly had not to do with persons, but doctrines only. Upon this some of Boston departed from the assembly, and came no more. After the errors condemned, there were five points in question between Mr. Cotton and Mr. Wheelwright on the one part, and the rest of the elders on the other part, <which were after reduced to three,> and those after put into such expressions as Mr. Cotton and they agreed, but Mr. Wheelwright did not: -

1. The first was about our union with Christ. The question was whether we were united before we had active faith. The consent was that there was no marriage union with Christ before actual faith, which is more than habitual.

2. The second was about evidencing justification by sanctification. The consent was that some saving sanctifications (as faith, etc.) were coexistent, concurrent, and coapparent (or at least might be) with the witness of the Spirit always.

3. That the new creature is not the person of a believer, but a body of saving graces in such a one; and that Christ, as a head, doth enliven or quicken, preserve and act the same, but Christ himself is no part of this new creature.

4. That though, in effectual calling (in which the answer of the soul is by active faith wrought at the same instant by the Spirit), justification and sanctification be all together in them, yet God doth not justify man before he be effectually called, and so a believer.

5. That Christ and his benefits may be offered and exhibited to a man under a covenant of works, but not in or by a covenant of works.52

Winthrop’s Journal: November 1637

[November 1637] There was great hope that the late general assembly would have had some good effect in pacifying the troubles and dissensions about matters of religion; but it fell otherwise. For though Mr. Wheelwright and those of his party had been clearly confuted and confounded in the assembly, yet they

52 Ibid.
persisted in their opinions, and were as busy in nourishing contentions (the principal of them) as before. Whereupon the general court, being assembled in the 2 of the 9th month, and finding upon consultation that two so opposite parties could not contain in the same body without apparent hazard of ruin to the whole, agreed to send away some of the principal; and for this a fair opportunity was offered by the remonstrance or petition which they preferred to the court the 9th of the 1st month, wherein they affirmed Mr. Wheelwright to be innocent and that the court had condemned the truth of Christ, with divers other scandalous and seditious speeches, subscribed by more than sixty of that faction, whereof one William Aspinwall, being one and he that drew the said petition, being then sent as a deputy for Boston, was the same dismissed and after called to the court and disfranchised and banished. John Coggeshall was another deputy who, though his hand were not to the petition, yet professing himself to approve it, etc., was also dismissed and after disfranchised. Then the court sent for Mr. Wheelwright, and he persisting to justify his sermon and his whole practice and opinions, and refusing to leave either the place or his public exercisings, he was disfranchised and banished. Upon which he appealed to the king, but neither called witnesses nor desired any act to be made of it. The court told him that an appeal did lie; for by the king’s grant we had power here and determine without any reservation, etc. So he relinquished his appeal, and the court gave him leave to go to his house upon his promise that, if he were not gone out of our jurisdiction within fourteen days, he would render himself to one of the magistrates. 

List of Antinomians from The Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628-1686:

Whereas the opinions & revelations of Mr. Wheelwright & Mrs. Hutchinson have seduced & led into dangerous errors many of the people heard in Newe England, insomuch as there is just cause of suspicion that they, as others in Germany, in former times, may, upon some revelation, make some suddaine irruption upon those that differ from them in judgement, for prevention whereof it is ordered, that all those whose names are underwritten shall (upon warning given or left at their dwelling houses) before the 30th day of this month of November, deliver in at Mr. Canes house, at Boston, all such guns, pistols, swords, powder, shot, & match as they shall be owners of, or have in their custody, upon paine of ten pounds for every default to bee made thereof; with ares are the bee kept by Mr. Cane till this court shall take further order therein. Also, it is ordered, upon like penalty of x, that no man who is to render his armes by this order shall buy or borrow any guns, swords, pistols, powder, shot, or match, un-

53 Ibid., 132-34.
The Names of the Boston Men to be disarmed.

Mr. Thomas Oliver
Richard Cooke
Richard Gridley
William Hutchinson
Richard Fairbanke
Edward Bates
William Aspinwall
Thomas Marshall
William Dinely
Samuell Cole
Oliver Mellows
William Litherland
William Dyre
Samuell Wilbore
Mathew Jyans
Edward Rainsfoard
John Oliver
Henry Elkins
John Button
Hugh Gunnison
Zachary Bossworth
John Sanfoard
John Biggs
Robert Rice
Richard Gridley
William Townsend
John Odlin
Edward Bates
Robert Hull
Gama. Wayte
William Dinely
William Pell
Edward Hutchinson
William Litherland
Richard Hutchinson
William Wilson
Mathew Jyans
James Johnson
Isaak Grose
Henry Elkins
Thomas Savage
Richard Carder
Zachary Bossworth
John Davy
Robert Hardinge
Robert Rice
George Bürden
Richard Wayte
Jacob Eliott
Thomas Matson
William Freeborn
James Penniman
William Baulston
Henry Bull
Thomas Wardell
John Compton
John Walker
William Wardell
Mr. Parker
William Salter
Edward Bailer
Mr. Alfoot
Mr. Eason
Thomas Wheeler
Mr. Comins
Mr. Spencer
Mr. Clark
Robert Moulton
Edward Denison
John Coggeshall
Mr. King
Richard Morris
Mr. Scrugs
Mr. Dumer
Richard Bulgar
William Denigar
Mr. Foster
George Bunker
Philip Sherman
Samuel Sherman
James Browne
John Underhill

54 From Shurtleff, *The Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New En-
Bibliography


Mature Faith Development and the Exclusion of Atheists

Maggie Ingell

Many Americans falsely understand atheism as a mere unbelief in God's existence and correlate that unbelief with immorality. My project examines the tension between the progressive ideology of inclusivism and the conception of the morally incapable atheist by turning to James Fowler's Faith Development Theory (1981). This structural developmental theory posits that every human being, regardless of religion or lack thereof, has "faith" and that every human being follows the same developmental model through stages of faith. However, I argue that because of its use of religious language, Fowler's theory excludes atheists from the higher stages of development, despite his claim to include all people. Reimagining what "faith" means to an atheist helps us understand that one's beliefs do not reflect and cannot predict one's level of moral maturity.

The public debate between theism and atheism causes tension daily in America. From national politics and intellectual debates to local rifts between churches and atheist groups, the difference between belief and unbelief is more than a disagreement; it determines identities and challenges tolerance. Consider the June 2012 Gallup poll report, stating that only 54 percent of Americans would vote for a "well-qualified" atheist for President. Although this is the highest rating in Gallup's history of asking the question about supporting an atheist for presidency (since 1958), atheists still come behind both gays (68 percent) and Muslims (58 percent) when the same question is posed, suggesting that while America has become more comfortable with the capacity both gays and Muslims have for trustworthy representation of American values, atheists are still the most distrusted minority in America. This disparity is about more than just being able to be elected as a representative; this is about public trust, in general. Moreover, it speaks to the view of all atheists as incapable of representing American values and, therefore, incapable of thinking and behaving in a morally mature manner. In this sense, atheists are not just excluded from the public sphere, but also portrayed as untrustworthy human beings because they lack a mature moral compass.

That is not to say that theists don't face their share of prejudice, as well. New Atheists, or the individuals who reemphasize the power of science and reason, as well as the irrationality of religious beliefs, poke fun at believers regularly. Like earlier atheists, New Atheists feel it is only a matter of time before these religious people's beliefs evolve to center on reason. The main difference between traditional atheism and New Atheism is that the latter is an established and recognized movement of thinkers who promote militant atheism and who entered

the public sphere in response to many years of a religious revival. Best known for such public figures as Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Daniel Dennett, New Atheism makes waves in public discourse. These authors explicitly denigrate religious individuals because of their acquiescence to the “illusory happiness” of religion. Christopher Hitchens writes, “The person who is certain, and who claims divine warrant for his certainty, belongs now to the infancy of our species,” contending that theists are far less developed and mature than their atheist counterparts because they believe in things that “come from the bawling and fearful infancy of our species.” Furthermore, being a theist is “a babyish attempt to meet our inescapable demand for knowledge (as well as for comfort, reassurance, and other infantile needs).” Because religion teaches about subjective and unfalsifiable concepts, these New Atheists consider it their mission “to wrestle a significant sphere of human concern…from the nefarious grips of religion.” As Hitchens puts it, “Religion poisons everything.” Therefore, while atheists often face public discrimination when election time comes, theists often find themselves defending the rationality of religion against the reductive accusations of New Atheists.

Finally, and for many individuals more importantly, this debate in the political and intellectual sphere manifests itself every day among friends and within families. As an ex-Catholic myself, I know that the strict divide that we have erected between belief and unbelief can result in ostracism of the minority and social dysfunction between the closest friends and family members. When I told my Catholic mother that I didn’t believe in God, she first denied this claim, saying, “Yes, you do!” The second time I told her, she responded, “I hope you’re not going to Hell.” The third and final time this conversation came up, she started crying because she knew once-and-for-all that I would not be in Heaven with her. I am not alone in disappointing family members. In a survey conducted in 2008, 61 percent of American atheist respondents felt that there would be “at least minor repercussions in the family” if their families found out they were atheists. “Coming out” of the atheist closet is a challenge in American society because of the stigmatization associated with atheism. In fact, an easy Internet search yields advice to closeted atheists on the best way to “break the news” to their families and friends without distressing themselves.

4 Ibid., 11, 64.
5 Ibid., 64.
6 Pigliucci, “New Atheism,” 149.
7 Hitchens, *god is Not Great*, 13.
In some families and social groups, a denial of this nature can even result in excommunication, severing all ties with the collective group. Situations like this, in which the individual discloses his or her atheist identity and subsequently faces poor treatment and prejudice, are common occurrences in America today, both when an individual within a religious family becomes estranged from the religion of her childhood and decides to opt for “unbelief,” and when an individual within a nonreligious family “finds God” and starts preaching the truths of the newly adopted religion.

Despite their disagreements, most theists and atheists define atheists as unbelievers. Atheists see themselves as having cast off false (transcendent) belief, and sometimes hold themselves intellectually superior. Theists also consider atheists to have rejected not only the doctrinal teachings of religion, but also its ethical principles, and therefore regard atheists as persons lacking any moral compass. Both views are wrong.

Neither theism nor atheism can determine one’s moral and intellectual capacities. In fact, I will show that theists and atheists share a lot more in common than they realize. Belief is not the dividing factor between the theist and atheist, but experience. How one interacts with, reacts to, and finally places meaningfulness in her or his life is what ultimately leads a person to identify as theist or atheist. A helpful distinction for our purposes is that of transcendence versus immanence. Transcendence, correlating to theism, is the experience of some kind of greater spiritual force of power external to this world, to humanity, and to the individual. For some, transcendence may simply be a source of value, power, or meaning that is outside the realm of humanity and does not necessarily imply a personal and responsive God. This force does not necessarily have agency, and for some is merely a “center of value and power” that is external to the individual and to humanity. Immanence, on the other hand, is the experience of placing any greater force or power internally and within this world, humanity, or oneself. Note that while theism and atheism commonly refer to the superficial level of belief, transcendence and immanence point to the level of lived experience. We often think that one’s beliefs (theism or atheism) influence one’s lived experience (transcendence or immanence), but in reality, our lived experience is what shapes our beliefs and can pull us in any number of directions.

These terms may appear to be dualistic—it may seem that one is either a clear-cut atheist or theist, but cannot be in the middle. That is not the case, however. It is unhelpful and misleading to clearly distinguish between theism and nontheism as dichotomous. In fact, it is this misconception that leads to the types of discrimination and prejudice that we see between theists and atheists. Although interfaith and peace groups attack the problem of interreligious hate, their efforts have yet to persuade the public that our fundamental understanding of a conflict between “belief and unbelief” is unfounded. To


11 Throughout this paper, I use the term “atheism” rather than “nontheism.” Although they both signify the belief in no God or gods, I have chosen atheism in order to dispel negative stereotypes surrounding “atheism” and the identity “atheist.”
eradicate the falsely constructed divide, we must go farther. The modern push is for tolerance of the “Other,” recognizing that someone else can hold a different set of beliefs and being able to accept that. We must push for a total refashioning of what defines a person as morally and rationally capable.

It is not just the polemicists who make sweeping assumptions about others’ moral and rational capacities. Even moderate and liberal thinkers, who aim to dispel the wall of hatred between theists and atheists and who are famous for their “inclusive” or “open” worldviews, may inadvertently perpetuate this false dichotomy. James Fowler, a United Methodist minister and developmental psychologist, is a liberal theist who pushes for a more inclusive and ethical worldview that can encompass theism and nontheism alike. I turn to Fowler to show how even the most progressive voices have an ingrained sense of the divide between theism and atheism that adds to the misconceptions we have of the “Other.” When Fowler was writing, the divide between theism and atheism was bounded by a deeper and more complex set of ideological associations than today because of the Cold War associations of communism, atheism, and distrust. Furthermore, tensions between many religious groups were high, so that Fowler’s work was already pushing the norms by suggesting that non-Christians could be moral. Although he succeeded in expanding the readers’ sense of what cultural values faith entails and who can achieve a fully moral personhood for his time, Fowler’s model does not meet today’s standard of what inclusivism means. Therefore, while we should commend Fowler for his worthy agenda, he did not succeed in dismantling the divide between theism and atheism in his account of moral development.

Marked by its national sense of living in fear and suspicion of the “Other” because of the Cold War and the “Communist threat,” 1981 was a year in which the divisions between Christian America and non-Christian America were quite evident. The rise of the Religious Right certainly added to the polarization of American religious life by portraying domestic opponents as standing in the way of a better American society and flirting with Communism. For Fowler, the divisions between religions were deepening the divide between humans. Unlike so many Americans at the time who kept their eyes peeled for any hint of suspicious communist activities, Fowler wanted to show that every individual shares some common humanity that unites us across our differences. Fowler’s desire to unite even crossed the border between theism and atheism. That is, although many associated communism, atheism, and immorality, Fowler was bold enough to dissociate the three and suggest a new way of thinking about humanity. “Faith Development Theory” (FDT) is Fowler’s bold and praiseworthy attempt to bring people together across differences and advocate for a more understanding and pluralistic society.

In order to show that faith is universal, Fowler describes faith as not just a particular kind of belief, but that in which one invests the whole self. Faith is a worldview, an everyday orientation to one’s environment. Faith is how someone responds to cosmic and ultimate questions like “Who are you?” or better “Why are you here?” Not necessarily religious, faith is a person’s deep-
est being that determines how she constructs meaning in the world. According to Fowler, everyone has faith because everyone attempts to explain his or her existence in this world in some way. In fact, even science could be considered a person’s faith. Religion is often thought to determine what a person’s faith looks like. For Fowler, one’s religious tradition influences, but does not determine, the development of one’s faith. For instance, if I am a devout Catholic, I will go to Mass at least once a week, and I will turn to Jesus Christ for salvation. I will find meaning in the world within Jesus, and I will orient my life around Him. If I am Catholic, but not devout, I might turn to Jesus for solace when times are bad, but not live every moment for and because of Christ. In fact, many people’s faiths are more dependent upon other life issues: money, family, careers, etc. Because of the meaning of the term faith, the issues of morality and epistemology naturally come into play. Faith determines how a person perceives good and evil and how she comes to know anything she holds to be true. Faith, as a holistic concept that involves one’s entire being and purpose, is both a moral and epistemological notion.

Fowler unfolds his theory of faith development using structural developmentalism, a popular framework in psychology throughout the twentieth century. Fowler contends that with each stage in this six-stage developmental theory, the individual gains a better or purer way of knowing. The final stage, called “Universalizing Faith,” is embodied by figures like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Often considered modern day saints, both Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., embody morality in their active leadership and selflessness. For these individuals and others like them, humanity as a whole is the center of their moral concern, a concern for which they are willing to die. Fowler upholds a normative image of human development, picturing the most morally perfect human as one who embodies stage six faith. While Fowler doesn’t explicitly deny atheists the highest development, I argue that Fowler excludes atheists because his language and images express two contradictory ideals: 1) universal inclusivism, or the idea that all humans share something in common despite boundaries established by differing beliefs and 2) a normative and singular notion of what it means to attain the highest stage of faith development, morally and epistemologically.

Fowler, who clearly finds the common ground or shared humanity of all humans to be of utmost moral significance, contradicts his own set of virtues because he maintains a single, normative idea of what constitutes full faith maturity. I will show that Fowler’s criterion of “transcendent faith” and increasingly religious depictions of faith exclude atheists from the final stage of faith development. By inadvertently excluding atheists from that stage, Fowler contradicts his own claim to inclusiveness.

In the sections to follow, I provide an overview of FDT and Fowler’s goals in establishing it. Next, I expound “mature faith” and how Fowler maintains the idea of normative maturity in faith. Finally, I

expose the tension between the normative notion of mature faith and universal inclusivism, using FDT to demonstrate the irony and contradictoriness of holding both ideals simultaneously.

James Fowler and Faith Development Theory

James Fowler promotes universalist notions of humanity. That is, he heralds the idea that we have more common ground than divisions among us. As I discuss it here, Fowler idealizes universal inclusivism, or the moral theory that endorses unity and understanding over divisive boundaries erected by cultural and religious differences. In other words, universal inclusivism is the essentialist idea that all humans share some common humanity that makes each individual worthy of a universal code of respect and rights. At its extreme, universal inclusivism involves an active obligation to help human beings. Universal inclusivism represents a moral philosophy that provides a worldview in which all humans are interconnected, and therefore promulgates a moral commitment to inclusivity and tolerance for all. According to Fowler, the most mature faith is marked by "enlarged visions of universal community" as well as the ability to see "the fractures and divisions of the human family," showing that, to Fowler, seeing all individuals as part of a "human family" is the ideal. Therefore, universal inclusivism, or this notion of a single human family, is a key virtue, one that Fowler heralds. It also shows how genuine Fowler's proposal of a faith development theory was in its goal of unity. Fowler's noble goals are significant because, as I will show, despite Fowler's universal inclusivism that promotes universal equality, his normative idea of mature faith ironically results in an exclusion of atheists in FDT.

