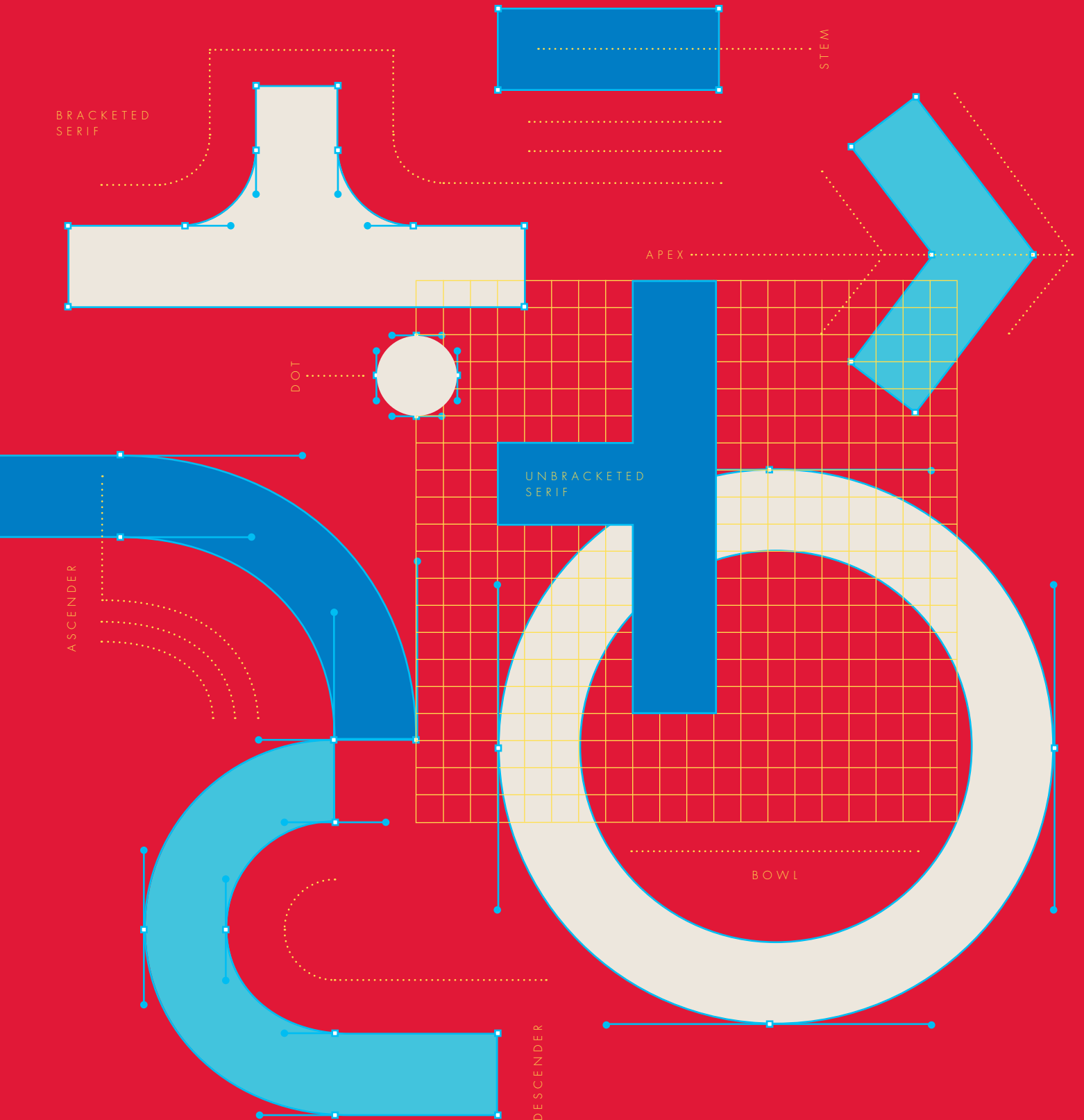


• *The University of Kansas*
journal OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
Summer 2014 – Spring 2015



The Journal of Undergraduate Research is an annual publication by the Center for Undergraduate Research that features the scholarship of undergraduates at the University of Kansas.

COVER

Claire Zimmerman, Senior in Visual Communication Design

Mentor: Andrea Herstowski, Associate Professor of Design

See page 34 to learn about Claire's project designing a typeface representing the characteristics of Trier, Germany.

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Peter Haney, *Assistant Director of the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies*
Bartholomew Dean, *Associate Professor of Anthropology*

Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

My experience working at the Centro Hispano here in Lawrence, where many clients speak an Indigenous Mexican language, and my time spent studying Kichwa (at KU and in Ecuador), provided me with my research idea. Then, to provide the helpful thrust of necessity, there was my Latin American Studies Capstone class (a requirement to graduate), looming closer and closer. Thus, at the nexus of inspiration and obligation, was my project born.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

I had to reformulate my research question profoundly. Also, it turns out that people, in general, are much more helpful than I originally assumed.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

The unexpected discoveries (which can also be maddening!).

On the Translation of Fear: A Study of Ecuadorian Kichwa Speakers and the US Immigration System

Gustin Bova

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the situation of Ecuadorian Kichwa-speaking migrants who, upon arriving at the US border (and being put into Expedited Removal), claim a fear of returning to Ecuador. The study draws data primarily from the Credible Fear Interview stage of this process. The author performed interviews with Kichwa-English interpreters who have worked in Credible Fear Interviews, and complemented this with bibliographic investigation. The study ultimately argues that conflicting understandings grounded in language, class, and culture, along with procedural issues, are likely leading officials to deny the Credible Fear claims, and applications for relief, of Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers at an excessive rate. The study draws on the experience and judgments of interpreters, viewing them as both credible experts and constituents of the process itself. The study concludes with questions for further research and points for practical consideration.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, Indigenous Latin Americans have migrated to the US in greater and greater numbers (see, e.g., Fox and Rivera-Salgado 2004). Many of these migrants, upon arriving at the US border, speak little to no Spanish. The principal sending regions for these migrants are Southern Mexico, Central America, and, to a lesser extent, the Andes. While these migrants are easily distinguished in their home countries, the United States immigration system has often failed to accommodate their linguistic and cultural distinctness. They have been frequently incarcerated, interviewed, processed and deported in a language they do not command (e.g., Camayd-Freixas 2008, 2009). They have, in criminal trials, been deemed mentally deficient, emotionless, and monstrous due to lack of interpretation.¹ And while recent events, including the “border crisis” of 2014, have brought increased attention to these migrants,² they remain a largely invisible and disadvantaged population within the US legal system.

Although scholars have worked to address closely related issues, there is a dearth of research on this particular topic. For example, legal scholars have worked to establish the right to interpretation in one’s best language, even for undocumented migrants who speak rare languages (Ackermann 2010; Davis et al. 2004; León 2014). And anthropologists and linguists have analyzed the interface of Indigenous defendants and Neo-colonial legal systems—particularly in the Australian and Alaskan contexts (Cooke 2002; Eades 2008; Morrow

1993). And finally, scholars in the field of interpreting/translation studies have done extensive work unsettling notions of interpretation, cross-cultural communication, and language comprehension in legal settings (Hale 2008; Hertog 2002; Mikkelson 2008). However, research remains scant on Indigenous Latin American migrants and the US legal system—on the nature of communication in these encounters and the implications for due process (one exception being León 2014).

In this paper, I seek to examine the interactions of a particular population with a particular aspect of the US legal system: namely, those of Ecuadorian Kichwa-speaking migrants³ with the Credible Fear Interview (and, by extension, the full Merits Hearing). In doing so, I seek not only to expose a problem but to explain its nature in detail, in order to strengthen efforts at reform. I ultimately conclude that conflicting understandings grounded in language, class, and culture, along with procedural issues, are likely leading officials to deny the Credible Fear claims, and applications for relief, of Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers at an excessive rate. While the claim is indeed modest, it accounts fairly for the study’s limitations, and the discussion that supports it applies to a broad array of immigrant populations.

I. METHODOLOGY

To begin, my principle method of discovery for this study was the qualitative interview. I performed 5 one hour-long interviews with three Kichwa-English legal interpreters: Kinti, Charlie Uruchima, and Amy. I performed the interviews primarily in English (although I

also speak Spanish at an advanced level, and Kichwa at an intermediate level). Three of these interviews were performed with one interpreter: Kinti, so the majority of my data come from my conversations with her. Throughout the work, I consider my interviewees’ accounts to be both raw data on legal processes themselves *and* authoritative analysis of those processes (plus related political and cultural phenomena). I attempt to engage both aspects of my collaborators’ contributions in order to illuminate the multi-faceted, historical and transnational interactions that they described for me. Ultimately, the lack of certain quantitative data⁴, the small number of interviewees, and the inability to perform direct observation substantially limit this study, but it is my hope that it will still prove valuable, as the germ of something more.

II. BACKGROUND: ECUADORIAN KICHWA SPEAKERS; THE CREDIBLE FEAR INTERVIEW

Ecuadorian Kichwa

For starters, it is generally agreed upon that there are approximately two million speakers of Ecuadorian Kichwa (e.g., Adelaar and Muysken



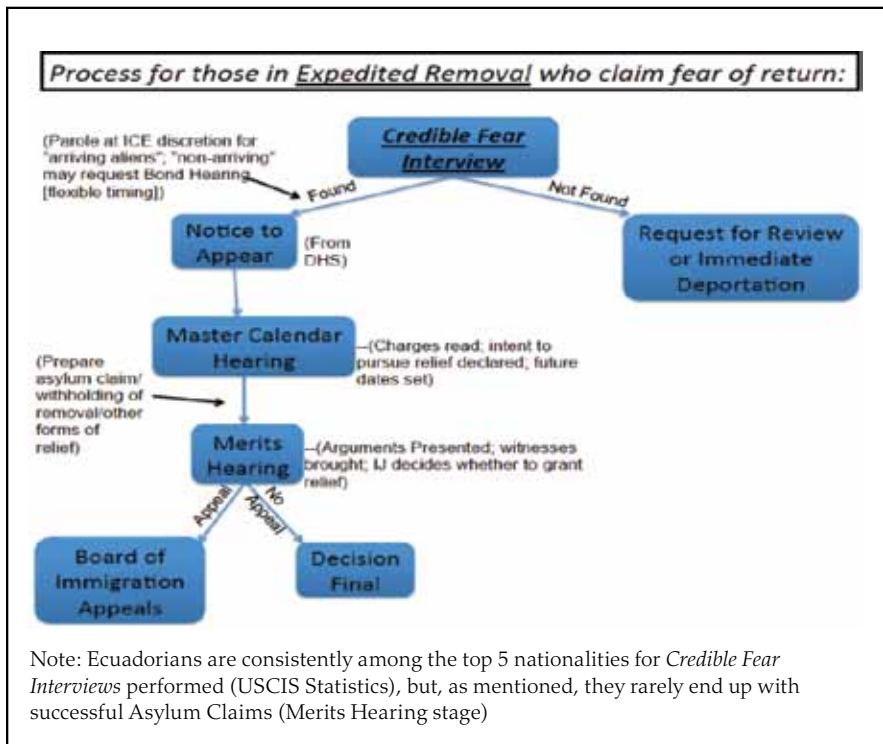
Two Kichwa women outside their home.

¹ See the cases of Nicolas Dutan Guaman and María Guaman Guaman, which are discussed in greater detail in a forthcoming MA thesis by Charlie Uruchima (New York University)

² See, for example, “Immigrants Who Speak Indigenous Languages Encounter Isolation” (New York Times 2014), or “Language Barriers Pose Challenges For Mayan Migrant Children” (NPR 2014).

³ A note on terminology: I will switch between the terms ‘migrant’ and ‘applicant’ in this work, depending on what I want to emphasize.

⁴ Namely, the precise success rate of Ecuadorian Kichwa-speakers in the Credible Fear Interview or Merits Hearing. The available quantitative evidence only allows us to see that Ecuadorians in general are relatively unsuccessful at getting *Asylum* in particular (only one part of the overall process), which is suggestive but not conclusive (see: EOIR Asylum Statistics Chart).



Graphic 1: The overall process

fear of returning to her country of nationality. If yes, the officer asks a number of follow-up questions.⁸ In doing so, the officer seeks to establish evidence (or lack thereof) that the migrant has a Credible Fear of Persecution and/or Torture. These terms, “persecution” and “torture,” are distinct, legal terms, with a number of Board of Immigration Appeals and federal court decisions informing their interpretation. In a nutshell, “persecution” is the basis on which a person applies for Asylum/Refugee status, and it consists of: “serious harm or suffering inflicted on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion,” *specifically when the perpetrator of such harm is “either the government or a non-governmental entity that the government is*

unwilling or unable to control” (USCIS 2012a, 20). In turn, “torture” is the basis on which a person applies for Withholding/Deferral of Removal⁹, and it consists of: “some action that would result in serious physical or mental harm” that is “inflicted by or at the instigation of, or with the consent or acquiescence of, a government official or other person acting in an official capacity” (USCIS 2012a, 35). These are the operational definitions that provide the basis for Asylum Officers’ determinations (and for Immigration Judges’ decisions in full hearings).