Inspired by the structural developmental theories of Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, and Lawrence Kohlberg, Fowler describes faith development as a passage through six archetypal stages. Fowler's six-stage Faith Development Theory describes a universal and formal human development path that aims to describe how people change their orientation to the cosmos, to others, and to themselves throughout their lives. In FDT, there are six stages of faith that advance as one gradually grows from egocentrism and selfishness to selfless universal awareness and concern. Few people make it to the final stage and most remain in stage three or four. Fowler argues that all people have faith, that all faith follows the same trajectory, and that the highest stage of faith offers the "purest" epistemology and access to truth. Not only do stage six individuals "know" more comprehensively and accurately, but they also act based on that knowledge, thus acting in

to be a feature of the most developed faith. Therefore, my argument here is not that universal inclusivism is a facet of fully mature faith, despite that it is according to Fowler, but rather simply that this is one value that Fowler presupposes to be a virtue throughout the book. Thus, for Fowler, it is crucial to view all humans as a part of a single family.

13 Fowler, Stages of Faith, 199-200.
14 While it may seem that this virtue just reflects stage six faith, or Fowler's notion of fully mature faith, it is also clear that Fowler finds it of key importance exactly for the reason that he considers it

the most morally mature ways no matter the societal repercussions. Stage six, for Fowler, is a stage we should all aspire to reach because it radiates goodness. His theory inspires readers to work towards the highest stage of development that is represented by the Buddha, Mother Teresa, and Gandhi, among others. As these figures illustrate, stage six involves unconditional devotion to the betterment of the world. It also requires that one overcome the idea that his or her worldview is absolutely true and superior to any other worldview, thus recognizing the truths in others’ worldviews. This relativism doesn’t entail moral acquiescence. It does not prevent the person from acting on his or her values. Rather, mature faith begets a higher conception of the truth that undoubtedly involves the goodness of humanity. This person recognizes the partiality of his or her own faith and sees it as capable of offering only a slice of some higher truth, and yet spurring the person to act for the good of the universe. Fowler claims that stage six involves an actualization of a “felt sense of an ultimate environment [as] inclusive of all being.”

Finally, stage six demands that the person has a single and theistic source of value and power.

When Fowler wrote *Stages of Faith*, he did so with specific images of the fully developed (stage six) human being. While not everyone achieves the sixth stage, every person *should* strive to be in stage six. That is, every person *should* have a single, theistic source of values and power. Every person *should* be willing to die for a “good” cause. Every person *should* overcome the paradox of the particular and the universal by seeing that his or her specific worldview offers a window to some universal spirit of oneness and truth. Every person *should*, therefore, be able to act on her faith, becoming an “incarnation” of universal faith. However, according to Fowler, only a person with stage six faith actually achieves all of these things. Only the stage six individual demonstrates unconditional love and is willing to sacrifice her/himself to the greater cause of incarnating the “spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community.”

The fully mature person is charismatic and works for the good of the “ultimate environment.” According to Fowler, the fully mature person has a singular center of value and power and acts in particular ways (ways particular to a certain religion, culture, or controversy) to fulfill her vision of the absolute truth. Finally, the ideal, fully mature person believes in the power of the future and dedicates her life to bringing that promising future to the present moment.

**Singular and Normative Images of Mature Faith**

In FDT, the image of fully mature faith is singular and normative. When I suggest that images of fully mature faith are singular, I mean that only one type of fully mature faith exists. That is, only one measure of faith exists, according to Fowler, and that is laid out by FDT. When I suggest that these images of mature faith are normative, I mean that these images imply that all people should universally strive for mature faith because it is superior to and higher than other, lower faiths. By itself, a notion of

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
the ideal mature faith does not contradict universal inclusivism because the individual with this image might not assert its normativity or singularity. That is, one can find that inclusiveness is crucial to the modern moral order, and also maintain an image of mature faith without contradicting oneself. However, when a person finds inclusivity to be crucial, but simultaneously imagines a single mature faith that everyone ought to strive for, he or she dismisses the variety of expressions and experiences of faith. Moreover, when normative singularity is applied to a developmental stage theory, as in the case of FDT, it automatically places dissenting faiths on the lower registers of moral and epistemological development.

Fowler himself considers FDT to be a normative stage theory: “Successive stages represent qualitative movements in ‘purification’ of reason,” and “more developmental stages make possible a knowing that in some senses is ‘more true’ than that of less developed stages.” Fowler thinks that stage six faith is “the normative endpoint, the culminating image of mature faith in this theory.” By offering a singular and normative description of the most fully developed faith, Fowler allows no room for other types of faiths, thus excluding certain faiths from being recognized as fully mature. FDT is not as inclusive as Fowler imagines it. Returning to the idea of what mature faith entails, we can see how Fowler’s stage six, in its normativity, supports an exclusive image of moral and epistemological maturity.

**The Tension between Normative Maturity and Inclusivism in FDT**

So far, we’ve seen how Fowler simultaneously values inclusivity and a single, normative definition of mature faith. From the outset, we can see how these two ideals clash, but we have yet to see how this collision pans out in FDT. In aiming to make an inclusive theory, Fowler tries to use neutral language. By the second half of his book, however, Fowler employs religious language to describe the supposedly universally accessible stages. At the heart of his thesis lie “faith” and “monotheism”; unpacking his use of these terms will underscore the latent irony in FDT.

Fowler employs the word “faith” deliberately. In *Stages of Faith*, Fowler bases his definition of faith on the etymological work of W.C. Smith, who defines faith as “an orientation of the personality, to oneself, to one’s neighbor, to the universe; a total response; a way of seeing whatever one sees and of handling whatever one handles; a capacity to live at a more than mundane level.” For Fowler faith is a universal feature of humanity; it develops over time to create a more virtuous human being. He must include atheists in his theory if it can be considered truly inclusive and universal, which is why he presents his theory as “religion-neutral,” or equally open to theism and nontheism. But “faith” reverts to its popular meaning in FDT despite the

19 Ibid., 102, 101.
20 Ibid., 199.

21 Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 12. Here, the connection made between faith and transcendence is imperative for understanding why Fowler holds that mature faith is marked by one transcendent center of value and power. I will unpack this critique in the following pages.
generic way in which Fowler defines it originally.

While we all have some universal human characteristic that involves one’s sense of meaning, Fowler’s choice of the term “faith” smuggles in a set of religious associations. Therefore, we must question Fowler’s choice of the term “faith” to describe this shared human ability to frame our world. Faith signifies a long history of Judeo-Christian meaning and cannot suddenly be considered non-religious. However, in employing it here, Fowler makes space for a putatively “universal” theory that, in fact, excludes atheists from full development. Fowler uses the term faith for many reasons, one of which is his calling as a Christian minister. For him, personal growth is primarily based on one’s relationship with God. By calling this characteristic “faith,” Fowler constructs a theory that relies on God as its source of truth in the higher stages of development. In other words, Fowler presents an image of supposedly universal human development that paints the truest and highest stage of development as requiring theistic faith. For Fowler, simultaneously using the term “faith” and declaring the neutrality of FDT means that he can propose a universal theory in which theism is nonetheless required for highest faith development. Based only on how Fowler defines faith, FDT had potential to be universal. But in his description of the final stages, there is slippage in Fowler’s use of the term faith, so that it comes to refer specifically to theistic faith.

**Exclusion of Nontheists: Transcendence and Monotheism**

Now that it’s clear why the term “faith” is misappropriated in FDT, we can see how faith and Fowler’s language and imagery specifically take on deeply Christian meanings. Fowler employs controversial language given that he claims the theory is religion-neutral. As the chapters progress, the meanings he assigns to terms like “faith” shift from his original religion-neutral definitions to more religious, specifically Christian, meanings. In fact, Fowler does not mention God until his stage descriptions, maintaining a neutral stance (a stance that purports to be equally open to theism and nontheism) throughout his chapters on defining faith and discussing structural development. In other words, his theory is neutral while he defends his content and his form, but as soon as he switches to expounding the fundamentals of the stages, theism is in the spotlight and nontheism is devalued, implicitly or explicitly.

Thus, while the first half of the book is dedicated to the psychology of faith and faith development, the second half comes across as theological, with only hints of psychology. Although Fowler spends the first fourteen chapters defining faith as universal and pointing to the psychological reasons this is true, chapters 15 to 24 center on the theology of faith. Fowler organizes the second half of the book in two parts: “Stages of Faith” and “Formation and Transformation in Faith.” He bases his argument
that people universally experience structural development of faith on the 359 interviews he conducted with mostly white Christians. 22 The first use of theistic meanings comes in Fowler’s elaboration of the first stage of faith, where he notes that the infant begins developing “pre-images of God.” 23 According to Fowler, the “pre-stage” of “Undifferentiated Faith,” which coincides with infancy, involves “the rudimentary awareness of self as separate from and dependent upon the immensely powerful others.” 24 In calling this emergence of consciousness “pre-images of God,” Fowler primes the reader for the increasingly significant role theism plays in FDT. As he continues in the descriptions of stages one and two, the interviews he includes focus on God. The jump from the psychology-focused first half of the book to the theology-focused second half becomes clear at this point. When Fowler turns to the third stage of faith, he discusses the adolescent’s search for a God who affirms the self. 25 Fowler assumes that all people have an experience of God and express it symbolically. However useful Fowler’s account of the moral development of theists and atheists alike may be, his depiction of the stages suffers from his slippage from psychology to theology.

While descriptions of stages one through five are imbued with hints of religious bias, Fowler specifically and explicitly relies on Christian theology to support FDT in discussing stage six. Universalizing faith, or stage six, unearths his presupposition that God is a necessary part of full faith development. Fowler defines three features of faith at stage six: 1) “inclusiveness of community,” 2) “radical commitment to justice and love,” and 3) “selfless passion for a transformed world, a world made over not in [a stage six individual’s] image, but in accordance with an intentionality both divine and transcendent.” 26 Before being categorized as a stage six individual, one must demonstrate all three criteria, which complicates Fowler’s claim to universality. While a nontheist might easily meet the first two criteria, the third presents a problem; a nontheist can demonstrate “selfless passion for a transformed world” that is not in her or his image, but might not imagine that image as one “with an intentionality both divine and transcendent.” Fowler never offers a detailed or explicit definition of what he means by transcendence, but he does connect it with monotheism and God.

That stage six absolutely requires faith in a transcendent form of value becomes clear when we examine the bridge Fowler erects between faith and its object. He uses H. Richard Niebuhr’s concept of “radical monotheism” as the foundation of Universalizing Faith. Radical monotheism, for both scholars, is not a type of “-theism” that indicates a religious belief in one god. According to Fowler, radical monotheism is “a form of faith in which the reality of God—transcendent and ever exceeding our grasp—exerts transforming and redeeming tension on

22 Fowler, Stages of Faith, 316-17. In fact, 97.8 percent of those interviewed were white, and 85.2 percent were Christian (11.2 percent were Jewish).
23 Ibid., 121.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid., 153.
the structures of our common life and faith.” 27 It is central to stage six faith because it allows a person to detach him/herself from ego-based centers of value and power.

In order to justify using radical monotheism to describe mature faith, Fowler must eradicate the obvious connection with its original meaning, the belief in one god. Therefore, he redefines all three of the conventional forms of theisms, polytheism, henotheism, and monotheism. In his model, polytheism is “a pattern of faith and identity that lacks any one center of value and power of sufficient transcendence to focus and order one’s life.” 28 Polytheism correlates to the lower stages of faith because these stages lack one transcendent source of value and power. In other words, polytheism might correspond to stages one and two of faith development because the individual has yet to “unify one’s hopes and strivings.” 29 According to Fowler, there are two types of polytheists. First is the protean polytheist who skips among “minor centers of value and power” with transience and intensity. 30 The second type is the diffuse polytheist who “never bring[s] all of [his/her] passion to any relationship or value commitment.” 31 In both cases, polytheists “lapse into a confusion of our representations of a transcendent center of value and power with that reality itself.” 32 In other words, polytheists, and as we will see, henotheists also, have a misconceived and shallow faith, according to Fowler.

Henotheism, like polytheism, is a lesser form of faith. According to Fowler, unlike polytheism, however, henotheism has a single center of transcendent power, but that center is false. That is, henotheism is “a pattern of faith and identity in which one invests deeply in a transcending center of value and power, finding in it a focal unity of personality and outlook, but this center is inappropriate, false, not something of ultimate concern.” 33 Unlike the connection that Fowler draws between polytheism as the belief in many gods, and polytheism as the state of having many centers of value and power, Fowler’s definition of henotheism radically alters the real meaning of henotheism. In its original and more well-known definition, henotheism is the belief in many gods, but the worship of one God. According to Fowler’s definition, henotheism is a misguided or idolatrous faith because it does not have the truthful transcendent center, presumably God or one’s equivalent to God. In fact, Fowler goes on to say, “The henotheistic god is finally an idol.” 34 In describing stage six, Fowler asserts that “gods of nation, self, tribe, family, institutions, success, money, sexuality, and so on” are “idolatrous gods.” 35 The implication here is not only that having multiple centers of value and power is an obstacle to reaching stage six, but also that it is somehow sinful to focus your faith anywhere outside of the “sovereign God of

27 Ibid., 204.
28 Ibid., 19. Niebuhr’s Christian theology clearly holds negative connotations of polytheism, but there are other interpretations that view polytheism as a more accepting belief system. My emphasis.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 20.
32 Ibid., 23. Fowler’s emphasis.
33 Ibid., 20. My emphasis.
34 Ibid. My emphasis.
35 Ibid., 205.
radical monotheistic faith.”

For Fowler, that radical monotheism is the ultimate expression of faith because it is “a type of faith-identity relation in which a person or group focuses its supreme trust and loyalty in a transcendent center of value and power, that is neither a conscious or unconscious extension of personal or group ego nor a finite cause or institution…. It implies loyalty to the principle of being and to the source and center of all value and power.”

Radical monotheism, for Fowler, is the highest form that faith can take, and it only appears in stage six faith. Furthermore, Fowler says, “In radical monotheistic faith, the commonwealth of being, unified in the reign of God as creator, ruler and redeemer, is universal.” In other words, to be in stage six, the person must prioritize her centers of value and power such that God is the One transcendent center, because it is only when God is one’s only center that the person can realize the universal “commonwealth of being.” Fowler’s use of radical monotheism is the crux of his exclusion of atheists from fully mature faith because it directly correlates transcendent faith with higher stages of faith.

Not only does Fowler connect his developmental stages of faith with exclusively theistic faiths, but he also inserts transcendence into the definitions of both. Notice the correlation between polytheism, a lack of transcendence, and lower faith stages compared with the correlation between radical monotheism, transcendence, and the highest stage of faith development. By associating the most mature faith stage with radical monotheism and by associating radical monotheism with transcendence, stage six faith and transcendence are necessarily and always paired together, according to Fowler. Thus, Fowler also implies that the lower stages of faith, which lack a single, transcendent source of value and power, actually have immanent faith. Immanence, the lack of transcendence and the placement of value and power internally to the self, humanity, and the world, then correlates with the idolatrous polytheism and immature faith.

Therefore, while Fowler insists that faith is universal, the theist-atheist divide implicitly becomes much more distinct as he disregards the atheist’s potential for full faith development and discusses transcendence and radical monotheism together as prerequisites for full moral and epistemological development. He portrays faith lacking transcendence (or immanent faith), and therefore atheists, as limited to the lower levels of faith development, while transcendent faith, and therefore theists alone, enjoy the insight of the higher stages. Unlike the selfless mature faith of transcendence,

36 Fowler never describes the “sovereign God of radical monotheistic faith,” but it is not the knowable God that the lower stages worship. Fowler might argue that this is an unknowable God, a God of mystery.
37 My emphasis.
38 Ibid., 23. Fowler’s emphasis.
39 Ibid., 205. This is simply one instance among many in which Fowler expresses the need for God to achieve stage six.
40 Additionally, it is important to note that polytheism, henotheism, and monotheism all contain some reference to the transcendent. Fowler offers no category of faith that is a nointer. Even the most base category (polytheism) contains theism. Furthermore, only the polytheistic category of faith “lacks any one center of value and power of sufficient transcendence,” which might imply that immanent faith is at the bottom of the totem in Fowler’s mind.
the immature faith of immanence has self-centered goals. While he might argue that everyone has faith and that there are many ways to define our source of value and power, Fowler ultimately maintains that to be fully mature is to have a single and transcendent source of value and power. Therefore, anyone with immanent faith, any atheist, is unable to attain the highest level of faith development.

Conclusion

This analysis of FDT has shown the general tension between universal inclusivism and a normative and singular idea of mature faith. James Fowler’s FDT is an example of how even the most avowedly universal and inclusive accounts of human personality may fail when they assume a single, normative notion of fully mature faith rather than a plurality of ideas about what constitutes a fully developed person in faith. When we examine the specific issue of belief and mature faith, it is clear that while the issue of maturity is fading when it comes to the divide between Christians and non-Christians, the wall between theists and atheists remains strong. Atheists everywhere feel the pressures of their religious counterparts who hold that they cannot be trusted. Moreover, even theists who claim to be inclusive can, in fact, neglect the “Other,” leaving the atheist to be either distrusted or excluded.

There is hope, however, because some Americans are beginning to see that faith and belief are universal, that the relationship between theism and atheism is better considered in terms of lived experience between the pulls of transcendence and immanence, and that both theists and atheists can be good, trustworthy, and rational people. Recent scholarship on the ideas of a pluralistic, inclusive, and non-reductive society are developing and spreading to the public. My project ultimately pushes for the collaboration between inclusivism and pluralism.

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I argue that there is a specific, unique mode of cognition that is engaged in the reading of literature—that we have different cognitive pathways for processing literary information—and thus we read literature differently than we read other forms of text. My project explores the unique characteristics of the cognitive processes of reading literature by proposing that we have a literary mode of mind, characterized by higher levels of creative thinking and an increased ability to seek and ascertain connections, patterns, and meanings in text. I examine this idea through engaging in literary analysis, exploring previous research in cognitive psychology, and creating and executing my own experiment that aims to find some of the cognitive domains that literary text might influence.

Many of us have experienced the riveting feeling of "I couldn’t put this book down!" but is this sensation still familiar when it is applied to the reading of a textbook? This dichotomy of feelings arises because literature and textbooks are two distinct forms of text. Literary text prompts its readers to engage with the text in a way that is unique when compared to the reading of other forms of text including, but not limited to, instruction manuals, informational paragraphs, and news articles. It is justified to suspect that there is something fundamentally different about the way that we engage with literary texts. I argue that there is a specific, unique mode of cognition that is engaged in the reading of literature—that we have different cognitive pathways for processing literary information—and thus we read literature differently than we read other forms of text.