A final, important note is that Credible Fear has traditionally been easy to establish, with success rates of over 80% (USCIS Credible Fear Workload Summaries). This is because Asylum Officers do not make full judgments of an

applicant’s case, but instead seek only to establish whether the applicant has a “significant possibility” of establishing eligibility (for Asylum or Withholding) in a full hearing before a Judge (USCIS 2012a). In February 2014, however, the Asylum Division of the USCIS released revisions to their instructional materials for Asylum Officers that raised the Standard of Proof used in Credible Fear Interviews (memo, Lafferty 2014). USCIS workload summaries after February 2014 suggest that these revisions have already led to markedly decreased success rates. The essential context for these revisions, as Campos and Friedland argue in a 2014 article for the Immigration Policy Center, is a conservative political backlash against supposed “asylum abuse” (Campos and Friedland 2014).¹⁰ It is in this politicized context, then, that Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers enter the Credible Fear Interview.

III. MY INTERVIEWS: ISSUES OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE, CLASS, AND PROCEDURE

A. What Kichwa Speakers Are Actually Claiming

To contextualize the following analysis, I want to begin by explaining, in concrete terms, the sorts of persecution/torture that Kichwa speakers are actually claiming. As a jumping off point: Shoshanna Malett writes in an online article that “the most common claims from Ecuador are those of Ecuadorians fleeing gang violence and trafficking, [while] [t] here are also numerous claims of domestic abuse” (Malett, Accessed 2015). Regarding Kichwa speakers in particular, my interviews support

⁸ This questioning is, in theory, “non-adversarial” (USCIS 2012c). But, officers do probe for contradictions in the applicant’s statements, and my interview data suggest that this can turn the interview adversarial, thus making lack of legal counsel (which is the norm, especially for Indigenous migrants) particularly problematic.

⁹ A harder-to-obtain form of relief, that offers fewer benefits than Asylum, but that is available to some who are otherwise barred. Applicants typically apply for Asylum and Withholding simultaneously.

¹⁰ See, for example, the Dec. 2013 U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee hearing titled “Asylum Abuse: Is It Overwhelming Our Borders?”. Or, from Feb. 2014: “Asylum Fraud: Abusing America’s Compassion?”.

the notion that some are making claims based on gang violence, and trafficking/the drug trade. In the most detailed instance, my interviewee Kinti described a man employed as a janitor in central Ecuador who was recruited against his will to work as a drug mule by higher-ups in his company. He faced threats of violence if he attempted to quit, so he fled the country. Additionally, my data support, strongly, the prevalence of domestic violence claims among Kichwa-speaking women.

There are *also*, however, two other common claims among Kichwa speakers that Malett does not recognize: namely, local-level political persecution and religious persecution. Regarding the first claim, in response to a question about what types of situations Ecuadorians are fleeing, my interviewee Kinti offered the following:

K: it has appeared that, uh, few cases have shown that women, or man, have been kind of threatened by the political parties. For example that, there were a few instances I have interpreted that, list 35, which is the government list party, has been threatening to the people: if you don't work for me, this is what's gonna happen, or they just beat up. It's not the government directly acting, acting on the people, but they're locals, local governments, like, small local governments in the communities, for example, who are working for Correa's party, for example. They are the ones who are kind of, um, bullying them, other people who are working with the Pachakutik, for example, and that case has gotten a little too much for some people...

Additionally, Kinti confirmed elsewhere that these local-level intimidations do sometimes reach the level of physical assault,

including surprise group-beatings and even the use of guns. Her explanations, however, are probably opaque without a background of Ecuadorian politics. To give only the basics: *Alianza País* is the dominant political party in Ecuador; it is the President's party, and, while it initially drew support from Indigenous movements, it has ultimately proven unfriendly to Indigenous sovereignty and collective rights. *Lista 35*, or "list 35," is a synonym for the party, representing the party's numerical location on the Ecuadorian ballot. *Pachakutik*, on the other hand, is a leftist, agrarian-Indigenous political party that has had some success in mainstream Ecuadorian politics, and generally opposes the politics of Correa (the President) and his party. With that background in place, we can look at the claim Kinti is relaying: namely, that *Alianza País*, at the local level, is using violence to intimidate Kichwa-speaking Ecuadorians who are involved in *Pachakutik* and refuse to support *Lista 35*. They are doing so without explicit directives from Rafael Correa, but one could argue that they are doing so with implicit permission/*acquiescence* from the government (see persecution definition above).

The second claim overlooked by Malett, as already mentioned, is that of religious persecution. In one discussion on the topic, Kinti transitioned out of a story about discrimination in Ecuadorian cities, and into the following:

K: It's, the rest is pretty much, either the community, in the community, or religion, because he or she's Protestant—

G: Ohh yeah

K: That's an issue; he or she is Protestant. And the rest are catholic drunkards who are trying to beat them and that kind of thing; that's the kind

of thing that they will say. And besides that... their beliefs change and their parents or relatives, also, are against the change of religion.

This short exchange sums up the overall point well enough. For context: it's been a common practice for decades now for foreign, Evangelical missionaries to pursue Kichwa-speaking Ecuadorians as potential converts. When these Kichwas do convert, from a syncretic version of Catholicism to Evangelical Christianity, they change a number of important behaviors. And furthermore, since it is individuals who convert, rather than whole communities, tensions are created between the converts and their own communities. For example, Kinti's jest about "catholic drunkards" refers to the fact that *evangelicos* give up alcohol—which is, of course, very important in the syncretic Catholic-Indigenous *raymis* (festivals). Beyond simply not drinking, these converts will often not participate at all in community *raymis*, disapproving of the dancing and various forms of "idolatry." This non-participation in essential community functions creates a divide within the *ayllu* (community) that sometimes, as Kinti reports, bubbles over into physical assaults. In sum, then, the four major bases of Kichwa speakers' Credible Fear claims are: drug and gang-related trafficking/violence, domestic abuse, local-level political persecution, and religious persecution.¹¹

B. "Simple" Questions with Complicated Answers: Relocation and Injury

Relocation. I turn now to two interview questions whose explication touches on a host of larger issues. Regarding the first question: at a certain point in the

¹¹ An important note here is that Asylum Officers test all of these claims against Department of State Reports on country conditions. To briefly sum up the Reports on Ecuador: they generally deny government complicity in harm to Indigenous people, and they do not mention the local-level political persecution or Evangelical-Catholic conflicts that Kinti describes (US DoS 2013, 2013, 2014). This downplaying and absence of issues is likely to undermine the strength of some otherwise valid claims.

Credible Fear Interview, after having heard some/all of an applicant's basis for Fear, the Asylum Officer will ask about the possibility of *internal relocation*. For Ecuadorian migrants, the question is typically along the lines of "can you move somewhere else in Ecuador and be safe?," or "why can't you just move to a city in Ecuador, like Quito, or Guayaquil?." This simple question is essential to the Asylum Officer's analysis of the applicant's case, since, as Officers are informed by their instructional materials, the ability to safely relocate internally may be sufficient basis for a negative Credible Fear finding (USCIS 2012a, 23). Furthermore, the February 2014 revisions (mentioned above) to those instructional materials urge Officers to give more weight than before to the possibility of internal relocation (Lafferty 2014). This simple question, then, currently carries more weight than ever.

My primary collaborator, Kinti, quoted a number of the answers that Kichwa speakers usually give to this question of relocation. We discussed the topic a number of times, but the following excerpt is most representative:

G: And when the officer asks, cuz the officer asks, right, like, why can't you just move to Quito? What exactly do people respond to that?

K: If that's the case, then their response most often is that we don't know anybody, uh, for example, the freshest thing I can remember yesterday was a case she said, this woman said you know, I don't have anybody in Quito or anybody close to the cities, I don't have anything, I am indigenous person therefore I am, I am denied all the work possibilities and there's no such jobs or anything. I can't go anywhere. And I don't want to return where they're gonna kill me...

G: ... and it's just, so it's just like, mana

pitachu char-charini [*Translation: I don't ha-have anyone*]? Or how do they say it?

K: They will say mana, mana pita riksinichu, llankanichu, manapi, mana llankayta charinichu, mana pita llaktapi riksinichu nin, mana ayllukunata llaktakunapi charinichu; mishukuna makan nin, mishukuna riman, shina nishpa nin [*Translation: no, no I don't know anyone, I don't work, no one, I don't have work, I don't know anyone there, they say, I don't have family in those places; mestizos hit, they say, mestizos insult, that's what they say*].

We see, then, in Kinti's rendition, that the Kichwa-speaking migrants feel alienated from Ecuadorian cities on three grounds: one, lack of family, two, lack of work, and three, discrimination/abuse. The first ground, lack of family, is given its particular meaning by the context of rural Ecuador. These Kichwa-speaking migrants are from tiny towns in the Andean countryside, where the main support network is the *ayllu*, a community composed primarily of extended family members (although, as Pribilsky argues, migration from Ecuador has been rapidly changing this). Many of these Kichwa-speaking migrants have spent their whole lives in this small-town context, where everyone is related to everyone, and many of them have never traveled to other areas of Ecuador (particularly the women). The second ground, lack of work in the cities, refers to the incompatibility of the rural-agricultural skillset with the big city labor markets. While many Indigenous folks who live close to urban centers travel to sell vegetables in open markets, they can only do so because they have land in a nearby rural area. The prospects for a Kichwa speaker of finding *permanent* work in a city are

bleak. The options largely consist of informal work as an ambulatory salesperson of cheap consumer goods like candy and cigarettes, or folkloric *artesanía*, if one has the time and resources to make it. It's also possible for women to find domestic cleaning work (which is low-paid and unprotected), and for men to find a limited amount of construction work. The issue, however, is not only scarcity/availability of jobs; it's also the discrimination and abuse they face both within urban workplaces and on the street ("mestizos hit"; "mestizos insult"). Kichwa speakers face extensive exploitation and verbal, physical, and sexual abuse at the hands of some *patrones* in the big cities, and, beyond that, they may be subject to abuse by random passersby, simply for being present in the city. This is because Ecuadorian urban society, at its worst, sees these *indios* as filthy, backwards, and, crucially, as belonging only in certain spaces. For all these reasons, Kichwa speakers do not want to relocate internally, particularly to the big cities (which are seen by Asylum Officers as providing anonymity and protection).

This explanation, however, even if a Kichwa speaker provides it in detail (which is often not the case), may still prove insufficient. As Kinti recounted during one conversation, the Officer will often turn to questioning how it is that the person can migrate to an entirely different country (the US), but not to a different part of her own country. The answer to this question that would likely *help* Kichwa speakers' cases is that Ecuadorian government officials are systematically persecuting them, and they therefore cannot seek safety elsewhere in the country. That, however, is not the case in Ecuador. Some officials, then, might see that as reason

enough to deny Credible Fear (or relief). However, there is a more subtle, but very real, answer to the question of why Ecuadorian Kichwas would relocate to the US rather than Quito. In my interview with Charlie Uruchima, I reiterated the question about internal relocation, which led to the following exchange:

G: Did—what are your thoughts about that question, did you hear that question?

C: Yeah, I heard that question; I think she [*the Kichwa speaker in a CFI that he interpreted for, on the one occasion that he has done so*] said she didn't know anybody else outside of her town. But that's, I mean, also, migration culture is huge... places like Cañar, people today, that's where you find a lot of, they have a lot of like young people coming, still migrating today, because their parents have migrated already, so, they see migration as... like a reunion.

G: A reunion?

C: Yeah. And I mean I was thinking more like the migration culture, culture aspect of it. But I mean there's also like tangential reasons for it as well. You know it's, it's like well if something happens, and then... especially as traumatizing as like, for example, her case, if something like that happens, then you already know, like, well, everybody else is doing it, so I guess, now I have to do it...

G: I have to, I have to migrate, is that what you mean?

C: Yeah, yeah

G: Ok

C: And that's what I feel like, [?], it makes the decision easier you know?

Charlie, then, who is a graduate student, reiterates the Kichwa speakers' explanation of not knowing anyone in other areas of the country, but then proceeds to introduce a new element: "migration culture." In the academic literature, this term is usually found as "culture(s) of migration." The term refers to how migration can become

"deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behavior, and [how] values associated with migration become part of the community's values" (Massey et al. 1998, 47). In his works, Jeffrey H. Cohen clarifies the term further, arguing, in the context of Oaxaca, that a culture of migration exists where: one, "migration is pervasive—it occurs throughout the region and has a historical presence"; two, "the decision to migrate is one that people make as part of their *everyday* experiences [*italics mine*]"; and three, "the decision to migrate is accepted by most... as one path toward economic well-being" (2004, 5). Finally, as Cohen emphasizes in a later work, the idea of cultures of migration is underpinned by the belief that migrants are "rational social actors," and—particularly relevant for this analysis—"[e]ven... refugees who flee cultural, economic, religious, and social problems and persecution in their home communities and nations are typically making calculated decisions about their futures" (Cohen and Sirkeci 2011, 13).