To respond to this idea that we read literary text differently than we read non-literary text, I have created a cognitive psychology experiment to explore whether an individual can be biased toward a literary mode of information processing in which the individual is more sensitive to metaphors, creative thinking, and word associations. First, I will explore the idea theoretically in order to demonstrate the motivations for this exploration. Second, I will outline and discuss the experiment and its implications.

Reading Literature: A Case Study

The method of literary analysis emphasizes what is special and distinct about reading literature. The goal of a literary analysis is for the reader to translate his or her intuitions while reading a text into evidence of semantic associations, motifs, and themes. I argue that these intuitions that occur during the reading of literature stem from our cognitive processes; intuitions, as I suggest, are a result of neural happenings that we have not yet been able to pinpoint (think of Tip-of-the-Tongue Syndrome, the phenomenon in which we feel that we know a word, but cannot utter it). In literary analysis, we bring these intuitions to the surface and make claims about the feelings and ideas that the literature incites. Here, I use my own reading of The Bell Jar, by Sylvia Plath (1971), as a case study to demonstrate how we can be affected on a cognitive level while reading, and in a way that is unique to literature.
A Literary Mode of Mind

Allyson Scher

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Here, I use my own reading of The Bell Jar, by Sylvia Plath (1971), as a case study to demonstrate how we can be affected on a cognitive level while reading, and in a way that is unique to literature.
In reading literature with a particular consciousness and vigilance, in this case to the word “crawl” throughout the *The Bell Jar*, we are able to comprehend a more profound level of meaning from the text. In this literary mode of mind, we are not restricted to either the literal or the metaphorical meaning of any particular word, but we are able to access both, as well as a wealth of semantic and experiential associations.

*The Bell Jar* represents a world that is governed by strict gender roles. The protagonist, Esther, is feminine, young, and attractive on the outside, yet she rejects the role of femininity and domesticity that is expected of her. Because of her disinterest in a life of domesticity, Esther is diagnosed as “ill”;

her inability to fulfill her assigned gender role as a woman is amplified into a psychiatric diagnosis. Esther is sick in so far as she refuses to submit to societal norms, and so in order to be “cured” she must accept domesticity and conform to society. Esther perceives what is domestic to be instead militaristic. The conflation of the domestic and militaristic illustrates a war that Esther struggles with; this is a war in which her attachment to her sense of an inner self is pitted against the expectations attached to society’s idea of the outer self—the attractive female that society expects to settle into domestic life. It is the sense of the war\(^1\) looming over the nation that illuminates the war between her inner and outer selves, and causes Esther to perceive society and the female role of domesticity through a militaristic lens.

When Esther returns to her home in suburbia, she remains holed up in her bedroom, as if it were an army barracks. To Esther, suburbia is a war zone in which even the sun is dangerous, “seeping through the blinds, fill[ing] the bedroom with a sulphurous light” just as a nuclear explosion would (114). Esther’s neighbor, Dodo Conway, the picture of domesticity and suburban life, patrols the suburban grounds in an effort to preserve domesticity, for as Esther says, she “seemed to be wheeling a baby back and forth under my window” (115). In fearing Dodo Conway, specifically in her role as a mother caring for her baby, Esther further highlights her objection to the ideal female, who is only a mother and wife. Esther responds to the sun and the mother in a way that is appropriate on a battlefield but inappropriate in suburbia: “I slipped out of bed and onto the rug, and quietly, on my hands and knees, crawled over to see who it was” (115). This framing of action conjures up an image of Esther as a soldier, literally crawling on her hands and knees in dirt to surreptitiously spy on a metaphorical enemy. Dodo Conway, as the enemy force, has a “gaze [that] pierce[d] through the white clapboard and the pink wallpaper roses and uncover[ed] me, crouching there behind the silver pickets of the radiator” (117). Dodo’s role as the mother of six children, currently pregnant with a seventh and living in a big suburban home, creates a threat to Esther’s way of life, and thus creates Esther’s view of her as an enemy.

In response to the piercing gaze of Dodo Conway, Esther “crawled back into

\(^1\) The war in *The Bell Jar* is the Cold War. The novel was written in 1963 and is largely influenced by the Cold War paranoia of the times. The book begins with a reference to this being the summer in which the Rosenbergs were executed. The thought haunts Esther throughout the novel.
bed and pulled the sheet over [her] head” (117). In “crawling,” Esther evokes two prominent uses for the word: to crawl as a baby, and to crawl as a soldier avoiding attack. Through the use of the word “crawl,” Esther creates the foundation of the struggle between her interior and exterior selves by suggesting the inherent relationship between babies and soldiers, domesticity and militarism. The word “crawl” is seemingly ubiquitous in the text, as Esther often wishes to crawl away from people or into certain places in an effort to shield herself. When Esther sees a Russian girl interpreter at the UN, she says that she “wished with all my heart I could crawl into her and spend the rest of my life barking out one idiom after another” (75). The use of the word “crawl” here facilitates our extraction of meaning from the text, and evokes the conflation of the militaristic and the domestic through Esther’s perspective.

It is through the use of the word “crawl” in Sylvia Plath’s The Bell Jar that we are able to access associations of militarism and soldiers, domesticity and babies, hiding and fear of being seen, behaving ingratiatingly, and being slow. These associations are conjured in my mind because I am reading literature; I find myself less apt to consider these associations when I am reading a newspaper article about an animal that crawls through the rainforest. I argue that we become more aware of these concepts and connections through reading a word like “crawl” in a literary text because we read and process literature differently than we read and process other text.

**Cognitive Literary Studies**

The current study works with a new discipline in attempting to integrate the interests of cognitive studies and literary studies. The field of cognitive literary studies has recently gained traction in the academic community, and works to eliminate the idea that cognitive studies and literary studies have distinct and competing interests in language as an object of study. Historically, one strand of literary studies has focused on how word choice adds multiple levels of meaning and how metaphors strengthen ideas, while a parallel strand of cognitive studies has focused on how human beings access particular definitions of a word or comprehend that a metaphor is true when it is false in the literal sense. Cognitive literary studies is an integration of literature and cognitive science that aims to discern how literature can be explained as a product of the brain and how literature can interact with or impact the brain.

“Cognitive literary studies is an integration of literature and cognitive science that aims to discern how literature can be explained as a product of the brain and how literature can interact with or impact the brain.”
some common link, neural connections in the brain are strengthened; and so, these connections between words and associations become neural connections. Crane and Richardson (1999), co-authors of “Literary Studies and Cognitive Science: Toward a New Interdisciplinarity,” highlight the strength of these webs of association in poetry: “It is the ‘union of affecting words’ in (potentially) infinite extensible associational networks that gives poetry its ‘energy’ as well as its sublimity” (123). In this paper, I support the theory behind cognitive literary studies by arguing that we have specific cognitive strategies that facilitate the reading of literature.

The Role of Context in Reading Comprehension

It is well documented in the psychological community that context plays a significant role in facilitating or impeding the cognitive processes of reading comprehension. I will begin my argument by exploring the ways in which studies have shown that context influences our processing of language in order to create a foundation for my claim that literature is a form of context that influences the cognitive processes of reading comprehension, thus enabling a literary mode of mind.

Since David A. Swinney’s landmark study in 1979, “Lexical Access during Sentence Comprehension: (Re)consideration of Context Effects,” psychological studies have focused on reading comprehension through studying lexical ambiguity resolution—how context shapes our choice among the meanings of an ambiguous word. Lexical access, the retrieval of a word from an individual’s mental lexicon, has been the object of many studies aimed at learning what factors affect our comprehension of language. Recently, psychologists have been concerned with how context affects an individual’s lexical access of a particular definition of an ambiguous word. This paper works on the assumption of the reordered access model—the favored model according to numerous recent studies—which claims that all meanings of an ambiguous word are accessed irrespective of context. In accordance with the reordered access model of lexical ambiguity resolution, several facets of context contribute to the speed of lexical access. For example, research shows that subjects take twice as long to recognize a word in isolation in comparison to a word in the context of a sentence (Liebman 1963); research has also demonstrated that the presentation of a word that is semantically associated to a target word will increase the speed of recognition for that target word (Meyer and Schvaneveldt 1971). Context, whether it comprises associations or related words, or simply refers to a word’s being in a sentence, affects our processing of the word. For this reason, the current study hypothesizes that the context of literature will also play a significant role in lexical access and reading comprehension.

David Swinney’s (1979) study serves as a primary example of how context affects lexical ambiguity resolution. Swinney examines ambiguous words such as bug (a word that has two primary interpretations: insect or spying device) to determine how the context affects whether both meanings of the word are initially accessed. In the experiment, subjects were asked to perform a lexical decision task: the subject responded YES or NO...
to whether the presented letter string was a word (e.g. MOUSE) or a non-word (e.g. BRUKE) in the English language; a fast response (400 milliseconds) to the word illustrated that it was easy to access, while a slow response to a word (450 milliseconds) illustrated that it was difficult to access. The subjects were asked to perform lexical decision tasks after hearing a sentence with the word “bug” (ambiguous condition) or “insect” (unambiguous condition) in a sentence. The sentences included the ambiguous word (“bug”) in biasing context (toward the intended definition) and no context, and the unambiguous word (“insect”) in biasing context and no context. For example, the ambiguous word in biasing context reads: “Rumor had it that, for years, the government building had been plagued with problems. The man was not surprised when he found several spiders, roaches, and other bugs in the corner of his room” (650). The unambiguous word in biasing context reads “insects” instead of “bugs” in the above sentence. At the point of the word “bug” or “insect” in the sentence, subjects were asked to perform a lexical decision task on the words “ant” (contextually related to target word), “spy” (contextually inappropriate to target word), and “sew” (unrelated). The results of the experiment were relatively fast responses to “spy” and “ant”—after the sentence with the ambiguous word “bug”—compared to “sew,” indicating that lexical access initially makes available all meanings of an ambiguous word, regardless of a biasing context. Swinney extended the initial experiment and replicated it with a single change in which the lexical decision task to contextually related, contextually inappropriate, and unrelated visual words appeared three syllables following the ambiguous word. In both the biasing context and the no context conditions, response times to the contextually related word were much faster than to the contextually inappropriate and unrelated words. The response times to the contextually inappropriate words were not significantly faster than to the unrelated words. And so, “related” ("ant") meanings of an ambiguous word were facilitated three syllables after the ambiguous word, but the “unrelated” meanings ("spy") were no longer facilitated at this delayed point. This evidence suggests that we initially have access to all meanings of a particular word but our minds narrow to a particular meaning after three syllables have passed. The result of the second experiment shows that ambiguity is resolved in the short time of three syllables. As reading literature has been shown to decrease a reader’s need to make decisions and increases the reader’s capability of taking in and accepting ambiguity—which I will delve into further in discussing the study of Djikic, Oatley, and Moldoveanu (2013) below—the context of literature’s prompt toward the acceptance of ambiguity may prolong the duration of time after a word in which all meanings of that word are accessed. And so, we will examine literature as a context, and observe how it affects creative thinking and language comprehension.

**Literature as Context**

In arguing that literature is a form of context that influences reading comprehension, I explore three experiments from the last two years that study literature through a cognitive lens. A recently published article demonstrates how reading fictional literature increases
the strength of an individual’s Theory of Mind, or ability to attribute mental states to other human beings and recognize that others have beliefs, desires, and knowledge distinct from one’s own (Kidd and Castano 2013). The study compares a condition of subjects reading fictional literature with subjects who read non-fiction, popular fiction, and nothing at all. In the study, participants completed an advanced Theory of Mind test called “Reading the Mind in the Eyes,” which asked participants to ascertain the emotions of an individual based on a picture of his or her eyes. Participants also completed a Yoni test, a new measure that has been validated as an assessment for cognitive and affective Theory of Mind (Bal and Veltkamp 2013), in which they were asked to infer a character’s thoughts and emotions from minimal linguistic and visual cues. These tasks of attributing emotions and beliefs to others as well as understanding them serve as a measure to gauge the levels of social perception and emotional intelligence of the participants. Results from these tasks show that the subjects who performed the tasks immediately after reading fictional literature had higher scores on the Theory of Mind tests when compared to those subjects who read non-fictional literature, popular fiction, or nothing. The study concludes that reading literary fiction enhances Theory of Mind. This study suggests that reading literature impacts the human mind in specific ways that include social and emotional implications, and so, raises the possibility that, because literature allows a reader to adopt another perspective other than one’s own, reading literature influences creative thinking.

Another recent study considers how the relationship between literature and the brain may impact the creativity of the reader. “Opening the Closed Mind: The Effect of Exposure to Literature on the Need for Closure,” by Djikic, Oatley, and Moldoveanu (2013), claims that comprehension of literary text requires the reader to embrace ambiguous thoughts, while a non-literary text causes the reader to read for fast facts. The authors demonstrate that subjects who had read a literary short story experienced a significant decrease in self-reported need for cognitive closure—the need to reach a quick decision and an aversion to ambiguity—in comparison to the subjects who had read a non-fictional essay. Low cognitive closure, or an embrace of ambiguity, is an essential component to creativity; and so, the decreased need for cognitive closure in the literary condition suggests that reading literature fosters creativity.

In an unpublished study, Phillips (2013) examined the brain during the acts of close reading of literature versus skimming of literature. She scanned the brains of her subjects with an fMRI machine, aimed at measuring activity in the brain by detecting blood flow patterns, while the subjects read a full chapter from Jane Austen’s Mansfield Park. The subjects were instructed in one condition to browse the passage as they might do in a bookstore, and in the other condition, to read the text as a scholar would in conducting a literary analysis. The results showed that a close, scholarly reading demonstrated brain activations in unexpected areas of the brain, such as the somatosensory cortex and motor cortex, which are involved with touch and movement. This result suggests that directing subjects toward a close reading
of or careful attention to a literary text can create vastly greater activations in comparison to a less engaged pleasure reading. This study is still in the process of analysis and further experimentation, but paves a way for considering how literature may inform cognitive science and how one might conceive of a literary neuroscience interdisciplinarity.

The above cognitive studies of literature show that reading literature affects cognitive processes. In reading literature, an individual is better able to understand the beliefs of another individual and to allow the mind to embrace ambiguous thoughts and emotions. Djikic, Oatley, and Moldoveanu (2013) offer a foundation for the present study because their research shows that the reading of literature “opens the mind” and possibly leads to “changes of meta-cognitive habits” based on taking on the perspective of a narrator in a work of fiction (153). These points strongly suggest an increase in creativity, and thus provide support for the idea that the reading of literature may enable creativity and make use of a specific “meta-cognitive habit” that is unique to creative processing. In the next section, we will look more closely at creativity.

**Measures of Literary Reading**

Creativity, metaphorical thinking, and multiple meaning activation might be some of the domains that literary context influences. In order to study the effect of literary context on information processing, I will focus on these measures following the reading of literary versus non-literary text.

One idea is that a creative mind is able to connect disparate ideas and form many associations to other words and ideas when presented with an initial word or idea. An associative hierarchy illustrates the concept that individuals have varying numbers and depths of associations in response to a stimulus word, and these associations form a hierarchy of sorts. For example, if the word is *table*, words such as *chair, wood, food, meal, counter*, among others, may be included in an individual’s associative hierarchy. Studies show that an individual’s level of creativity is directly related to his or her associative hierarchy, and more creative individuals have larger associative hierarchies (Mednick 1962). A flat hierarchy suggests that the mind is less strongly connected with close associations to the stimulus word and more strongly connected with remote associations of the stimulus word, while a steep hierarchy suggests that the mind is strongly connected to close associations and less strongly connected to remote associations. For this reason, an individual with a flat hierarchy of associations is more likely to be a creative individual.

The present study considers these notions of an individual’s flat or steep hierarchy as a disposition toward thinking.

It is important to note that creativity levels can be altered by the environment. One study found that the psychological and physical embodiment of a metaphor for creativity promotes creativity levels in problem solving (Leung et al. 2012). This was achieved by asking the subject to physically act out metaphors for creativity, such as “think outside the box,” by performing a series of creativity measures while outside of a box in comparison to performing that same series of creativity measures while standing inside a box. Results showed that participants

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achieved higher creativity scores while standing outside of the box and unknowingly embodied the creativity metaphor “think outside the box.” Hence, creativity can increase or decrease according to the environment. The thought-provoking nature of literature suggests that a literary context may also influence creativity levels.

The Present Study: Method

Fifty-six participants performed three types of tasks in one of two conditions: the literary condition and the non-literary condition. In the experiment, the subjects were asked to read instructions and passages of text interleaved with the psychological tasks that measure creativity, metaphor comprehension, and multiple meaning activation. In the literary condition, the subjects were presented with a short poem to read and respond to before performing the psychological tasks. The selected poems are from varying time periods and concern varying themes: John Keats’s “The Living Hand,” William Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 73,” William Blake’s “Ah! Sun-flower,” Henry David Thoreau’s “Light-Winged Smoke,” George Eliot’s “Count That Day Lost,” and Charlotte Bronte’s “Life.” In the non-literary condition, the subjects were presented with and asked to respond to a short paragraph about a piece of history, a sport, or a current event. The non-literary prose text was taken from past reading comprehension questions of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE). The literary and non-literary texts were of similar length so that subjects spent approximately equal amounts of time reading each. If there is a distinctly literary mode of information processing, participants in the literary condition will produce higher scores on tasks across the board. These results would suggest that reading a poem has influenced the participant’s mode of information processing, and inclined him or her toward literary thinking.