My interviewee Charlie Uruchima, in the passage above, refers to Cañar as a site of "migration culture." We've already discussed that the Azuayo-Cañari region accounts for the majority of Ecuadorian-US migration, but we haven't discussed what that looks like in those communities. Having traveled to Cañar myself, I can vouch from personal experience that some feel as though the middle has been cut out from them. Essentially, the older generation is there, and children are there, but the young adults—those of most productive working age—are gone (hence Charlie's observation of young migrants *following* their parents). As a sign of this, one sometimes observes big US-style houses, built by remittances, to which migrants

have never returned. In his work, Pribilsky discusses this transnational economic system of migration and remittances that Azuayo-Cañari families depend on (Pribilsky 2007). For this reason, when a rural Kichwa speaker in those regions experiences an act of persecution, the notion of migration—as a means of escaping, of achieving, of *reuniting*—is already profoundly present in his mind and social surroundings. We even see Charlie go so far as to suggest that reasons other than migration culture are "tangential," while simultaneously emphasizing the legitimate trauma of the Kichwa speaker he interpreted for. Ultimately, we see him conclude that migration culture and the traumatizing event, together, make the overall migration decision "easier" than it would otherwise be.

The train of thought that Charlie lays out *could* lead one to question the validity of Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers' asylum claims (asylum, after all, exists for the persecuted, not simply for migrants seeking economic well-being).¹² I would argue, however, that it shouldn't do so. As Cohen and Sirkeci argue in the passage quoted earlier, even refugees, when they migrate, are making "calculated decisions about their futures." To grapple adequately with the diasporic and transnational world of today, we have to be willing to accept the complex considerations that motivate both migration *and* requests for protection. We need to look at the claims of, for example, Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers, through a multi-faceted lens. When they experience acts of persecution/torture, these acts are immediately contextualized within patterns of migration that are profoundly economic in nature. The motives may come in many guises. And we have to consider that, for Ecuadorian Kichwa speakers, the closest thing to home, apart from their rural Ecuadorian

¹² With the same logic applying equally to Withholding of Removal and Torture.

ayllu, may not be Quito or another area of Ecuador, but rather New York City. It may be that Spring Valley, NY, for instance, is the only other place where they have blood-relations, and, therefore, accepting community.

Injury. Turning now to the second not-so-simple question, I start with the fact that Asylum Officers—as they seek information about the potential persecution/torture that an applicant has experienced—try to elicit specific information about the *injuries* that the applicant suffered. In doing so, Officers probe for discrete, at-least-vaguely medical injuries to record: “broken wrist,” for example, or “lacerated forehead.” The Officer seeks this information for two reasons: one, to establish the severity of the harm inflicted, and, two, to establish credibility. Regarding the second point, the migrant needs to recall in detail the nature and duration of her injuries, and remain consistent in her story. All of this may seem necessary and unproblematic to the reader, but, on many occasions, Kichwa speakers offer answers that are both unsatisfactory to Officers, and that do not accurately represent their cases. For example, in the case of a beating, a Kichwa speaker may describe what his assailants did to him, but, when pressed for the exact injuries he suffered, simply describe again the actions of his assailants. Kichwa speakers often also give contradictory/vague accounts about when exactly incidents occurred.

Tellingly, Officers also always ask whether the applicant saw a doctor, and, if not, then “why not.” And therein lies the issue. In essence, the Officer’s expectations around injuries are rooted in a society (or class within a society) that goes to and listens to doctors. In other words, the Officer bears/represents a particular set of medico-cultural norms. The Kichwa speaker, on

the other hand, has usually not seen a medical doctor because of geographical distance, cultural difference, a language barrier, or the chance that the doctor is prejudiced against *indios*. Without a medical doctor’s diagnosis, the Kichwa speaker may not know exactly what injuries he suffered (or, if he went to a traditional healer [*yachak*], he may have a diagnosis that will not translate well in the Interview context). To make matters worse, without the medical doctor’s visit, he also lacks a record of when exactly the injuries occurred. Taking all of this together, then, the Kichwa speaker may seem imprecise about both the exact nature of his injuries *and* when they occurred, which may, for the Officer, undermine the apparent severity of the case and/or the applicant’s *credibility*.

To make all of this a little more complex, there also exist a number of particularities surrounding gender and gender-based violence. In one interview, Kinti transitioned from a discussion of translating the word “torture” into the following:

K: Even if [they are] wounded, sometimes the person does not want to tell those private things, that’s like an intrusion, private matter can be described in part, another thing, that’s another thing that they don’t want to, especially women, for women to describe all those injuries that they have received; they don’t really wanna tell, they just tell superficial things and they think if they do describe the details of what happened to them, might be, I don’t know, but they don’t want to so...

Kinti, then, moves from a translation difficulty (“torture”) into the issues of privacy and “intrusion.” This demonstrates that communication of harm revolves not only around terminology but also around culturally-situated

communicative competence. Put simply, this concept represents the fact that people learn not only *how* to say things, but also when, where, and with whom to say them, a process labeled acquisition of competence (Hymes 1971). In the case of the Credible Fear Interview, the Asylum Officer behaves incompetently by requesting details that aren’t appropriate for the female Kichwa speaker to give (*particularly* to an often opposite-gendered stranger). And the Kichwa speaker responds by providing only the “superficial” amount of detail that is appropriate. As Kinti stated in another interview, regarding Kichwa speakers talking about physical harm:

K: ... if the man, or somebody has done it, private parts, [it] just... sounds too ridiculous. Even the word doesn’t sound even appropriate to even come up with.

These notions of what is “ridiculous” and “appropriate” are grounded in strong cultural understandings of what can be said, where and to whom. Kichwa-speaking women (particularly without any previous legal advice) are likely to hue to these notions of what’s appropriate during the interview—to the detriment of their cases. Taken altogether, then, when Asylum officers elicit information about harm experienced by Kichwa speakers, they tend to impose a distinct medico-cultural system, and to violate gendered communication norms—and, as a result, they may reach erroneous conclusions about severity of harm, or about an applicant’s credibility.

C. Issues of Interpretation Per Se Terminology. A first lens for looking at issues of interpretation per se in these interviews is that of legal terminology. For starters, any interpreter who needs to translate the peculiar register of Legal English

into a non-European language will encounter substantial difficulty, lacking the assistance of common Latin and Greek roots. And these difficulties are, naturally, much greater when working with a language like Kichwa, whose speakers come from small-scale societies, free of elaborate legal bureaucracies. Here, issues of culture, class and education all intermingle. For instance, on the one hand, many Kichwa speakers maintain a radically distinct legal system, a community justice system that involves public shamings, beatings and cold-water baths,¹³ with its own concepts and rationale. On the other hand, Kichwa speakers are simultaneously subject to the Ecuadorian national legal system, a system that is more-or-less similar to the US legal system. This means that Kichwa speakers *could* have the chance to acquire comparable terminology. However, Kichwa speakers are likely to have had no interactions with that national legal system (or to have had only alienating and antagonistic ones). Arguably, this is because Kichwa Indigeneity, in Ecuador, is simultaneously a class-marker. To speak Kichwa *predominantly* means, unequivocally, to have received very little State education and to have very little money¹⁴, which is a social position from which the official legal system will appear opaque/hostile. These issues of language, culture, class, and education all intertwine to make translating legal terminology into Kichwa especially difficult.