In the study, participants sat in front of a computer screen and were instructed to read passages of text and respond to subsequent tasks. The participants’ performances were judged on three tasks: Remote Associates Task (RAT), Homophone Meaning Generation (HMG), and a Metaphor Judgment Task (MJT). The RAT is designed to test creativity through associative thinking, or considering and manipulating associative elements into new combinations; it consists of three word-items, such as chair, horse, time and requires the subject to find a single word that is related to all three of the stimulus words, such as high. The HMG is meant to assess the ability to switch among verbal concepts and thus a thought process that resembles the flat hierarchy of creative thinking (Warrington 2000). In the MJT, subjects are asked to judge whether or not a stimulus sentence, which is either a true, false, or metaphorical sentence, makes sense, by rating it on a scale from 1 (does not make sense) to 3 (makes perfect sense). Through these ratings, the MJT tests metaphor comprehension.
The Present Study: Results

The experimental data showed no significant effects on the HMG and RAT tasks, but a significant effect on the Metaphor Judgment Task (MJT). The MJT data showed a significant interaction between the sentence type (true, false, or metaphor sentence) and experimental condition (literary or non-literary condition). This interaction suggests that the effect of one of those factors depends on the level of the other factor. Further analyses demonstrated that the nature of the interaction was a main effect approaching significance of experiment condition on metaphor sentences in particular. Metaphor sentences were rated higher in the literary condition than in the non-literary condition, on average (see figure 1). This effect on metaphor sentences suggests that subjects were more apt to comprehend metaphors when they were in the literary condition compared to when they were in the non-literary condition. Thus, reading literature, compared to reading non-literary text, may influence an individual's metaphor comprehension capabilities. This finding suggests that we do in fact process literary text in a unique way that is especially sensitive to metaphorical language.

The study also looked at the response times (RTs) of subjects responding to whether or not a sentence makes sense in the Metaphor Judgment Task. Although there was no significant effect of experiment condition on RTs, numerically, the RTs in the non-literary condition were higher, which means that the sentences were processed more slowly, than the RTs in the literary condition for false, metaphor, and true sentences (see figure 2). This finding might suggest that subjects in the literary condition comprehend the sentences they read at a faster

Figure 1. Average ratings (scale of 1 to 3) of metaphor sentences in the Metaphor Judgment Task for literary condition (L) and non-literary condition (NL).
pace. And so, perhaps the literary mode of information processing facilitates the comprehension of sentences better than a non-literary mode.

**What is at Stake in Literary Studies?**

It is not uncommon that people reject reading literature and scoff at literary criticism because it appears to infuse profound meaning into something that they consider trivial; for instance, a blue object in a literary text may suggest despair and depression, *but what if the object is just blue and it suggests nothing?* The value of literature and the fact that literature has existed as long as humans have existed goes unnoticed as literary analysis all too often comes across as an artificial construction of literary devices rather than as suggestive of some greater pattern or meaning. Some people ask these analytic questions of a literary work: “What does the author mean here?” or “Why does the author employ this imagery?” These, I suggest, are the wrong questions because they emerge from an unhelpful framework for understanding the source of literary comprehension. An interdisciplinarity of cognitive science and literature provides us with a cognitive framework with which to read literature that esteems the reader as highly as it esteems the text—the correct question is not what the author means, but what meaning the reader finds; the reader does not find this meaning because it has been hidden by the author, but because the reader creates this meaning through the relationship of the text and the reader’s mind. Through this cognitive lens, it is evident that the reader employs particular cognitive strategies while reading literature, and these strategies differ from

**Figure 2. Mean Response Times (in milliseconds) to the Metaphor Judgment Task for literary condition (L) and non-literary condition (NL).**
those that the reader uses to read other texts and speech. The reader is instrumental to the interpretation and analysis of literature in this cognitive framework, and this emphasis on the role of the reader has vast implications for the future of literature.

This cognitive lens becomes an especially valuable analytic approach to post-modern literature, which began in the 1940s after World War II and continues today. French theorist Jean-François Lyotard (1984) famously defined post-modernism as “incredulity towards meta-narratives,” or a skepticism toward narratives that claim to explain the whole of human life. Thus, literary post-modernism is characterized by a number of features: intertextuality, or the relationship between one text and another, and sometimes the different texts are interwoven; self-consciousness of the text; and discontinuity, which may refer to tone, perspective, and logical sequence. The post-modern concern with “metanarratives,” which are enabled by metafiction and intertextuality, creates situations in which a text exists within a text within yet another text. A cognitive framework provides a way to talk about the complexities of strategic contextualization that many post-modern authors employ. Cognitive science gives us a way of understanding the emergence of the post-modern movement, partly because post-modern literature is so concerned with thinking about thinking, and post-modern authors routinely capitalize on the disruption of thinking invited by the disruption of narrative itself. In *Hamlet* and other early seventeenth-century works, there are plays within plays (as, for example, when an acting troupe acts out a play within the greater play of *Hamlet*); in post-modern literature, such practices constitute entire novels rather than being experimentally or self-consciously nestled within otherwise conventional work. For example, in Percival Everett’s (2001) *Erasure*, a ghetto story appears in the middle of a literary novel. A newly published novel, S., by J.J. Abrams and Doug Dorst (2013), creates a post-modern confusion similar to Everett’s *Erasure*. S. is a novel called *Ship of Theseus*, written by a fictitious author in 1949, and filled with notes in the margins as well as postcards, photographs, and other clippings that denote communication between two previous readers of *Ship of Theseus*. Post-modern literature insists upon this question of how the reader should treat other genres and forms of text within a work of literature: is a history narrative now a romantic narrative because it is iterated within a romance novel? Is non-literature transformed into literature because it has been read within literature? A cognitive approach reads literature as a prime for modality and makes possible this new understanding of literature. Literature is not necessarily a defined mode of writing, but a source of priming that requires a defined cognitive strategy or mode of mind. Furthermore, if the author can appropriate one textual mode for the understanding of another textual mode, and ask the reader to read with a particular cognitive strategy, then there are other ways in which we can reorient our frames of reference. If we can understand newspaper clippings and notes in side-margins as a literary text because it is within literature, we then may be able to understand other aspects of the world on literary terms, and thus make alternate uses of the literary mode of mind.
Conclusion

The present study explored the influences of literary versus non-literary text on information processing, and found that reading literature might bias cognitive strategies during information processing toward metaphor comprehension. In the present study, subjects who read poems prior to the Metaphor Judgment Task were more likely to comprehend metaphors, in comparison to subjects who read passages of non-literary prose text. This finding supports the hypothesis that there is a literary mode of information processing that enables particular strategies specific to the reading of literature, specifically metaphor comprehension. However, the present study did not find any significant results to support the hypothesis that reading literature influences creative thinking or multiple meaning activation.

Despite lack of significant effects, numerically, the response times (RTs) in the non-literary condition were higher than the RTs in the literary condition for false, metaphor, and true sentences, respectively. This finding might suggest that subjects in the literary condition comprehend the sentences faster. It is possible that this effect could become significant with a greater sample size.

The discussion of the present study raises the question of whether there is something innate in the literary text itself, whether it is the presumption of literary text that facilitates a literary mode of information processing? In this particular study, was it the language of the poem, or the recognition that the subject was reading a poem that facilitated metaphor comprehension for the subjects in the literary condition? In what ways can this literary mode of mind aid us in the comprehension of text or speech that is not fundamentally literary? This experiment provides evidence for a literary mode of information processing, and so, if a literary way of thinking facilitates metaphor comprehension, what other factors are unique to this particular cognitive strategy? Further exploration into understanding the relationship between literature and cognition has the ability to resolve these questions and open up even more.

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Doctors, Nurses, and Healthcare Reform: The Extended, Changed Physician in Modern Medicine

Eunhye Oak

The launch of the health insurance ex-
changes, however rocky, has seen 8 mil-
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ing months. A common concern among
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And while physi-
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On the other hand, the number of
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tants, as well as athletic trainers in some
departments. Though still insufficient to
cover the possible total 32 million new
patients, physician extenders have such a
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analysts have proposed developing this
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ry care. Advanced practice nurses,
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tonomy compared to other providers, are
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the doctor's duties and relationship with
the patient? And if the doctor's role is
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the doctors themselves expect of the pro-
fession? To examine these topics I spoke
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3 The different types of nursing correspond to
different licensed titles. Registered nurses (RNs)
are the staff nurses found in all healthcare settings
who have either a diploma, an associate degree, or
increasingly required today, a bachelor's degree in
nursing. RNs who complete a graduate program
for a masters or doctorate are known as advanced
practice registered nurses (APRNs). APRN is an
umbrella term for four specialties: certified regis-
tered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) who adminis-
ter anesthetics in surgery and whose professional
history may be traced back to the earliest recog-
nition of "advanced practice" nursing; certified
nurse-midwives (CNWs) who provide obstetrical/
gynecological care in both hospitals and homes;
clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) who oversee edu-
cation, administration, and systems management;
and nurse practitioners (NPs) who are also called
physician extenders because their responsibilities–
prescribing medication, diagnosing and treating
common illnesses – most closely resemble those of
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Doctors, Nurses, and Healthcare Reform: The Extended, Changed Physician in Modern Medicine

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The launch of the health insurance exchanges, however rocky, has seen 8 million new enrollees enter the health care system under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and more will follow in the coming months. A common concern among providers, analysts, and politicians is the lack of physicians to receive the huge influx. The shortage is both immediate and long term. Though figures vary by source, one study from the Annual Review of Medicine projects a total shortage of 91,500 physicians in 2020 after full ACA implementation. And while physicians are retiring early, not enough medical students are matriculating to take their place; fewer still declare interest in primary care, the field most necessary for health reform to work as the ACA seeks to reduce costs and emergency room admissions, increase preventive care, and designate a first stop for Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs).

On the other hand, the number of physician extenders—licensed health care professionals who perform routine physician tasks under the direction of a physician—is growing at a higher rate than that of physicians. This includes nurse practitioners and physician assistants, as well as athletic trainers in some departments. Though still insufficient to cover the possible total 32 million new patients, physician extenders have such a significant presence in today’s clinics that analysts have proposed developing this sector to increase the capacity of primary care. Advanced practice nurses, who are closest to physicians in level of autonomy compared to other providers, are also flourishing in specialties other than primary care. How are nurses’ increasing numbers and expanding scope affecting the doctor’s duties and relationship with the patient? And if the doctor’s role is indeed changing, what do patients and the doctors themselves expect of the profession? To examine these topics I spoke with doctors and nurses at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, the major teaching hospital of

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3 The different types of nursing correspond to different licensed titles. Registered nurses (RNs) are the staff nurses found in all healthcare settings who have either a diploma, an associate degree, or increasingly required today, a bachelor’s degree in nursing. RNs who complete a graduate program for a masters or doctorate are known as advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). APRN is an umbrella term for four specialties: certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) who administer anesthetics in surgery and whose professional history may be traced back to the earliest recognition of “advanced practice” nursing; certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) who provide obstetrical/gynecological care in both hospitals and homes; clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) who oversee education, administration, and systems management; and nurse practitioners (NPs) who are also called physician extenders because their responsibilities — prescribing medication, diagnosing and treating common illnesses — most closely resemble those of a doctor.
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.  

Approximately five years ago, departments throughout Barnes-Jewish held meetings to review their house staff models in anticipation of the new resident work hour restrictions set by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Before 2011, interns’ schedules had already been reduced so that interns were on-call for 30 hours at a time, beginning around 7 a.m. and leaving after noon on the following day with a few hours of sleep in between; now their schedules would be capped off at a maximum of 16 hours in hospital per shift. In each department, attending physicians and fellows were shuffled to accommodate the interns’ shortened shifts. The process for the whole hospital cost $5 billion, all to provide the “exact same care as the day before,” according to Dr. Warren Isakow.

Dr. Isakow is an associate professor of medicine and director of the medical intensive care unit (MICU) who has overseen the recent integration of nurse practitioners in his unit. NPs were already present in the surgical ICU, providing about one third of the total service alongside fellows and attendings. The acute care nurse practitioner program at the Goldfarb School of Nursing, also a part of Barnes-Jewish, was started by an NP from the surgical ICU with foresight of greater demand. In 2009 the MICU hired three NPs from the school’s graduating class. NPs operate as house staff, being responsible for two to three patients and following the same work-hour rules with 10-12-hour shifts. They are valued as the “consistent factor” in the unit because, unlike residents who cycle through departments every few weeks in their training, NPs remain in the MICU and maintain continuity.

A collaborative practice agreement pairs the NP to a supervising physician who periodically reviews a percentage of the NP’s cases and remains available for help. In their daily routine, NPs admit patients, take histories, write orders, interact with the patient and family for decision-making processes, and perform technical procedures by themselves. Increased autonomy is what motivated Rene Hofstetter, an NP in the MICU and in a related pulmonary care unit, to pursue an advanced degree. “When I was a staff nurse, I would present a problem and then always offer several solutions to that problem. [The doctors] thought I was being too– well, I don’t know–” she cuts off and laughs before continuing, “so then I decided to go back to school and become an adult nurse practitioner.” In ICUs, NPs are valued for providing more uniform quality catheter insertions, intubations, dressing, and the like, compared to residents who are less experienced. NPs are also cheaper to hire.

4 Barnes-Jewish is a setting chosen for accessibility and is not representative of all U.S. hospitals. I owe special thanks to all the doctors and nurses who were willing to speak with me. Their stories and insights were invaluable to my research.

5 “House staff” is the term for all resident physicians in a hospital. First-year residents are called interns.

6 The ACGME first restricted duty hours in 2003, capping the workweek at 80 hours. Since 2011, on-site duty has been limited to 24 consecutive hours, but the ACGME allows “for up to six additional hours to participate in didactic activities, transfer care of patients... and maintain continuity of medical and surgical care.” The restrictions allow residents to stay beyond their shifts “in unusual circumstances,” but in such cases, the justifications must be documented, reviewed, and tracked by a program director.
since they are reimbursed at around 85 percent of a doctor’s rate for the same services. As permanent additions to the staff, the NPs have improved the environment in the MICU.

Across campus in the Cardiac Rapid Evaluation Unit (CREU), NPs maintain the entire floor in lieu of house staff. Ten NPs with collaborative practice agreements work in shifts to cover 42 beds, and without any residents, the attendings and several moonlighting fellows are the only physicians. Peggy Capriglione is an NP in the cardiac unit, and she says that her job combines autonomous practice with the opportunity of getting to know her patients. “We’re able to meld the best of both worlds. For example, if I know from talking with a patient that he can’t read, after the doctor comes in to talk about tests and medications, I stay behind and ask, ‘Now how much of that did you understand?’ and explain everything to him,” she says. “If I have the time to figure out their story, I’m able to make risk-factor modifications since we’re trying to prevent them from coming back [to the hospital].”

Diversification in American nursing began after two major professional associations—the National League for Nursing and the American Nurses Association—formed in the 1890s. With organization came registration acts and a licensing system that produced the first legal title of registered nurse (RN). Nurses fanned out and found niches in serving specific populations, such as impoverished residents in settlement houses and soldiers in the military (particularly during World Wars I and II). They also found opportunities in new fields including anesthesiology and midwifery. Hospitals, initially dependent on student nurses’ labor, began hiring more nurse graduates, who were called “staff nurses” and would eventually compose the majority in the occupational field. In the 1960s “advanced practice nursing” emerged as a response to the increasing specialization and the fading general practitioner among doctors. A shortage in primary care physicians and the aging population’s increased need for healthcare—a situation very similar to today’s—prompted the development of masters programs that nurses could pursue after the standard diploma to become advanced practice nurses.  

Today, nurses can have an associate, bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree (Doctor of Nursing Practice, or DNP). A master’s remains the minimum requirement to become an advanced practice nurse, but there have been suggestions about demanding DNP degrees instead. Capriglione says that the profession lacks a straightforward educational track, and the variation of degree requirements among states as well as individual hospitals further complicates the process. “An MD is an MD is an MD, but nursing is not homogeneous,” she says. “The rules have changed every few years, and it’s absurd that they’ve changed so many times.”

While NPs are just recently growing in number at Barnes-Jewish, nurse coordinators have been around for a long time in units such as lung transplantation—

tion, a unit housed under the same Pulmonary & Critical Care division as the MICU. Dr. Elbert Trulock is a professor of medicine and previous medical director of the lung transplantation program. He says “the nurse is the guardian angel” who has the most interaction with the patient on a daily basis. The entire transplant team consists of faculty physicians, nurse coordinators, pharmacists, a dietician, social worker, and chaplain, who collectively provide comprehensive care to the patient according to his or her particular needs. Every patient is assigned a primary nurse coordinator and a primary physician (not to be confused with primary care physicians) to deliver continuous care. Each of the four physicians in the lung transplantation unit is responsible for 125-150 patients, and the eight nurse coordinators have a smaller patient pool. Though they don’t have advanced nursing degrees, nurse coordinators have a fair amount of autonomy. The system is “vertically integrated” so that nurse coordinators interact with the patients more frequently while the doctors integrate information from the entire team and oversee the course of treatment with less direct patient contact.

The majority of patients are comfortable with their nurses, though they can request to see a doctor if they feel uneasy. Dr. Trulock says that conflicts between doctors and nurses “are not common in our group because we have very skilled and experienced nurses who can read my mind. They’re quite good at knowing what to do and anticipating what doctors would do.” Since they see assigned patients unaccompanied by a doctor, the nurse coordinators in transplantation extend the reach of the physicians, who are fewer in number. A similar pyramid structure of doctors working with more nurses to care for a large number of patients exists in other departments that use a team-based approach.

The collaboration of physicians and APRNs has the longest history in anesthesiology. The use of anesthetics in surgery is barely 150 years old. October 16, 1846, in Boston marks the momentous day when William T.G. Morton demonstrated the first successful use of diethyl ether gas to anesthetize young Gilbert Abbott for the removal of a neck tumor. Anesthesiology subsequently developed as a subspecialty under surgery, and when it became an independent field less than a century ago, anesthesiologists had less prestige than doctors in other specialties. Nurses worked alongside the doctors, administering anesthetics as early as 1887. Surgeons were said to prefer nurses to anesthesiologists in their operating rooms because they experienced less conflict giving orders to a nurse, who was female and considered subordinate, than to a fellow male physician with equal medical education.8 Dispiriting as

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8 The hierarchy of the nurse-doctor relationship is inextricable from gender roles that reinforce a traditional sexual division of labor: doctors are men doing a man’s job and nurses are women in a woman’s job. In the analogy of a husband and wife looking after their children, doctors are the breadwinners who make important decisions for the family, while nurses are subordinate, non-professional, and responsible for caring, which is regarded by professionals and the public as a less privileged duty altogether. See Sarah J. Sweet and Ian J. Norman, “The Nurse-Doctor Relationship: A Selective Literature Review,” Journal of Advanced Nursing 22, no. 1 (1995): 165-70. The gendered experience of nurses is discussed in many academic writings and generally acknowledged to be patriarchal, while more recent papers claim that the attitude has diminished over time. Research on the influence of gender in career commitment and interprofessional relationships is still ongoing.
this history may be, it explains why the collaboration between physicians and advanced practice nurses is the most developed in anesthesiology; CRNAs, also called nurse anesthetists (NAs), were the first clinical nursing specialists, and the specialty evolved hand-in-hand with the field itself.

Barnes-Jewish has 100 anesthesiologists and 75 NAs employed across multiple settings—operating rooms, delivery rooms, pain management clinics, etc.—where anesthetics are needed. Dr. Joseph Kras is an associate professor of anesthesiology who works daily with anesthesiologists, residents, and NAs. Nurse anesthetists’ duties include examining patients, prescribing anesthetic plans with an anesthesiologist’s approval, and administering the anesthetic. With an NA standing over the patient at all times, Dr. Kras is free to rotate among several operating rooms that are under his supervision at once. He says, “I rely on their judgment and training because I’m not always in the [specific operating] room, and [they act] as an early warning system and take good care of patients in the interim. I can’t take care of as many patients as I do without them.” As a supervising anesthesiologist, Dr. Kras is required to stay within a five-minute proximity of NAs during operations although, when paged, he will typically reach a room within 30 seconds to a minute.

When I ask whether an anesthetist can fully replace an anesthesiologist, he responds with an illustration of two overlapping bell curves: if the horizontal axis represents the level of knowledge, the left curve belongs to NAs and the right curve to doctors. There are NAs who are more knowledgeable than some doctors, and they fall in the overlapping region, but he concludes that “because of the [knowledge of the] biological basis of disease that a doctor has, there are cases of patients with co-morbidities [a term for coexisting disorders] in which anesthesiologists can better anticipate problems. For sicker patients, the physician’s broad range of training makes him the one primarily responsible for medical decisions.” Studies suggest that patients supervised by anesthesiologists and NAs have equal outcomes, yet Dr. Kras explains that these data must be interpreted cautiously. Since sicker patients, or “complex cases,” are usually assigned to doctors, a doctor’s pool of cases is more difficult than that of nurses; citing equal recovery rates as equal outcomes is inaccurate when the initial cases don’t match in level of sickness. Dr. Kras also mentions that the “rare events” nature of anesthesiology weakens the statistical power of such studies.9

NAs on the whole have several characteristics that make them stand out among the general population of nurses. Compared to the overall RN population, which was 93 percent female in 2012, essentially unchanged from 94 percent female in 2002, the female-to-male ratio among NAs is 60:40.10 Dr. Kras attri-

9 The term “rare events” refers to the fact that anesthesiology is a field with such low mortality rates attributed to anesthesia that a much larger sample size than currently studied is necessary to demonstrate significant difference between groups.

butes this to their status as “the highest profile specialty” in addition to the unpredictable work hours (which depend on however long a surgery takes rather than a set shift, and may be less appealing to women with children). Since the doctor-nurse relationship between anesthesiologists and NAs has been established longer than any other kind of relationship between advanced nurses and physicians, NAs have a well-established professional identity within their field. It’s not surprising, then, that nurse anesthetist organizations are among the strongest advocates for expanded responsibilities and greater autonomy. According to Dr. Kras, this can be counterproductive for teamwork. Though anesthesiologists and NAs “get along reasonably well,” he thinks disputes more frequently occur when an NA brings politics into the workplace as a member of a national organization.

Despite the longevity of the relationship between anesthesiologists and NAs, that relationship is by no means quiescent. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has a federal rule that specifies how many rooms, NAs, and residents may be under one anesthesiologist’s supervision, and also requires the anesthesiologist to be present for specific steps of the anesthetization process. An amendment in 2001 allowed state governors to opt out of the federal supervision requirement if they believed doing so would be more beneficial to the health of their citizens. Missouri is not one of the current seventeen opt-out states in which NAs can practice independently and run their own pain management clinics in rural areas. Nurse Practice Acts, which govern the licensure, education programs, and scope of practice\(^1\) for each nursing specialty, also vary by state. Missouri is one of the most restrictive states for NAs, according to Bernadette Henrichs. Henrichs is a nurse anesthetist, professor, and director of the nurse anesthesia program at the Goldfarb School of Nursing. She holds a doctorate degree but always introduces herself to patients as “Bernadette, the nurse anesthetist” to avoid confusion with the anesthesiologist at her side.\(^2\) An example she gives of Missouri’s restrictions on NAs’ practice is a bill that was passed in 2012 despite strong lobbies by the Missouri Association of Nurse Anesthetists. The legislation mandates that “only licensed physicians may use certain techniques,” particularly spinal injections for regional anesthesia, “in diagnosing or treating chronic pain” and will remain in effect until 2016, at which time anesthesiologists and NAs will debate its renewal.\(^3\)

Job competition is a part of anesth-

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\(^{1}\) Scope of practice laws, set by the state, are different from nurse practitioners’ collaborative practice agreements, which are drawn specific to the physician-NP pair.

\(^{2}\) When Henrichs earned her doctorate in 1999, she was asked not to introduce herself as “Dr. Henrichs” because patients might be confused. There is some debate over whether nurses with PhDs should be called “doctors” in the clinic alongside physicians with MDs. During our meeting, Henrichs told a story of how Missouri doctors tried to pass a state law requiring the word “Nurse” to be more visible on badges with specifications for font size and placement. The proposal did not pass. In this paper, I address physicians as “Dr.---” and nurses by their last names. This is only for the sake of clarifying the speaker’s occupation without listing all of his/her suffixes (MD, PhD, CRNA, ANP-BC, etc.).

\(^{3}\) Bill number SB682 and HB1399 in the Missouri House and Senate, respectively. http://www.senate.mo.gov/12info/bills/sb682.htm.
ologists’ reluctance to grant NAs autonomy, but Henrichs says that the perceived competition doesn’t exist since NAs and anesthesiologists fulfill different capacities. “We’re not competing for jobs. The jobs are still out there, and there’s still a niche that the anesthesiologists can certainly fill. They should be working in more complicated areas, like the ICU, and complex operations. They’re also better researchers,” she says. “I don’t feel like we’re taking their turf. There’s plenty for both of us.”

In Henrichs’s experience, NAs and anesthesiologists leave politics at the door and “work well as a team” in Barnes-Jewish operating rooms. In her 22 years, she remembers one patient who objected to being seen by a nurse, and the anesthesiologist replied, “We don’t work that way.”

How much do patients distinguish between doctors and nurses? In the ICUs, cardiology, and lung transplantation, patients are comfortable with their NPs or nurse coordinators. Nurse practitioner Hofstetter says that not only are patients getting used to seeing more nurse practitioners, but “if they’re confident in your abilities, they’re okay with it.” When asked, patients in anesthesiology say that they prefer a physician to a nurse, but telling apart the licenses of people wearing identical scrubs and masks is an impossible task when one is lying on a litter awaiting the operating table. As long as the patient is receiving proper treatment, neither preference nor distinction may ever come into question. Such is already the case with primary care where, compared to fields with team-based approaches that still hold the supervising doctor more responsible than the nurses, providers work more independently. When patients from rural areas are referred to Barnes-Jewish, many are unaware that their primary provider was in fact an NP rather than a physician. The NPs who work in specialized units at Barnes-Jewish are a minority of the country’s total NP population. According to the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, 75 percent of NPs work in primary care settings. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reports that in 2010 an estimated 56,000 NPs practiced primary care compared to 209,000 physicians. The HHS projects that by 2020, these numbers will increase by 30 percent and 8 percent, respectively, with the NP workforce growing far more rapidly than the physician supply. NPs provide services similar to those provided by primary care physicians, and they particularly

14 The distinction is also moot for patients who don’t realize that anesthesiologists are physicians with MDs, a still common misconception today.


focus on preventive care and chronic illness management; given their qualifications, large numbers, lower salaries, and shorter training at lower cost, expanding NPs' roles in primary care is an appealing solution to the provider shortage. Under the Advanced Nursing Education Expansion Program, the ACA has invested $30 million to fund students enrolled in primary care nurse practitioner programs.

The ACA also seeks to transform the delivery model of primary care with Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs). ACOs are groups of providers who seek to provide coordinated care while assuming financial risk; i.e. they share in the savings and losses that result from the ability to meet cost and quality benchmarks. A patient of an ACO is assigned a primary medical home as a first stop, and if further specialized services are needed, the patient is guided to other providers within the same organization, who coordinate care as the patient moves among multiple doctors. If money is saved during the patient's care, all providers share in the profits, and the same goes for losses. The ACO maximizes profit by standardizing treatments and closely monitoring performance using 33 required quality measures for patient/caregiver experience (e.g. patient's rating of provider), care coordination/patient safety (e.g. admissions for heart failure), preventive health (e.g. breast cancer screening), and at-risk populations (e.g. high blood pressure control for diabetes patients). In addition to advanced practice nurses' growing numbers, ACOs represent another factor affecting the doctor's practice.

Private practices are disappearing, and their services are being consolidated under the administration of big hospitals. Similar to large chains which offer low prices made possible by the companies’ size and standardization, big hospitals can become popular by offering patients standardized treatments at lower prices. There are pros and cons in this form of “big medicine.” For example, if a patient needs hip replacement surgery, an ACO can offer a standardized service (i.e. the same brand of prosthetic, operation procedure, recovery process, etc., plus followed by all doctors within the network) that is cheaper and meets quality metrics. Such a service would be a better option than shopping among private surgeons who charge higher prices and perform different procedures.

On the other hand, chain medicine can potentially transform doctors from personal caregivers to employees who are subject to strict company guidelines. Some worry that such regulation disregards the tenets of practicing medicine. Clinical medicine is a practice of caring for an individual and cannot, by definition, be universalized by adherence to directions. If a doctor must perform tests A, B, C, and prescribe drugs D, E, F to be reimbursed for treating Disease G, then the doctor is treating the disease entity instead of the patient. Diseases exist only in the patients who have them, and even diseases with the same categorical name present differently in each patient. Guidelines may standardize a general approach, but treatment is likely to fail if the disease eclipses the patient as the main target. Furthermore, a doctor can be penalized for providing excessive or inadequate treatment because of what

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Private practices are disappearing, and their services are being consolidated in the form of "big medicine." The ACA, meanwhile, endorses ACOs as the delivery system for Medicare, and providers can join the government’s pilot ACO (called the Medicare Shared Savings Program) or form private ACOs that contract with Medicare.

Dr. Trulock (from lung transplantation) points to primary care when he says, “The relationship between physicians and patients is rapidly fading.” He asks me to imagine having lived in St. Louis for many years while regularly seeing a particular internist. If I get sick and need to be admitted to a big hospital, such as Barnes-Jewish, I won’t see my doctor. Instead, I will be treated by a randomly assigned hospitalist who specializes in treating acutely ill, hospitalized patients. Unlike my internist, a hospitalist has no knowledge of my history and may order unnecessary tests, and even the hospitalist will change from day to day. While physicians in practice previously visited their patients in hospitals, today it is no longer financially efficient to make such trips. The time required to drive out, navigate an unfamiliar hospital, and return to the office would instead be more profitably spent seeing other patients with appointments.

This is not to say that hospitalists are less competent. A purported but undemonstrated advantage is that hospitalists are more comfortable with earlier discharges due to their experience seeing new patients with complex illnesses on a daily basis. Dr. Trulock says that while the change “doesn’t necessarily translate to poorer care in a strictly medical [sense],” the emotional satisfaction is less if care isn’t delivered by a familiar doctor. “It’s very disappointing that the doctor who knows me best won’t come see me when I need him the most,” he says.

Our conversation alone is enough proof of how much primary care has already changed. Prior to our meeting, I had never thought that a visit from my personal physician was something I might expect if I were hospitalized. Dr. Trulock adds a last note, “But it’s not because they don’t care. That’s just the way medicine has evolved in the last 10 years.”

Contributing to this evolution is medical education, which shapes how future doctors think and practice. The new resident duty-hour restrictions have been “absolutely disastrous,” says MICU director Dr. Isakow. Compared to the previous 30-hour shifts during which a resident could admit a patient and follow his or her progress for a full day, the shortened 16 hours are now more intense, and residents learn less because they don’t get a “good sense of the course of medical illness.” The sign-out notes that night interns pass on the next day cannot wholly convey the complex case that the receiving interns “didn’t live.” Though the hour restrictions were altered with the intention of reducing errors that may result from exhaustion, Dr. Isakow thinks the new system is even
more predisposed to medical errors.\textsuperscript{18}

New residents are just as bright, motivated, and idealistic as their predecessors, but they have a diminished sense of responsibility to patients because training instills a “shift work mentality,” which will only be perpetuated should ACOs become standard delivery models. “There’s no ‘ownership’ of the patient anymore,” he says, describing how admitting a patient used to mean that the patient became “yours” to care for and follow through to the end. He recalls that 25 years ago, residents were found sitting in patient rooms, but walk into an ICU today, and all residents are sitting around computers looking up information. “They don’t live with patients. They live with computers,” he says. “And they’re unable to recognize that a patient is doing well [by observation] because they’re more reliant on lab values to recognize a sick one.”

The displacement of time and responsibility—from the bedside to computers, from a patient’s course of illness to patients within a shift—is an undesirable trend for older physicians, who were trained under a different philosophy of care. But what arouses pessimism now will likely neutralize over time, when current residents become professors of medicine and patients grow to feel that talking to a nurse is more typical than talking to a doctor, who has assumed an increasingly distant and supervisory role in order to maximize the number of patients being seen at the hospital. The doctor’s profession is not crumbling or degenerating. It is changing, shaped by the priorities of government, medical education, and the patient population whose growth outmatches the healthcare workforce. What the patient expects of the doctor, and perhaps more importantly, what the doctor expects of himself or herself, is no longer the same as in decades past.

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\textsuperscript{18} Studies have yet to demonstrate that the duty-hour restrictions have significantly reduced the rate of medical errors.
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Bibliography


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"Thanks for writing and expressing your enthusiasm for dictionaries!" he writes. "As you may know, we've made a number of videos that help explain elements of the job of lexicographers." He lists a host of links to such videos, including those that "are on our YouTube channel only," noting additionally that "the FAQ at Merriam-Webster.com is actually quite comprehensive." It is not until the tail end of the list that he addresses my real questions. "It's possible to get a tour of our building if you're in New England, but such tours are rare and by appointment only and only last about an hour at the most." Mr. Sokolowski concludes his e-mail with a brief mention of a group called the Dictionary Society of North America, which would be holding a conference in Athens, Georgia. He includes a link to the conference website, noting that the conference would be held in two months' time, from May 23rd to May 25th. And so I head to Georgia.
Thanks Be to Words:
A Student’s Foray into the World of Lexicography

Tianqi Wang

But debates about language are always proxy wars. They’re the dream work of culture, the play within a play, where social anxieties are staged as soap opera.

—Geoffrey Nunberg

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The 1961 publication of Webster’s Third New International Dictionary Unabridged is often regarded as one of the most controversial episodes ever to transpire on the landscape of American lexicography. At 2,726 pages, 450,000 words (of which 100,000 were new since the 1934 Webster’s Second), 13 ½ pounds, and a total production cost of $3.5 million, the dictionary came out in 1961 “wearing a leather jacket and smoking a reefer.” It generated an unforeseen storm among literary circles and newspapers over its lax admission of supposed perversion like “ain’t,” “finalize,” and “irregardless,” as well as its elimination of the slang warning label on certain words that its readers deemed appropriate only in highly informal contexts. This “permissiveness gone mad”—as the Times’ assistant managing editor had called it—provoked a slew of nationwide newspaper headlines lampooning the word “ain’t,” earning the Third a reputation in the New York Times for being a “say-as-you-go dictionary” that “can only accelerate the deterioration” of the poor English already deemed present in college student writing. The Chicago Daily News linked this “swell new book that...has just been finalized” with a “general decay in values,” accusing it of “relativism...the reigning philosophy of our day in all fields...[according to which there] is no right and wrong—it is all merely custom and superstition to believe so.” The Detroit News took this analogy to a political level, identifying in the dictionary a “bolshevik spirit” and claiming that “[w]herever men believe that what is, is right; wherever they discard discipline for an easy short-cut, there is bolshevism.” The attention catapulted the Editor-in-Chief Philip Gove to nationwide infamy: when a 1962 New Yorker cartoon by Alan Dunn portrayed a receptionist apologizing to a visitor that “Dr. Gove ain’t in,” Gove became—in the words of linguist Geoffrey Nunberg—“the only American lexicographer whose name could appear in a New Yorker cartoon caption without need of further identification.”

One particular point of ridicule was Gove’s style of defining entries, which restricted every definition in the Third to a single statement. A rigid adherence to this system often crammed an overwhelming amount of encyclopedic information into one sentence. Gove’s refusal to admit any exceptions to this rule resulted in a few comically cumbersome definitions, such as the notorious entry for “door”:

a movable piece of firm material or a structure supported usually along one side and swinging on pivots or hinges, sliding along a groove, rolling up and down, revolving as one of four leaves, or folding like

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4 Morton, Story of Webster’s Third, 179.
5 Ibid., 173.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., 183.
8 Ibid., 156.
an accordion by means of which an opening may be closed or kept open for passage into or out of a building, room, or other covered enclosure or a car, airplane, elevator or other vehicle.\(^{10}\)

Though Gove claimed that this entry was written for someone unfamiliar with doors, it would be difficult to imagine anyone finishing this definition with a clearer understanding of doors than the one with which that person had begun. Such convoluted entries obfuscated the very concepts they aimed to elucidate, drawing only further criticism for the Third.