A particularly *interesting* element of this terminological dilemma, for interpreters, is the issue of when to use Spanish terms (and/or *Kichwacized* Spanish terms), rather than attempting a fully Kichwa equivalent. There is, on the one hand,

a fairly unproblematic manifestation of this, in which the Kichwa speaker simply understands the Spanish term more readily than an equivalent Kichwa neologism¹⁵. For example, most Kichwa speakers are more familiar with *gobierno* than the properly Kichwa equivalent *kamachik*. Additionally, another unproblematic phenomenon is when a *Kichwacized* Spanish word has become the norm in a community, and is more precise than a natively Kichwa equivalent. For example, *decidina* is a Kichwacization of the Spanish infinitive *decidir*; a more purely Kichwa equivalent would be *arinina* [literally 'to say yes'], but, since that word may mean to decide, to commit, to agree, or to consent, it may be best to use the more precise, Spanish-derived term. There arises, however, a more problematic situation when a Spanish term may not be understood by the Kichwa speaker, but, since the Kichwa equivalent is equally unclear or would take too long (discussed in greater detail below), the interpreter feels compelled to use the Spanish term anyways. For example, Kinti provides an explanation for the term *única oportunidad*, which she sometimes leaves in Spanish:

K: Única oportunidad. I have, that's only opportunity you have, so, what am I gonna say? Kunan, kaypika tukuyta ninki. Kunanman, chay kipaka mana ima tiyankachu [*Now, here you say everything. After now, there will not be anything*]. Maybe that's it.

As we see, the original term loses precision in the Kichwa version, and the Kichwa version is substantially longer. And since the Kichwa speaker will likely *not* understand the original Spanish term, the interpreter ends up stuck between two undesirable options.

Fundamentally, this issue hinges on the opaque nature of the legal register, which is further exacerbated in the Kichwa language context.

The Ontology of Harm. Building on the issues just discussed, a more profound translation problem exists around the concept of "harm"—an essential component of the persecution and torture definitions listed earlier. In the Asylum Officers' instructional materials, we find that either physical *or* mental harm may be the basis for a persecution claim or a torture claim (USCIS 2012a). The underlying philosophical notion, then, is that the realms of the physical and mental are distinct, *but* both can be the site of something called "harm." Furthermore, in a legal sense, this "harm" may or may not be sufficient to ground a persecution/torture claim. It is the Asylum Officer's job to elicit information about the type of harm experienced and its severity.¹⁶ My collaborator Kinti and I discussed the issues around communicating harm in all three of our interviews. By the time we had the following exchange, I had already understood the basic idea, and was trying to elicit the actual language involved:

G: Um, so you're saying one, one hard thing is like the idea of harm, like harm in Kichwa is a general—

K: Harm in Kichwa. Idea... is like Chukriy

G: Chukriy

K: Chukriy is the harm, physical harm... now Chukriy in the psychological, there is no description for it ...

G: You can't say chukriy umapi [*harm in the head*] or something like that?

K: You can say chukriy umapi, so umapi will be physical wound on your head

G: Oh, right.

¹³ Altogether called *La ley indígena*, as recognized in the Ecuadorian constitution.

¹⁴ With the possible exception of the *Otavaleño* merchant class.

¹⁵ Words typically developed and promoted by (bilingual) Kichwa professors and Indigenous activists that often do not take hold in rural Kichwa communities.

¹⁶ On a related note, in the earlier mentioned 2014 memo, the Asylum Division chief described new specifications as to *what* mental pain or suffering may constitute torture. Given the memo's political context, we know that this means new limitations on what claims can constitute torture—thus encouraging officers to reject more claims and/or restrict their questioning to physical harm.

K: So, it wouldn't be, it might be shunkupi [*in the heart*] (laughs)

G: Shunkupi

K: Shunkupi, maybe that might be the only word might suit for that because *chukriy* is emotional, mental, everything, hm-mm, it's all included in there, it's a bundle ... and the only word that I can use for emotional or psychological is 'have you become crazy because of it?'

G: Uh-huh

K: ... 'did you get like crazy,' 'you are lost your mind or something?'

G: What's-what's--

K: Uma-uma-uma illak tukurkanki? [*Did you become cra-cra-crazy? Literally: without a head*] (laughs)

G: Uma illak tukurkanki, uh-huh

K: Shunku illak. Uh, chinkarishka tukurkanki. [*Without a heart. Uh, did you become lost?*]

G: That, ok, sure.

K: So, uh, those kinds of things might reflect them to think differently from the physical harm.

G: Hm-mm. That, so that might sort of work, but...

K: Sort of not quite exactly.

We see, then, in Kinti's explanation, that *chukriy's* principal meaning is physical harm; however, the term's full meaning includes psychological/mental/emotional harm as well. The particular difficulties arise when one needs to *distinguish* types of harm. Altogether, I theorize from my interviews that the concept of harm leads to a two-fold problem in Credible Fear Interviews with Kichwa speakers:

1. The Officer asks about general "harm" experienced, implicitly seeking either physical or psychological harm, but the translation into Kichwa leads to responses exclusively about physical harm, *or*
2. The Officer asks specifically about psychological harm/

torture, but the distinction cannot be effectively translated.

In the first case, while both types of harm are absolutely relevant to the claim, the simple term *chukriy* may elicit only part of a person's story, and, if the Officer does not ask more follow-up questions, that part may be lost. In the second case, if the Officer *does* try specifically to elicit information about non-physical harm, and does so using phrases like psychological or emotional pain/harm/torture, the interpreter has a difficult time translating the phrases. Kinti recounts that sometimes she has had to ask the person if she went crazy, as the best way to get across the notion of psychological harm. This, as she explained in another interview, has its own consequences, since the person will often get defensive and reply in the negative. All of this has serious implications, since this 45 minute-1 hour long interview is generally an applicant's *única oportunidad* to get their story across, and if miscommunications occur around the nature and severity of harm inflicted, it may sink an entire claim. In fact, a central point that Kinti re-iterated to me, throughout our talks, was that many Kichwa-speaking applicants, especially women, *have* experienced psychological torture, but that lack of awareness about what is relevant to their claims, lack of vocabulary and education around issues of mental illness, and, sometimes, lack of specific, sensitive, or appropriate questioning on the part of the Officer, prevent them from adequately explaining their experience.

Language Ideology and Time.