The press also reacted scathingly to the Third’s frequent citation of contemporary figures in its entries. Whereas the 1934 Webster’s Second had boasted citations from the most esteemed writers of the past, including Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible, Webster’s Third sought to reflect twentieth-century changes in the English language by admitting illustrative quotations from a large number of contemporary American writers and public figures, such as Mickey Spillane, Polly Adler, Fred Allen, and Al Capp. The press did not concur with Gove’s view that all of these people “use[d] standard English…and [were] often quite quotable.”\(^{11}\) Polly Adler took a particularly heavy hit: a number of journalists scorned the fact that a mere popular writer had been cited, as succinctly expressed by a headline in the New York World-Telegram and Sun: “Dictionary Is Not Just a Book When It Quotes Polly Adler.”\(^{12}\) Two days prior, the Chicago Daily News rather woefully admitted that “we believe it [to be] the function of an unabridged dictionary to deal realistically with a world that has, after all, buried John Dryden and Alexander Pope and elevated Mickey Spillane and Miss Adler to best-sellerdom.”\(^{13}\)

On the face of the matter, Webster’s Third appeared in what seemed to be a linguistically hypersensitive time, when people in one American town ran down a Drive Slow sign to demand not a higher speed limit but a correctly used adverb; when a publisher tottered on the brink of a commercial buyout by those whom its dictionary had offended on lexical matters;\(^{14}\) when a slogan on a 1954 cigarette ad even prompted some smokers to quit, out of sheer desire to punish the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company for bad grammar.\(^{15}\) “Winston tastes good like a cigarette should” committed the crime of using “like” as a conjunction, which, as one extremist writer at the New York Times put it, belongs to a class of grammatical offenses that “persuade me that

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{10} Morton, Story of Webster’s Third, 190.
  \item \textbf{11} Ibid., 99.
  \item \textbf{12} Ibid., 306. Interestingly enough, one wonders if this reaction from the press was at all related to the fact that Adler had been quoted to demonstrate a particular sense of the verb “shake,” as in “There was no shaking off the press.”
  \item \textbf{13} Ibid., 157.
  \item \textbf{14} James Parton of the American Heritage Publishing Company found the Third to be such an “affront” to scholarship that he instead contracted Houghton Mifflin to publish The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language after failing to acquire the “atrociously managed” G. & C. Merriam Company.
  \item \textbf{15} That is not to say, however, that the dictionary and the cigarette ad were unsuccessful. In fact, both saw tremendous commercial success, in large part due to the attention generated from their linguistic controversies.
\end{itemize}
the death penalty should be retained.”

Contrast these reactions with Geoffrey Nunberg’s remark that today’s dictionaries are “about as hard to get into as Sam’s Club.” Under the heading “OMG!!! OED!!! LOL!!!,” a New York Times editorial in April 2011 proclaimed how “wonderful [it is] to experience the ongoing corruption and evolution of the English language.” With a mixture of rapture and despair, it reported the recent inclusion of “OMG,” “LOL,” and even the graphic heart symbol in the Oxford English Dictionary. These changes, along with the OED’s “Google,” “dotcom,” “wiki,” “wassup,” “BFF,” and “tweet,” Merriam-Webster’s “sexting” and “earworm,” and American Heritage’s “manboob” and “vuvuzela,” embody the influx of Internet parlance in our dictionaries today. “Our debates about usage still have that melodramatic tenor, but they don’t have the same cultural significance,” notes Nunberg. “Nobody objects now when a dictionary includes some hip-hop slang or a texting abbreviation.”

There would seem to be no better time to release a new edition of the Unabridged dictionaries. So much has happened in the span of this half-century between 1961 and 2011: the Third was published before the first Moon landing, before the Vietnam War, before the fall of the Berlin Wall, before the advent of the Internet. Somewhere among these revolutionary firsts, attitudes towards language have also evolved. A few indirect sources told me that the indefinitely postponed successor to Webster’s Third was finally in the works. I did not know when Webster’s Fourth would come out or what it would look like, but I expected I would find the answer in Georgia.

Nestled within the University of Georgia’s verdant campus is the UGA Hotel and Conference Center, an elaborate complex of two hundred rooms, four on-site restaurants, and over 38,000 square feet of banquet and meeting space. Walking through an ambiguously marked entrance, I hear classical music wafting from a nearby room of women conversing excitedly in cocktail dresses. I almost walk in before the flat-screen TV beside the doorframe clarifies that this room is not full of lexicographers, but of reunited UGA alumni.

One would have imagined that the 19th biennial conference of the Dictionary Society of North America (DSNA) would be easier to locate. With over four hundred members across forty countries, the DSNA is one of the largest professional associations for lexicographers. It was founded in 1975 to unite those with a vocational or avocational interest in dictionaries. In addition to publishing Dictionaries, a yearly journal for dictionary scholarship, the DSNA holds biennial conferences for linguists, lexicographers, and students to present papers on the latest in lexicographical theory, history, and practice. Yet at the UGA conference center, even an alumni breakfast seems more conspicuous than a society of lexicographers.

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18 “When Words Were Worth Fighting Over.”
After several more wrong turns, I finally locate the vacant registration desk for the conference. After ringing the bell for assistance, I pick up a blue tote bag, courtesy of Oxford University Press. Inside, it contains a conference program, a visitor’s guide, a complimentary blue OED pen, and a blue OED postcard with “LOL” printed on the front in white.

The list of conference participants reveals the names of seventy-one individuals representing a variety of organizations, from prominent publishers like the Oxford University Press and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt to universities like Pennsylvania State and Waseda University to online reference providers like Dictionary.com and the Visual Thesaurus. Among the participants is David Skinner, author of The Story of Ain’t, a general-interest book published last year on the Webster’s Third controversy; Peter Gilliver, Associate Editor of the OED; and, of course, the elusive Peter S., whose name I see listed next to “Merriam-Webster.” I notice my name on the list as well, beside a dubious blank where others have listed their organizational affiliation.

Linguistic scholars often reference Webster’s Third as the poster-child of the persistent antagonism between two camps of linguistic ideology known as “prescriptivism” and “descriptivism.” Prescriptivists champion one normative standard of English over others and consider dictionaries responsible for informing readers on how language should be used. Grammarians, word mavens, and writers of usage guides are often stereotyped as occupying this traditionalist role. In contrast, the descriptivist camp—upheld mostly by linguists and lexicographers—is more interested in observing how people actually use language than in dictating how they should speak and write. Dictionaries, in their view, are empirical records of the language; they must remain objective to the facts of common usage, and have no business discriminating between polite and profane, correct and incorrect. Descriptivists further argue that the prescriptive notion of “correctness” is loaded with arbitrary distinctions between preferred and condemned varieties of language. They maintain that there is no one Standard English: rather, correctness is entirely dependent upon how people actually use language, with or without prescriptivist approval. It was apparent from the Third’s critical reception that, despite the growing acceptance of structural linguistic principles in academic circles of the mid-twentieth century, the notion that there was only one correct standard language was still very much the prevailing spirit in the mass media.19

The earliest attacks on Webster’s Third arose from a marketing mishap in the company’s initial press release. Three weeks before the dictionary’s publication date of September 28th, 1961, McCandlish Phillips ran a hyperbolic article in the Times that described the dictionary—perhaps in the editors’ marketing interests—as “entirely renewed in content and radically altered in style” in order to be “interesting, and even entertaining, for ‘average families.’” Though these exaggerations accurately reflected the company’s publicity material, they were ultimately

19 Shrewd readers may notice that the spirit of the mass media does not necessarily reflect that of the masses, and they would be correct. Please hold that thought, dear reader, for another 15 pages.
imately dishonest to the dictionary itself. The *Third's* controversy emerged largely from the crucial last line: “The use of ‘ain’t’ is defended as ‘used orally in most parts of the U.S. by cultivated speakers.’”20 Here, Phillips’s use of “defended” conveyed the false impression that the *Third* had neglected all warning labels to the entry when it had in fact noted that “ain’t” was “substandard” in most contexts. The editors intended not to defend the use of “ain’t,” but to describe it.21 Newspapers took little notice of this fact, however. Without bothering to consult the entry itself, newspapers across the nation began to deride the dictionary’s defense of “ain’t” and deplore what they considered to be the consequent decline of social values in America.

The disputes over “ain’t” eventually escalated into much more serious criticisms of the dictionary. Wilson Follett launched the first extensive and rhetorically elaborate attack on *Webster’s Third* in the January 1962 issue of the *Atlantic*. With outraged incredulity, he challenged the reader to “[t]hink—if you can—of a dictionary from which you cannot learn who Mark Twain was…or what were the names of the apostles, or that the Virgin was Mary the mother of Jesus of Nazareth, or what and where the District of Columbia is.”22 Worse than this “illustrious history largely jettisoned” was the fact that the dictionary “plume[d] itself on its faults and parade[d] assiduously cultivated sins as virtues without precedent.”23 He charged the writers of the *Third* with attempting “to convert the language into a confusion of unchanneled, incalculable williwaws, a capricious wind blowing whithersoever it listeth.”24

The most vicious attack on the *Third* appeared two months later, when Dwight Macdonald, a prolific writer and caustic social critic, penned “The String Untuned” in the *New Yorker*. Spanning thirty pages, Macdonald’s article was by far the longest and—in the words of the literary and linguistic scholar James Sledd—“the most eloquently mistaken” of attacks on the dictionary.25 Rhetorically, it launched the most deceptively attractive criticisms and expressed many of Follett’s points with more systematic eloquence. After conceding a few cursory compliments to the work—such as acknowledging the sheer quantity of new technical terms introduced—Macdonald gradually shifted his review to an unqualified condemnation of every other aspect of the dictionary—from the pronunciation key to the defining style to the usage labels—with prolific quotation to justify every point in his argument. At the heart of his article was a basic opposition to Gove’s attempt to apply empirical methods to lexicography, which Macdonald argued would “result in greater evils than it seeks to cure.”26 He called the growing influence of linguistics on *Webster’s Third*

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21 Morton, *Story of Webster’s Third*, 158.
23 Ibid., 112.
24 Ibid., 115.
a “scientific revolution” that “has meshed gears with a trend toward permissiveness, in the name of democracy, that is debasing our language by rendering it less precise and thus less effective as literature and less efficient as communication.”

He fundamentally opposed this assumption, advocating instead the virtues of maintaining cultural and linguistic values, and concluding his attack with the notable last lines:

Dr. Johnson, a dictionary-maker of the old school, defined lexicographer as “a harmless drudge.” Things have changed. Lexicographers may still be drudges, but they are certainly not harmless. They have untuned the string, made a sop of the solid structure of English, and encouraged the language to eat up himself.

Macdonald’s piece instantly became the definitive review for critics of the Third. As David Skinner ironically points out in The Story of Ain’t, “Gove had unveiled the great shining accomplishment of his life, [and] Dwight MacDonald wrote the best essay of his life, mocking it.” Even Macdonald himself admitted later that he had received around two hundred letters in response to his review on Webster’s Third, “about twice as many as I got even on my review of the 1952 R.S.V. Bible,” a difference that led him to “conclude that language arouses even more passion than religion.”

In reality, the dictionary was not radical in quite the ways the critics charged it to be. As the scholar Herbert Morton notes in his 1994 Story of Webster’s Third, “some of the loudest critics had never looked at the dictionary itself.” Many of the critics had charged the dictionary with sanctioning certain usages that had either already been present in the widely acclaimed Second, or had been misunderstood in the Third: “irregardless,” for instance, had already been in the Second prior to its appearance in the Third with a “nonstandard” label. It seemed that many critics who hailed the Second by railing against the Third had not bothered to consult the Second much at all. Moreover, nearly thirty years had elapsed between the respective publications of the Second and Third, during which a world war, the rise of popular culture, and an influx of immigrants had introduced a profusion of new terms to the English lexical melting pot. Gove recognized that it was the duty of the lexicographer to keep with the times, and consequently admitted these new terms into the dictionary. Although he and a number of the Third’s scholarly defenders issued well-reasoned replies to the critics, attempting to rectify their every logical fallacy and misrepresentation of the new dictionary, their arguments went largely unheard, confined as they were to the narrowly circulated academic journals inaccessible to the average American. With critics like Follett and Macdonald at its helm, the mass media continued to dominate public opinion in widely read magazines like the Atlantic and New Yorker, deaf to soft calls for reason.

27 Ibid., 130.
28 Ibid., 160.
30 Morton, Story of Webster’s Third, 191.
31 Ibid., 178.
After the first set of DSNA presentations, the participants gather in the lounge for refreshments and light banter. Filling a cup of coffee, I hear my name and look up into the blue eyes of David Skinner, author of The Story of Ain’t, with whom I had also corresponded by e-mail prior to my trip.

Mr. Skinner looks astonishingly unlike the black-and-white photo on the back of his book. He folds his arms in the picture, leaning against the wall of a house as he stares at the viewer with keen understanding. In person, his blue eyes seem far less penetrating, his stance far less imposing. Though he is at the conference with the express purpose of representing the National Endowment for the Humanities—for whose Humanities magazine he serves as editor—he appears in some ways to be just as much a fish out of water as I am.

Mr. Skinner proceeds to introduce me to—at last!—none other than the object of my quest, the elusive Peter S. himself. For a moment he pauses, his cool countenance breached by a more bemused expression. His eyes then widen with recognition.

“A—ah, you’re the one who—Glad to see you here!” he finally exclaims, face regaining composure. “Tianqi, is that right?”

We exchange brief pleasantries before Peter S. moves on to his other conference duties. Mr. Skinner and I continue our conversation over lunch, during which he explains to me what led him to write The Story of Ain’t.

“I had always been sensitive to differences in the way people use language,” he tells me. His brothers are both blue-col-lar workers with whom he speaks very differently, “in a more slangy way.” Growing up, he always aspired to a writing career, a goal about which he had no doubts despite having barely graduated college.

After growing disillusioned with the political and profit-driven nature of the textbook industry, he went on to edit a local newspaper that he also grew to dislike. When he finally found an editing job at a magazine that he did enjoy, he encountered a number of grammatical issues that he had to reconcile with his writing practices.

“I got in trouble for using slang in an article once,” Mr. Skinner observes, taking a sip from his bottle of apple soda. “So I thought: O.K., I’ll just go through dictionaries and work out a system of slang so I won’t get in trouble again, because then I’ll know what is and is not acceptable in writing.”

It eventually occurred to him, amid this endeavor, that all of these dictionaries were in fact written by individuals, each of whom held slightly varying opinions on the English language. There was no higher authority sanctioning usage. In the process, Mr. Skinner grew much more critical of the debates revolving around “slang.”

“I started to do this thing where, for every usage derided as slang, I’d find examples, be it in policy papers or whatever other documents, in which it was used in non-quotational contexts,” he recalls excitedly. “It was so much fun, telling people where they were wrong!”

That hobby did not mean, however, that he was immune to the same objection from others.

“My first big grammar debate,” Mr. Skinner tells me, taking a bite from his
barbecue pork bun, “happened after I wrote an article on a PSAT question about Toni Morrison.”

In a 2003 article for the Weekly Standard, Mr. Skinner had raised a small-scale grammar war over his objection to a controversial PSAT question concerning whether the following sentence contained a grammatical error: “Toni Morrison’s genius enables her to create novels that arise from and express the injustices African Americans have endured.” Although the official answer was that the question had no errors, a high-school teacher objected that the sentence incorrectly used a pronoun (“her”) with a possessive antecedent (“Toni Morrison’s”). Skinner attempted to sidestep the grammatical issue and attack the underlying logic of the question: the PSAT’s sentence seemed to be suggesting that Toni Morrison is able to express the injustices in the African-American experience because she is a genius. This causal relationship, Skinner wrote, was debatable because Toni Morrison herself is an overrated author, and yet this lack of genius would not prevent her from expressing the injustices African Americans have experienced.

The article drew significant backlash from grammarians, Toni Morrison fans, and readers across the Internet. At the time, Mr. Skinner thought the reactions unfairly misrepresented him as a “prescriptivist” or even a “racist.”

“But even accusations of racism had a silver lining,” he now recalls with amusement. “My article got read in all sorts of places I didn’t expect!”

Notable among his readers was Geoffrey Nunberg, a prominent linguist who at the time was balancing his full-time post at Stanford with chairing the American Heritage Dictionary usage panel and providing language commentaries on NPR’s Fresh Air program. After reading Skinner’s article, Nunberg had perused forty of Skinner’s other pieces in order to find an example in which Skinner himself committed the same grammatical mistake as in the question on Toni Morrison. He wrote a condemnatory response to Skinner in the New York Times:

It was revealing how easily Mr. Skinner’s indignation encompassed both the grammatical and cultural implications of the sentence. In recent decades, the defense of usage standards has become a flagship issue for the cultural right: The people who are most vociferous about grammatical correctness tend to be those most dismissive of the political variety.

At the thought of this attack, Mr. Skinner wipes his mouth and takes another swig from his apple soda. “I thought, I just got my ass kicked by Geoff Nunberg.” He shakes his head with a smile. “That’s kind of awesome!” In his online rejoinder to Nunberg’s reaction, he had cheerfully written, “It’s not everyday one gets slapped around by a real scholar, in the Times no less.”

He assures me that they are now good friends. “We’ve communicated a lot since then, and he’s helped me a great


deal with my book.”

And before I can even take in the assurance, Mr. Skinner sets his glass down firmly on the table and looks me in the eyes. “But what I learned is this: don’t mess with linguists. Because they will not give up until they get you.”

Although most of Wilson Follett’s criticisms in the Atlantic had little force beyond their rhetorical flourishes, Follett was not entirely wrong to claim that Webster’s Third represented a “large-scale abrogation of one major responsibility of the lexicographer...on the curious ground that helpful discriminations are so far beyond his professional competence that he is obliged to leave them to those who, professing no competence at all, have vainly turned to him for guidance.” At the heart of the debate, it seemed, was a fundamental disagreement over the role of a lexicographer. As Follett noted:

The rock-bottom practical truth is that the lexicographer cannot abrogate his authority if he wants to. He may think of himself as a detached scientist reporting the facts of language, declining to recommend use of anything or abstention from anything; but the myriad consultants of his work are not going to see him so...The fact that the compilers disclaim authority and piously refrain from judgments is meaningless: the work itself, by virtue of its inclusions and exclusions, its mere existence, is a whole universe of judgments, received by millions as the Word from on high. Linguists and lexicographers are powerful people, and often unwillingly so. Like most products of “expertise,” their work is often called upon to justify arguments that lie beyond the scope of their actual authority. The dictionary creates common conceptions of language that ground a wide stretch of our popular moral discourse, ranging everywhere from the reasonings behind our daily actions to the deliberative processes behind Supreme Court decisions. In a January 2013 interview with Oprah, cyclist Lance Armstrong admitted to having used performance-enhancing drugs in all seven of his Tour de France victories, taking care to vindicate his actions with a dictionary entry. “I went and just looked up the definition of ‘cheat.’ And the definition of ‘cheat’ is to gain an advantage on a rival or foe—you know—that they don’t have,” he said. Given the widespread culture of doping at the time, he felt that the definition did not apply to him because he “viewed it as a level playing field.” Armstrong’s rationalization of his actions is a particularly evident case of our general tendency to justify our actions by appeal to an external authoritative body, be it the Scriptures, the Constitution, or the Dictionary.

Dictionaries are often employed beyond their scope of authority, even in the Supreme Court. Those of the textualist persuasion—notably Justice Scalia—interpret statutory language according to dictionary definitions, grammatical


36 Lance Armstrong, interview by Oprah Winfrey, Oprah’s Next Chapter, Oprah Winfrey Network, January 17, 2013.
rules, and the context within which a particular term or phrase is used, while minimizing external considerations of the legislative intent or history behind the language of a particular statute.\(^{37}\) In *MCI Telecommunications Corp. v. American Telephone and Telegraph Co.*, for instance, the meaning of “modify” became a central issue of dispute. The case concerned whether the Federal Communications Commission had the authority to make filing tariffs optional for a nondominant long-distance carrier like MCI, in light of a provision in the Communications Act of 1934 that required common carriers to file tariffs with the Commission but also allowed the Commission to modify this requirement. In his effort to limit the power of the Commission, Justice Scalia appealed to dictionary authority. Citing various dictionaries such as the 1987 *Random House Dictionary*, the 1989 *OED*, and the 1976 reprint of *Webster’s Third*, he wrote that “[v]irtually every dictionary we are aware of says that ‘to modify’ means to change moderately in minor fashion.” When one petitioner pointed out that an earlier edition of *Webster’s Third* had in fact included a secondary definition in which “modify” means “to make a basic or important change in,” Justice Scalia dismissed this argument on the basis that *Webster’s Third* had once been widely criticized for its “portrayal of common error as proper usage.”\(^{38}\)

At the same time, most lexicographers adamantly try to push away their roles as arbiters of language. Today, most lexicographers are loath to side with prescriptivism due to the position’s historic reputation for promoting Standard English with conservative, elitist, and often xenophobic motivations. Descriptivism, as a champion of the virtues of empirical observation, seems to be the clear winner in a world increasingly catalyzed by scientific discovery and technological innovation. This dichotomy, however, renders the false impression that descriptivists are not concerned with norms at all. “We are all of us closet prescriptivists,” writes the linguist Deborah Cameron, because “‘description’ and ‘prescription’ turn out to be aspects of a single (and normative) activity: a struggle to control language by defining its nature.”\(^{39}\) Good kinds of descriptivism and prescriptivism each involve a healthy measure of the other.

As Nunberg puts it, “all dictionaries are in the business of describing the language as it is. What really changes is the conception of the language itself.”\(^ {40}\) Every minute detail a lexicographer omits or includes can create potentially magnified ripples in popular conceptions of language. Every definition they add or delete has the potential to alter our particular conceptions of English vocabulary. According to DSNA President-Elect Michael Adams, the true controversy behind the *Third* was in fact much more technical than what the popular press made it out to be. What was truly revolutionary about the *Third*, he claims, was the fact that Gove introduced an

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38  Ibid., 325-26.


40  “When Words Were Worth Fighting Over.”
“often attributive” label for a large group of nouns that frequently appear as adjectives, thereby effectively creating a new part of speech for a group of words that were previously only recognized as nouns. The “often attributive” label reified the systematically adjectival role of nouns like “air” and “cabbage” in phrases such as “air passage” and “cabbage soup.” Yet this technical choice went largely unnoticed: in one *American Speech* article on the matter, Gove noted with amusement that while the editors had explained this label inadequately and expected it to be scrutinized from the onset of publication, no one had picked up on this detail until three years after the dictionary was published. While “ain’t” bore the brunt of public ire, “air” and “cabbage” became adjectives with little protest.

Peter Sokolowski has a natural talent for shifting from silent poise to bold dynamism without giving his audience the slightest start. Snagging the vacant seat beside him at the conference banquet, I ask him how he came to his current post at Merriam-Webster.

“Why, the same as everyone else here!” he shrugs, taken aback by the simper of the question. “Kory, me, everyone else here…we all got our jobs from answering ads.”

He originally studied French and intended to become a French professor, until he stumbled upon an ad from Merriam-Webster that sought a foreign-language editor for its bilingual dictionaries. “I was just in the right place at the right time,” he says.

I point out that such ads for positions on the editorial staff of a major dictionary publisher are few and far between today.

He nods, adding, “We have a fairly low turnover at Merriam-Webster, which is why ads are rare nowadays.”

He concedes the one notable exception of Emily Brewster, who wrote to the company once every six months until she finally got hired. She has been with the company for over thirteen years, and has since risen to become Associate Editor—another prime example of Mr. Skinner’s point on the tenacity of lexicographers.

Despite his lofty title as Editor-at-Large, Peter S. seems surprisingly content with remaining behind the scenes. He has organized a Merriam-Webster panel at the conference for the following day—“just to keep ourselves relevant”—but “ducked out” at the last minute so that a former editor, Anne Bello, could take over his role. He also admits that he has never written a proper English definition. He instead works with bilingual French-English dictionaries and leaves the monolingual definitions to other editors.

“I did take a seminar with Ward Gilman, though,” he adds.

I ask him who Ward Gilman is.

“He’s the Director of Defining,” says Peter S. Leaning in, he continues: “The last surviving member of Gove’s editorial staff. You will see him tomorrow at the Merriam-Webster conference panel.”

During my conversation with Peter S., the other lexicographers at the table engage in a highly specialized discussion over which of Webster’s collegiate dictionaries were based on which of Webster’s unabridged dictionaries, and which style

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Digitizing the dictionary is in many ways a boon to lexicography. Merriam-Webster’s President and Publisher John Morse compares the traditional process of editing a dictionary to that of painting the Golden Gate Bridge. “Crews start at one end, paint their way to the other end. By the time they’ve gotten to the other end, they need to start all over again.” Now, technology presents lexicographers with a far more efficient alternative to the old A-to-Z-and-repeat routine. “Every morning we walk out onto the Golden Gate Bridge, and we look around and ask ourselves: what would be a good part to paint today?”43

The growing integration of computer technology into lexicography allows dictionaries to more efficiently collect authentic language data from Internet usage, to more readily adapt to users’ needs, and to incorporate more community-based input into its entries. Whereas traditional lexicography persistently fell short of its descriptive ideals by virtue of the limited linguistic data it could collect from a select group of language experts, the online platform now confers dictionaries an unprecedented capacity to keep up with lexical innovation. This “democratization” of access to online dictionaries moreover reduces publishers’ overheads: lexicographers can now work remotely and collect linguistic data at a much lower cost than ever before.

Yet as today’s dictionaries metamorphose into exclusively electronic entities, they begin to face additional problems quite different from those of Gove’s times. The online medium is a double-edged sword to dictionary-makers: though it liberates lexicography from the space constraints of paper binding and provides real-time access to new linguistics...
tic trends, it also threatens to convert the lexicographical industry into a freely accessible resource whose contents are dictated largely by public appeal with little effort at quality control.

Crowdsourcing, for instance, has become a popular lexicographical tool online, as part of a “democratic” gesture towards making dictionaries less elitist and more accessible. In July 2012, the British dictionary publisher Collins opened up its online dictionary to proposals for new entries from the public. In the hopes of uncovering a small handful of acceptable suggestions like “cyberbully,” the publisher has consequently found itself plowing through a landfill of dubious proposals like “amazeballs,” “bridezilla,” and “crapalicious.” As Deborah Cameron points out, a well-meaning deferral to the netizens of Facebook and Twitter will in practice generate what seems to be “less a democracy than a tyranny of nutters.” In attempting to increase its popular appeal, the dictionary compromises its value as a reference text for serious students of language and culture.

Proponents of initiatives like Collins’s may point to Wikipedia as the quintessential source of free and collaboratively gathered information. The undeniable success of the free encyclopedia seems to imply that its dictionary counterpart holds just as much promise. Yet as the linguist Patrick Hanks observes, Wiktionary falls far short of its encyclopedic sister both in accuracy and comprehensiveness. Many entries in the English Wiktionary sound stilted and unnatural, and the example sentences for a number of words employ uncommon phraseology (such as illustrating “admit” with “to admit a serious thought into the mind”). Hanks explains that “[t]he human mind, when pressed for an example, seems to reach unerringly for a boundary case, even at the expense of idiomaticity and naturalness, rather than for a central and typical, normal example.” Humans, though gifted in using language, are notoriously bad at metalanguage: people are not nearly as good at reporting their own linguistic behavior as they often believe. As it stands, a wiki-based dictionary is no replacement for lexicographical expertise.

At the same time, the decline of print dictionaries is quickly drying up the revenue stream on which lexicographers have traditionally relied. Despite the reduced cost in publication, lexicographers have not yet developed a stable business or funding model that would support large-scale investment in dictionary innovations. In his provocative DSNA presentation on “Dictionary n. (Obsolete)? Before and Afterwords,” Ilan Kernerman, C.E.O. of the bilingual English learner dictionary maker K Dictionaries, worries that dictionaries may lose their individual identity if their lexicographic content continues to be increasingly subsumed under broader electronic language processing entities like machine translation tools, language learning software, search engines, and word processors. As electronic dictionaries and online applications supersede print sales worldwide, many dictionary-makers have halted


46 Ibid., 77.
printing and closed offices. Kernerman echoes the sentiments of Chambers Harrap Publishers, the publisher of *The Chambers Dictionary*, who announced upon closing their Edinburgh office in 2009 that “[t]he digital revolution is changing the way readers consume news and search for information. People are moving away from printed reference books and going online where, generally, they expect to get their information for free.” The vast majority of the world, Kernerman admits, does not care about the survival of dictionaries. “If I may say so, fellow lexicographers,” he adds, “we are strange people.”

The specter of Google continues to haunt lexicography, and its presence is heard throughout the conference in the voices of its speakers. In addition to Kernerman’s concerns, one Society member indignantly points out that Google Books and Amazon Kindle digitized a dictionary on which he had worked, without consulting him, a concern to which another Society member answers with surrendered nonchalance, “You just had a bad contract.” Google also offers an enticing alternative to foreign-language learners: Professor Shigeru Yamada observes that, had he not required his students at Waseda University to use monolingual EFL (English as a Foreign Language) dictionaries in his assignments, they would have skipped straight to Google Translate. Continued refinement of the tool will eventually reduce the occurrence of translational gaffes that currently preclude its ubiquitous use. Given its advantages, the appeal of Google Translate seems undeniable: in offering foreign-language students a quick and painless way to circumvent the hassle of looking up unfamiliar words in a monolingual learner’s dictionary, the online translation tool grants instant satisfaction with little to no tedium or mental exertion on the student’s part, at what appears to be a minor cost of nuance that only a careful dictionary can capture.

Michael Rundell, the Editor-in-Chief of Macmillan Dictionaries, notes that all of these concerns amount to a painful paradox in lexicography: dictionaries are under threat precisely at a time when “dictionaries have at last found their ideal platform in the online medium.”

Ironically, the printed book format is being supplanted for the same reason it had itself once supplanted the scroll. Before the advent of the printing press, scrolls were the prestige format for major written works. Reading such texts required gradually unrolling small sections of parchment, a process which, for all its elegance, could only provide a strictly linear reading experience. In contrast, the bound book—also known as the codex, and first conceived as a series of wax tablets bundled together—enabled random access to its contents, in which readers could skip to, cross-check, bookmark, skim, and reread any passage with the flip of a page. Now, the codex itself is slowly vanishing within a disembodied digital entity that offers the paragon of interactivity. At the conference, Kernerman makes a further distinction between readers and users: readers passively take information in, while users actively engage with their readings and use them to their own ends. Whereas readers used to “look up” a word in the book and submit

to the possibility that other interesting words on neighboring pages may distract them from their mission, users now "search" for a word with surgical precision, find what they want, and move on. The lexicographic industry is therefore facing a fundamental shift in audience, from the formerly passive reader to the now increasingly interactive user. A dictionary that fails to recognize and adapt to this distinction would fall by the wayside and fade into obsolescence. "We are under threat," Kernerman says of his own company. "I don’t know how long we are going to last."

Scattered among the banquet banter is the occasional laugh, an attempt to allay aging anxieties with nostalgic humor. "To planned obsolescence!" Peter Sokolowski raises his glass of red wine proudly. One lexicographer follows the toast with a joking suggestion that the DSNA's newsletter be re-titled "The Posthumous Papers of the Dictionary Society," a proposal received with widespread laughter.

The most organized response to Kernerman's concerns comes from Orin Hargraves, the outgoing president of the DSNA. Tall, lanky, and sporting a ruddy tan and brown polo, Hargraves commands a quiet but authoritative presence in the room. As Hargraves begins to speak, Peter S. leans in and whispers that he is also "the most successful freelance lexicographer in the U.S.,” a distinctive species of excellence.

He begins by presenting Lisa Berglund, the outgoing Executive Secretary, with a rare annotated copy of the 1824 edition of Walker's Critical Pronouncing Dictionary, signed by all of their colleagues in the Society. "Oh my God," she squeals with glee, taking off her glasses to examine the signatures. "I can't believe this. I've been talking about nothing else for the past fifteen years!"

Hargraves then launches into his presidential address on "A Half-Life in Lexicography," which speaks not to the decay of lexicography over time but to the half of his own life in the industry. "Past presidents traditionally title it 'A Life in Lexicography," he explains. "But because I entered lexicography at the age of forty, I can't rightfully claim a life in lexicography."

Hargraves had been acquainted with dictionaries early in his childhood, when his relatives kept their family-owned restaurant stocked with a dictionary. His early familiarity with common defining styles amounted to an amusing episode in high school. Believing that definitions were key to a proper understanding of mathematics, the algebra teacher asked her students to define two words on the first day of class. Much to the chuckling delight of his DSNA audience, Hargraves recalls the definition he gave for "dog": "a canine mammal that is widely domesticated as a house pet."

He then discusses what he calls "demilexicographers," which are people who work primarily outside the dictionary industry but also harbor secret lives as "harmless drudges." He raises the example of a colleague who contributed a lot to lexicography "but also had a sideline in marriage counseling." As a more famous example, Hargraves cites Emily Dickinson’s love of dictionaries to prove that "reading the dictionary is not incompatible with greatness."

What all of these examples show, he concludes, is that it does not really mat-
ter whether lexicography persists as a vocation or an avocation. “We don’t know if it will be a job,” Hargraves stresses, but “it’s damn important” and will stay around no matter what form it takes. One does not need to devote one’s entire life to it in order to make significant contributions. What matters is the persistent love and knowledge of language and an interest in communicating that love to others, regardless of how a new electronic medium may distort its physical channels of expression.

Hargraves wraps up the conference banquet with “what you all really came here to see”: a performance from The Catchwords, a small group of lexicographers continuing their biennial tradition of singing original odes to dictionaries with minimal rehearsal. These songs—ranging from comical to irreverent to self-consciously grandiose—include the newly written “Thanks Be To Words,” “You Can Trust Your Dictionary,” “You English Words,” and the DSNA theme, “The Lexiproof Song.” The walls of the banquet hall echo with Hargraves’ lyrics set to a Mendelssohnian tune:

Thanks be to words,
They nourish the hungry mind!
The morphemes gather, they rush along; they are lifting their voices!
The definitions are grand; their phrasing is mighty.
But the words are above them, and Almighty!

The banquet dissolves with much chuckling into the night.

The next day, in their introduction to the latest of Merriam-Webster’s unabridged dictionaries at the DSNA, associate editors Emily Brewster and Kory Stamper unveil a series of “radical editorial changes” that render questions that had thitherto been stewing in my head—When will it come out? What will it look like?—all but irrelevant to the new work. In fact, the New Unabridged has already been released, and not as a newer, thicker tome than its predecessor, but on a fully electronic platform, unhampered by the constraints of space, the price of paper, or the tensile limits of bookbinding glue.

Even though much of it is based on Webster’s Third, the latest of the unabridged dictionaries is not titled Webster’s Fourth New International Dictionary Unabridged, but rather, Merriam-Webster’s New Unabridged Dictionary, or simply the New Unabridged. “It’s not a fourth anything,” Stamper takes care to stress. “It’s an entirely new animal.” Starting with the title, Merriam-Webster has introduced a series of changes that, according to the editors, “will with each iteration be further removed from [Webster’s Third] in both style and substance.”

As the most comprehensive American dictionary available online, the New Unabridged has topped its predecessor by 5,000 new words and 100,000 new usage quotations. Editors will add and revise entries based on current linguistic trends throughout each year. The dictionary also defies a number of the stringent parameters in earlier dictionaries. Commas, which Gove had largely banned

48 On the slight chance that you may recognize one of these names on the cover of a book or dictionary you have opened, here are the members of The Catchwords: Lisa Berglund, Peter Gilliver, Orin Hargraves, Katy Isaacs, David Jost, Rod McConchie, Orion Montoya, and Terry Pratt.
from the *Third* to maximize clarity and minimize space, are now allowed in lists of adjectives, a fact to which a DSNA audience member lets out a joking gasp. The hitherto taboo “etc.” has now been permitted in definitions, primarily at the end of parenthetical adjuncts. Brewster assures us that this change will not be as radical as it may at first seem, because “[w]e’ve all been afraid of it for so long that we’re using it very judiciously.” In addition, the distinction between a verb’s transitive and intransitive senses has sometimes been blurred, but only, as the editors stress, in places “where it makes sense.”

The editors hope that the resulting product is a “hybrid dictionary” that would appeal to both the serious scholar and the common user. With its advanced search capabilities and increased user-friendliness, the *Unabridged* website offers not just editorial information, but also data. For an annual subscription of $29.95, users can access not only the New *Unabridged* itself, but also the most recent Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Collegiate Thesaurus, Concise Encyclopedia, Medical Dictionary, Spanish-English Dictionary, and French-English Dictionary. Transcending the limits of alphabetical order, the advanced search tool allows users to search for words according to any combination of a range of criteria, including topic, grammatical function, date of first known use, language of origin, context of usage, anagrams, and quoted authors. Coupled with a sleek blue-and-white interface, this feature lends itself to some creative word-reconstruction on the user’s end. One can, for instance, search the *Unabridged* for all German-derived words pertaining to philosophy, or all biological terms with Greek etymologies, or all French-borrowed words that contain “cooking” in their definition. Entering “slang” in the Usage field, I find 1,857 entries, among the first of which is “absquatulate,” a slang term that is actually longer than its more formal synonym, to “decamp.”