Operating as context for the previous two points are the interrelated issues of language ideology and time. I define "language ideology" here, simply, as users' beliefs (often wrong) about the nature of language

(Silverstein 1979; Wooland and Bambi 1994). By "time," I refer to the amount of time an interpreter takes to communicate a given chunk of language. John Haviland, an anthropologist and Tzotzil interpreter, is quoted in an *LA Times* article as saying:

"[Court officials] can get very impatient—they can't see why a simple question like 'Do you waive your right to a jury?' takes three paragraphs to translate... [i]n the case of someone from an Indian village, there is nothing equivalent to a trial or a jury or a legal right... I usually have to tell a little narrative about what the issues are." (Kim 2009)

His quote sums up well the issue at hand. Court officials become "impatient," reflecting a judgment grounded in a belief about language, when the interpreter seems to take too long to translate a given phrase. The underlying belief in question, then, must be that languages in general are more-or-less similar—*particularly in that* a relatively short phrase in one language should translate into a comparably short phrase in another. This belief clashes with the reality of English(Spanish)-Kichwa interpretation, leading to frustration, loss of meaning, and, perhaps, denial of due process.

To make matters more complicated, this belief (like any belief) does not operate on its own. Instead, it is intensified by two external factors. First, as my interviewee Amy pointed out to me: in legal proceedings, time is money. Asylum Officers, for example, are pressured to keep Credible Fear Interviews to one hour or less, in part because of demands on productivity and keeping labor costs down. This is particularly the case when an interpreter is present, since interpreters receive a high hourly wage and are paid by the

minute.¹⁷ And second, the Asylum Officers' instructional materials specifically indicate that one sign of "misinterpretation" is that "[t]he interpreter uses many more words to interpret the question than the question appears to have required" (USCIS 2012e, 17). Conversely, the lesson says nothing about interpreters needing additional time/words depending on the language. These two external factors, then, exacerbate the effects of a misguided belief about the nature of interpretation and linguistic diversity. One interviewee even reported a story in which s/he was interpreting telephonically, and, because of perceptions around length of interpretation, was cut off without notice by an Immigration Judge, and later reprimanded by his/her employer. As my collaborator Amy stated, regarding Kichwa interpreting in general:

A: The idea can be interpreted, I just think that you have to have a much wider latitude as to what the interpreter can do in order to make [the languages] mesh. Not even mesh, that they're understood. That the client understands what—that both parties understand what's going on.

For this section's purposes, it is sufficient to note that, for Kichwa, the "wider latitude" Amy refers to must include extra time, and a tolerance for *seemingly* lengthy interpretations.

Other Working Conditions. Finally, a few assorted issues around working conditions remain to be addressed. First, there is the issue of training. Sometimes, interpreters of Indigenous languages have no training at all; for example, they are, occasionally, recruited at local restaurants and hired on a one-time-only basis. Other times, as with Amy and Kinti, their training

does not contain specific content about working with Indigenous languages. Following Marisol León, I believe that more training programs for Indigenous languages are needed (León 2014). While creating programs for each distinct language may not be realistic, interpreters for all Indigenous languages are bound to face similar problems, so generalized trainings should be feasible. Second, there is the issue of recognizing dialectal variation. All three of my interviewees reported either interpreting, or being asked to interpret, dialects of the Quechua language other than Ecuadorian Kichwa. As stated before, the difference between these "dialects" can be as great as those between the different Romance "languages." Inter-dialectal interpretation may be acceptable in a cooperative medical setting, for example, but it should never be used in high-stakes, typically adversarial legal settings (Mikkelson 2008). And third, there is the issue of breaks. Put simply, my interview data suggest that Indigenous language interpreters, probably due to their scarcity, are sometimes asked to work for multiple hours without a break. Interpretation scholars and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) agree that interpreters need regular, frequent breaks in order to continue interpreting effectively (e.g. NAJIT 2007). While these assorted working conditions do not point to issues as profound as the previous themes discussed, they are absolutely capable of undermining a proceeding's fairness. They, therefore, merit consideration, and present easy targets for reform.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, via all of the above, I have sought to support the claim that intermeshed issues of

language, culture, and class, along with various procedural issues, are *likely* leading officials to deny Kichwa speakers' Credible Fear claims, and applications for relief, at an excessive rate¹⁸. In doing so, I have had to face the complexity of analyzing a charged legal proceeding informed by various histories and larger contexts. It is, for example, imprudent to discuss a Kichwa speaker's utterances in a Credible Fear Interview without an understanding of what it *means* to be a monolingual Kichwa speaker in the Ecuadorian context. By the same token, it is impossible to understand an Asylum Officer's positive or negative Credible Fear determination without understanding the current US political climate regarding immigrants. I have done my best to provide the necessary context to make intelligible these interactions between Kichwa speakers and the US immigration system. There remains, however, substantial room for research on both my particular topic and related topics. For example, sociolinguistic studies of Credible Fear Interviews that are based on *direct observation* are necessary for understanding the specific mechanisms through which claims are (or are not) unjustly denied. And furthermore, such studies are necessary for determining the effects of the Asylum Division's 2014 changes in protocol. Direct observation-based analysis of Asylum Merits Hearings would be equally valuable, and, in all cases, such research is *especially* crucial for cases where Indigenous language interpretation is used (i.e. where the chances for miscarriage of justice are higher). Ultimately, my hope would be that such research would serve the Indigenous applicants themselves, not in an isolated sense, but as part of a larger effort to create a more humane immigration system:

¹⁷ In immigration proceedings, payment for interpreters is likely coming from the Lionbridge corporation, which received a \$100,000,000 DOJ contract in 2009 to provide interpreting services for the EOIR.

¹⁸ Again, I base this claim on my qualitative data and the available quantitative evidence.

one that recognizes the transnational and diasporic nature of the world today. One that, for example, allows Kichwa speakers who have suffered harm in their communities to decide to migrate to the US, where they can reunite with family—rather than sending them back to those who hurt them, or insisting that they should relocate to unfriendly cities in their “home” country.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks go out to the University of Kansas Center for Undergraduate Research for providing me with an Undergraduate Research Award to carry out this project, to my advisors: Peter Haney and Bartholomew Dean, to the interpreters who shared their experiences and insights with me: Kinti, Charlie Uruchima, Amy, and Maricela, and, for other types of invaluable support, to Jaime

P. Calderón, Michael and Rekha Sharma-Crawford, Virginia Raymond, Max Kautsch, Alexandra Free, Marcela Renna, and Laura Herlihy.