49 Gove claimed to have saved eighty pages of text from his comma policy, which allowed commas only to separate items in a series.

50 Some words in the *definient* have been replaced for the sole purpose of stifling the giggling of twelve-year-olds. For instance, Stamper points out that in the earlier entry for “bethel,” defined in sense (2b) as “a place of worship for seamen,” the word “seamen” has now been replaced with “sailors.”

“*The New Unabridged* has already been released, and not as a newer, thicker tome than its predecessor, but on a fully electronic platform, unhampered by the constraints of space, the price of paper, or the tensile limits of bookbinding glue.”

Beyond the blog, users can also access not only the difference between “affect” and “effect,” “cat distemper,” “dystopia,” “goofball,” “H-bomb,” “hot potato,” “Maoism,” “McCarthyism,” “mug shot,” “negative income tax,” “world-class,” “writer’s block,” and “zonk.” A Cryptogram field even offers to decode cipher puzzles and coded messages, though I have yet to search this field successfully. To enhance the browsing experience, the site additionally offers a blog, word games, videos, vocabulary quizzes, Top Ten Lists, and word popularity rankings based on searches. Thanks to the Internet, the dictionary has begun at last to break free from what E. Ward Gilman calls—in his preface to the 1989 *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage*—“the tyran-
ny of the alphabet.”

Yet as the printed page dissolves into the intangible realm of cyberspace, the humanity and fallibility of the dictionary’s writers begin to materialize through the various channels of online expression. The heterogeneity of the online platform gives voice to the human element that had once lain mute behind the cold black letters of paper tomes. The Unabridged blog, for instance, allows editors to openly discuss the challenges they face in revising a reference work of such massive scale. In one post, Peter S. considers the challenges of recording podcasts for Merriam-Webster’s “Word of the Day” and reveals that he also moonlights as a freelance trumpet player and jazz music host for New England Public Radio. In another post, Stamper expresses her reservations about the unlimited space in the Unabridged: “You’d think this is a boon,” she writes, but “in this case, it was a bane.” Her biggest challenge in 2013 has been revising the entry for “god,” and “when given free rein to make the entry for god as long as I wanted, I was at a loss.” It has taken her three months to find the right balance between the breadth and specificity of the various definitions in the entry, which she “will not revise…until at least 2015.” In the meantime, she warns theology students in a tweet that “if your paper’s entire premise hangs on the wording of a dictionary definition, you may be doing theology wrong.” Editorial humor permeates the informal fabric of blogging. Regarding future dictionary trends, Stamper predicts that “FOMO (fear of missing out), a much-despised initialism which eclipsed YOLO (you only live once) in 2013, will in 2014 be eclipsed by SALOL (so alone, LOL).” Brewster anticipates “election-inspired revivals of obscure terms of derision, like bufflehead and wantwitz,” more plays on selfie such as “do-it-your-selfie,” and “at least four dissertations analyzing the grammar of Miley Cyrus’ lyrics.”

Beyond the blog, users can also access Merriam-Webster’s “Ask the Editor” video series. Each of these two-minute videos features an editor elucidating some popular topic related to language usage and the lexicographical process. Stamper often discusses word etymologies (such as the origins of “defenestration” and the ampersand), Brewster common grammatical errors (such as the taboo on sentence-final prepositions and the awkward case of “his or her”), and Peter S. the nexus between lexicography and current events (such as the relation between Michael Jackson’s death and search spikes for “stricken,” “resuscitate,” and “emaciated”). Yet while embodying linguistic topics with a face and voice enhances their relatability, this element of human interest raises the potential for the medium to obscure the message. Some of the lexicographers are drawing independent attention based on their physical attributes, for the videos reveal not only the difference between “affect”


54 “Looking Back: A Year in Lexicography.”
and “effect,” but also the changes in Stamper’s hair color, Brewster’s make-up, and Peter S.’s shirt patterns. Frank Moraes, who wrote several posts about Merriam-Webster editors on the popular blog *Frankly Curious*, notes the startling number of searches on his site for keywords sensitive to the lexicographers’ appearance. While Stamper’s ability to inspire her own Facebook fan club can only mean well for Merriam-Webster’s publicity, one wonders whether the appeal of an online dictionary is relying increasingly on the online personas of its writers. Though the fates of the dictionary and lexicographer are intertwined, the direction of dependency may be reversing: whereas the lexicographer used to depend on demand for the print dictionary, the online dictionary may now depend on its lexicographer.

The *New Unabridged* demonstrates yet another step in the dictionary’s transformation from a concrete to an abstract entity. This process hearkens back to what Ian Lancashire calls in his conference presentation “the Great Definition Shift” of the eighteenth century: whereas earlier dictionaries had been concerned with giving names to things, emerging scientists and philosophers of the eighteenth century began to define words themselves instead of the things they denoted. Prior to the shift, dictionaries were primarily bilingual and defined words in one language by finding equivalent words in another: Thomas’s 1587 Latin-English dictionary, for instance, defined materia as “timber, wodde, the body of the tree vnder the barke.” In contrast, the *OED2* treats “timber” as a more abstract concept, defining it in sense (2) as “the matter or substance of which anything is built up or composed.” This analytic defining style of the *OED2* exemplifies the shift in lexicographical attention from things to words: rather than naming concrete equivalents of a word, such definitions describe the essential properties of the category denoted by that word.

In the *Webster’s* panel discussion following the associate editors’ introduction to the *New Unabridged*, DSNA President-Elect Michael Adams observes further that the concerns of the *Third* represented yet another shift in this trend, from words to abstract principles. Though Gove was often caricatured as a maverick, Adams notes that the *Third* was “not just a local phenomenon in Springfield, Massachusetts,” but part of a generational shift in lexicographical methodology, which aimed to take the dictionary in a direction that was more informed by contemporary advances in scientific method and the increasingly empirical nature of knowledge generation. His descriptivist policies were a result of his reluctance to claim more than that for which he had evidence. Thus, *Webster’s Third*, along with other dictionaries of its time, was as much a book about words as it was a book about the abstract principles behind their inclusion, exclusion, and representation in the dictionary. The nature of the dictionary therefore seems to be predicated on increasing levels of abstraction, from things to words to ab-

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stract principles. Perhaps the dictionary can and will persist through the age of information and electronic media—but not in the physical form as we know it, as the New Unabridged demonstrates. In the end, neither the Third nor the New Unabridged may be as radical as it appears.

Nor was the Third’s reception as tempestuous as the press made it seem. Former assistant editor Anne Bello argues that Macdonald’s tirades, for all their rancor, did not reflect the views of the general American populace. After analyzing the Merriam-Webster correspondence archives and reading unsolicited letters sent to Merriam-Webster between 1961 and 1974, Bello finds that the vast majority of letters did not refer to the Third’s controversy at all. Rather, most of them discussed the Third in the same way they discussed other dictionaries that did not receive media attention: they asked questions about specific features such as pronunciation, capitalization, and typeface. A minority of letters parroted the usual list of grievances raised in the polite press, including declining standards, Merriam-Webster’s abdication of its role as a linguistic authority, and so on.

Bello reassures us with a November 1962 letter from a rubber chemist who was well-aware of the controversy in the polite press and “convinced that most of the comments about it have been sadly misdirected.” As a technical writer, he lauded the Third for compiling “accurate, concise definitions” that “even included many new words of specialized meaning, or jargon, peculiar, for example, to the rubber industry—words and meanings I never expected to find in such a work.” He concludes on the following note:

“What greater service could a dictionary perform than to list and define all the new words of our technological society! It seems to me that the critics, who complain that you have failed to take a firm stand on precise meanings of the more familiar words, have overlooked one the other prime functions of a dictionary and your splendid achievement in this area. Perhaps they can be forgiven on the basis that they are evidently not technically trained people. But let them have their fun—at least they have aroused a healthy interest in our language.

“The take-home message,” Bello tells us, “is that there is a discrepancy between what people say they want and what they actually do.” Those who deplored the Third’s cultural impoverishment did not necessarily recognize any vestiges of cultural decline in the dictionary until newspapers said that such was the case. They were suggestible, based on the papers they read and the opinions they heard elsewhere.

While it is easy to explain the Third’s controversy in terms of a reductive binary between prescriptivists and descriptivists, the reactions from the press and public are in fact symptomatic of a deeper, more pervasive fear of change. The media’s criticisms of the Third were concerned less with the abstract principles of Gove’s methodology than with the concrete sociopolitical climate of the 1960s. Macdonald notably attributed Gove’s descriptivist inclinations to the “sentimental” and “unfounded” assumption that “it is snobbish to insist on making discriminations—the very word has acquired a Jim Crow flavor—about
usage.” The sociopolitical implications of this comment reflect what Deborah Cameron calls verbal hygiene, which are “all the normative, metalinguistic practices through which people attempt to improve language or regulate its use in accordance with particular values, such as authenticity, beauty, truth, efficiency, logic, clarity, correctness, civility.”

Though the specific historical and cultural contexts of verbal hygienic practices vary widely, verbal hygiene is generally a coded linguistic response to the anxieties of a particular moment that are not themselves linguistic, but rather political, social, and moral. Thus, in the practice of verbal hygiene, language becomes a metaphor for some aspect of society, such as social order. As Cameron puts it: [C]onservatives use ‘grammar’ as the metaphorical correlate for a cluster of related political and moral terms: order, tradition, authority, hierarchy and rules. In the ideological world that conservatives inhabit, these terms are not only positive, they define the conditions for any civil society, while their opposites—disorder, change, fragmentation, anarchy and lawlessness—signify the breakdown of social relations. A panic about grammar is therefore interpretable as the metaphorical expression of persistent conservative fears that we are losing the values that underpin civilization and sliding into chaos.

Given these sociopolitical sensitivities, the Third’s critics draped their past with a nostalgic shroud and deplored the future as a steady descent into linguistic and cultural squalor. The Third was therefore an unfortunate scapegoat for deeper sociopolitical anxieties of the 1960s, during which a complex of international tensions and domestic movements began to redefine the American landscape. While some may still mourn the extent to which civilization has degenerated, the vast majority would probably agree that we do not yet live in a post-apocalyptic society. Likewise, though lexicographers may express concern over the future of their profession, it may be safe to say that dictionaries will not be disappearing anytime soon—given that we significantly revise our understanding of what a dictionary is.

Michael Adams closes the conference with a moderated Skype interview with E. Ward Gilman, the former Director of Defining at Merriam-Webster, to whom Peter S. had briefly alluded at the previous night’s banquet. He has more-

58 Note: Though the term may sound synonymous with prescriptivism, verbal hygiene encompasses a far broader category of practices that vary in the linguistic preoccupations, motivations, and assumptions upon which they are predicated. While the prescriptive promotion of Standard English is one type of verbal hygiene, the category also includes movements such as campaigns for plain language, for anti-racist and anti-sexist language, and for the preservation of indigenous languages. Each of these practices respectively arose from their own particular values and motivations: commitments to anti-elitism, to equality and social justice, and to cultural diversity.
59 Deborah Cameron, “The One, the Many, and the Other: Representing Mono/Multi-Lingualism in Post-9/11 Verbal Hygiene,” Multilingual 2.0? (lecture at the University of Arizona Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ, October 1, 2012), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbz5KPQrUAs.
60 Cameron, Verbal Hygiene, 95.
over edited the well-respected *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage* and provided the training seminar for generations of young definers at Merriam-Webster, including Mr. Sokolowski himself. After several minutes of hesitant fiddling with the conference hall’s sound system, a coarsely pixelated image of the legendary Gilman materializes on the projector screen—browser frames still showing—to reveal a small, stout and bearded man, clad in a bright green vest over a faded magenta t-shirt, sitting in a bedroom with dim lighting and a microphone of questionable competence.

Michael Adams hunches over the small conference computer and asks him how he came to lexicography.

“Huh?”

Adams leans into the microphone and repeats his question.

“By accident!” exclaims Mr. Gilman after a slight pause. He retells the story of how he answered an ad for Merriam-Webster in the *Boston Globe*.

Adams then asks him how he reacted to Gove’s various *American Speech* articles on defining adjectives and the like.

“I never read those articles!” Gilman promptly exclaims, leaning back. The audience chuckles. After a brief pause, Gilman explains that he had been far more concerned with writing the dictionary in practice. He notes that Gove’s policies were sometimes impractical, especially when they tried to cram too much encyclopedic information into definitions. “Didn’t work too good,” he added, in what sounded much like a southern U.S. accent.

Adams asks Gilman how he personally benefited from doing research for the *Dictionary of English Usage*. Gilman scratches his beard for a few seconds and—as though reaching an epiphany—exclaims: “I actually began to read again!”

Finally, when asked to comment on the trajectory of the future career of lexicographers, he shrugs and says: “All this new electronic stuff is pretty much a mystery to me!”

To think that this was once the voice of authority on matters of English usage! Here at last is a living, breathing human, seen on paper as a legendary lexicographer, but in life as a man with an Internet connection problem. Like every other human, he has a voice, speaks with an accent, and reads finite lines of text. He remains blissfully unaware of the uncertain future of lexicography because he has seen enough irresoluble battles over a mere dictionary to know that people do not war over how to define language, but over how to define the indefinite future. Lexicographers and laypeople—distinct in their preoccupations but caught alike in the spirit of the times—attempt to ensure the future against decline, be it in their professions or in general culture. The crusade against time will never resolve itself, but the armaments will change, and humans—doing what humans do best—will adapt to these new terms so readily that they may one day look back and wonder what the fuss was all about. Lexicography, whatever intangible, abstract, digital form it takes, will continue to occupy the tension between the higher sanctioning authority that the layperson expects from dictionaries and the fallibility of flesh-and-blood humans who make dictionaries possible.

After the last panel discussion, Peter Sokolowski surprises me with a special

He takes care to point out Gilman’s “excellent” introductory essay to the dictionary. It provides a historical sketch of English usage from the fifteenth century down to the dictionary’s publication in the late twentieth century.

How apt it is, to leave the conference with the relic of a revered dictionary now out of print. One doesn’t simply come across these at the bookstore anymore.61

**Bibliography**


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About the Authors

Sarah Gallo is a senior majoring in Anthropology with minors in Spanish and Public Health. She first became interested in HIV/AIDS and public health through anthropology classes at WUSTL. Sarah is interested in how people access healthcare and how healthcare shapes the way in which people think about their bodies, themselves, and their world. She would like to thank her mentor, Professor Shanti Parikh, for all her guidance over the past two years. Next year, she will be working as a Healthcare Advocate at Compass Professional Health Services. Sarah plans to later pursue a Ph.D. in either anthropology or public health.

Nathaniel Hyman is a graduating senior studying Economics and History. He has been honored to work with Professor David Konig, his mentor, who has been instrumental in the development of both his Kling project and his Senior Honors Thesis. Nathaniel is originally from Swampscott, MA, and plans to move back to the east coast to attend law school next year. In his free time, Nathaniel enjoys running, and after running a couple of half marathons, he hopes to start training for a full marathon next fall.

Maggie Ingell is a Religious Studies major with minors in Arabic and Religion and Politics. Her subfields include religion and violence, American religion, and atheism and secularity. Maggie’s Kling mentor, Professor Mark Jordan, provided challenging and insightful feedback for which she is deeply grateful. She also could not have finished this project without her thesis advisor, Professor Cassie Adcock. Next year, Maggie will be finding homes for foreign exchange students in Texas, trying to apply her research outside of academia.
Allyson Scher is graduating with majors in English Literature and Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology. Through her undergraduate studies and independent research, she has developed a primary interest in language and how it influences cognition. She would like to thank her mentor, Dr. Jami Ake, and her thesis advisor, Dr. Dave Balota, for their invaluable efforts and guidance over the last two years. She would also like to thank Dr. Wendy Love Anderson and her past seminar leaders, as well as all of her Kling peers for being truly exceptional people.

Eunhye Oak is graduating with a major in Biochemistry and a minor in Writing. Outside of her science classes, Eunhye is interested in the history of medicine, the way in which health reform affects the doctor-patient relationship, and creative nonfiction. She would like to thank the Kling Fellowship for giving her the opportunity to explore these interests. Lastly, this project would not have been possible without her mentor, Dr. Stephen Lefrak. She is always thankful for his constant support and guidance.

Tianqi Wang is graduating with a double-major in Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology and German. She enjoys a wide range of interests in languages, linguistics, the philosophy of language, and creative nonfiction. She is ever grateful to her mentor, Professor Edward McPherson, who she one day hopes to be. Perhaps that will happen sometime in ten years, but for the next year, Tianqi will bring her passion for language to Germany, where she will be teaching English as part of the Fulbright U.S. Student program.
Acknowledgments

We would first and foremost like to thank Professor Gerald Early, Professor Erin McGlothlin, and Dr. Wendy Anderson for leading our seminar over the years. Each of our projects underwent multiple intensive workshops every semester under their direction. Our seminar leaders challenged us to engage with our topics on a more intimate level and taught us to offer mutually constructive criticism as scholarly peers. We thank them for making us better writers, editors, and thinkers.

We also appreciate and admire the finesse with which Professor Joe Loewenstein so seamlessly integrated the Kling and IPH seminars into a consonant, creative, and productive workshop environment during our final semester, an endeavor which we are sure has been much more difficult than he has made it seem. From him, we have learned that people, no matter how disparate their field or genre, can find a way to speak to each other.

We owe much gratitude to all of our faculty mentors—Professors Shanti Parikh, David Konig, Mark Jordan, Jami Ake, Stephen Lefrak, and Edward McPherson—for sharing so much of their time, thoughts, and expertise with us over the past two years. They are the scholarly role models to whom we aspire, and their intimate involvement in our projects has played a key role in assuring that, by the end of two years, we have produced work of which we too can be proud.

In addition, we are grateful to Dean Mary Laurita for coordinating the program, as well as to Sarah Littlechild for administrative support from the College. Our projects would not have been possible without the support of the current and former staff of the Center for the Humanities—Dr. Leng, Barbara Liebmann, and Kathy Jessen-Pierson.

We would also like to acknowledge Carolyn Smith, a senior tutor in the Writing Center, for so meticulously copy-editing our manuscripts.

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Thank you.

—Senior Kling Fellows 2014
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