APPENDIX A

Practical Recommendations

- Extra latitude and time to interpret for Indigenous language interpreters as a matter of common practice
- Regular breaks for all interpreters
- More thorough education on country conditions for asylum officers, including relevant languages and migrant networks
- Critical consideration of Department of State’s Country Report which downplays Ecuadorian State complicity in oppression

- Use of interpreter *pre-CFI* so applicant can receive legal counsel
- Accommodation for narrative preferences (essentially: allowing applicant to tell her story freely, rather than structuring through rigid Q & A) (see Conley and Barr 1990; Cade 2011)
- Release on own recognizance as default for Indigenous language speakers so they may access resources through community¹⁹
- Development of specialized training for Indigenous language interpreters
- Conferences for Indigenous language interpreters, and, thereby, creation of network among interpreters (a suggestion I owe to my interviewee, Amy)

¹⁹ A suggestion I owe to Virginia Raymond, JD, who requested such in a Dec. 10, 2014 letter to Jeh Johnson and Eric Holder.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

From 2010-2011, I spent a high school exchange year in Lower Saxony just outside of Bremen and noticed speakers of High German regularly using Low German colloquialisms. My personal interest in this topic grew in the spring of 2014 when I visited my former host family and saw a poster advertising a concert for De Fofftig Penns, a band that performs electronic hip-hop music in Low German. I expressed an interest in researching the growing interest in the Low German language in this region to my German advisor, Dr. Lorie Vanchena, and my honors thesis was born.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

I don't think I was aware of how many questions I would have to ask myself and be able to answer, how narrow and subsequently in-depth my topic would become. You can find all the answers you started searching for, but in the end, these answers raise many more questions.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

As a German Studies major, my favorite part of this research was incorporating sources in both German and English into my project. Since my topic is current and evolving, a large portion of my research involved reading local news from the region, which I enjoyed. This version of my paper is actually a translation of my thesis, which was written in German.

The German version of this article is available at ugresearch.ku.edu/Anderson

“Wi Snackt Wedder Platt!” Bringing Low German back to Bremen and Lower Saxony through the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*

Sara Sofia Anderson

ABSTRACT

Since 1992, when the Council of Europe created the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, 25 member states, including Germany, have ratified the *Charter*. The *Charter* protects several minority languages in Germany, but only one regional language—Low German—is included. My thesis argues that the *Charter* has had a positive impact on preserving Low German by supporting developments in education, politics, and daily life. I demonstrate this using the federal states of Bremen and Lower Saxony as my two case studies. While these are not the only federal states in the Low German region, the year I spent studying near Bremen in Lower Saxony (2010-2011) woke my interest in the Low German language and its importance in the culture of these particular states. Their schools, for example, have implemented creative solutions to fulfill the stipulations of the *Charter*. As I show, Bremen and Lower Saxony can serve as models for other regions of Europe that want to preserve their native regional and minority languages, an important part of their cultural identity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Europe's 60 regional and minority languages attest to the continent's linguistic diversity. This linguistic landscape affects Europeans far and wide: approximately 55 million speakers of these languages live in every country on the continent except Iceland.¹

One of these languages, Low German, which Germanic language scholar Frerk Möller describes as "one of the small languages of Europe,"² is spoken from the North Sea to the Baltic, between the Weser and Elbe Rivers, in the cities and on the plains of Northern Germany. Although data about the exact number of Low German speakers is contested in the linguistic literature, an estimated 2.5 million Germans use Low German today.³

In Germany, Low German is colloquially known as *Platt* or *Plattdeutsch* and formally referred to as *Niederdeutsch*. Low German is often understood as the "language of the low lands," but the name has a different etymological background: "low", which was once known as *plat*, referred to the language being clear and understandable to the average person.⁴ However, the term Low German has to do with the geographic region from which it comes, which is flat and near the sea. The official language of Germany, High German, historically comes from the geographically "higher" South. The names of these two languages are not associated with

the socioeconomic class of those people who speak them.⁵

Low German was the official language of the Hanseatic League, the former commercial power of the North, from the 14th to the 17th centuries. The language became a *lingua franca* with which the people could make themselves understood.⁶ As trade in Europe became more concentrated in the South in the 17th century, economic power was not the only aspect of the Hanseatic League that disappeared: the power of Low German declined, too. High German became the administrative language of the "German"-speaking territories, and by the end of the 17th century, Low German was hardly more than a conversational language generally concentrated in rural areas.⁷ Since this shift, Low German has existed as a regional language, relative to High German.

In 1992, the Council of Europe passed the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, which aims to preserve these 60 European languages. The *Charter* perceives these languages as cultural assets and protects them.⁸ The Council of Europe recognizes Low German as a regional language in eight of Germany's 16 federal states; each state selects different measures in the *Charter* to protect the language. This paper presents a case study of two of these federal states: Bremen and Lower Saxony, where Low German has substantial cultural significance.



Figure 1: The federal German state of Lower Saxony is denoted in red, while the federal state of Bremen is the beige area located within Lower Saxony.⁹

The Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache (Institute for Low German Language) describes the protection of Low German as the "task of society as a whole."¹⁰ Bremen and Lower Saxony have adopted exactly this approach. The *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* has had a positive impact on the preservation of Low German in Bremen and Lower Saxony, as evidenced by initiatives in

¹ "Minority Languages: Facts & Figures," *Mercator: European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning*, <http://www.mercator-research.eu/minority-languages/facts-figures>.

² Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert* (Leer: Verlag Schuster, 2008), 11.

³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁵ Jan Wirrer, "Niederdeutsch", 133.

⁶ Carl Undéhn, "Schnack mol wedder platt!" *Språktidningen* (februari 2013), <http://språktidningen.se/artiklar/2013/02/schnack-mol-wedder-platt>.

⁷ Jan Wirrer, "Niederdeutsch", 132.

⁸ François Grin, Dónall Ó Riagáin und Regina Jensdóttir, *Language Policy Evaluation and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 61.

⁹ Wikipedia contributors, "Niedersachsen," *Wikipedia: Die freie Enzyklopädie*, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Locator_map_Lower-Saxony_in_Germany.svg

¹⁰ "Sprachenschutz in Deutschland: Konferenz in Berlin," *Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache*, 24 November 2014, http://www.ins-bremen.de/fileadmin/ins-bremen/user_upload/presse/ins241114.pdf.

politics, education, and daily life in these two states, which could serve as models for other regions of Europe: they have implemented measures that are successfully preserving their native language.

II. THE POLITICS OF LOW GERMAN

The Council of Europe, the European Union, and how they support language rights

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949, soon after the Second World War. The mission of the member states was—and remains—to support human rights, democracy, and constitutionality in Europe. Although this mission was naturally also included in the founding principles of the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe remains an independent organization, located in Strasbourg, France. Today, there are 47 member states in the Council of Europe and 23 in the EU.¹¹ For countries that do not want to become members of the EU, the Council of Europe offers an opportunity for European as well as global collaboration outside of the EU. For countries that would like to become members of the EU, membership in the Council is often a strategic first step toward achieving this goal, as it offers international recognition of their commitment to human rights, democracy, and constitutionality.¹² The current member states of the EU were all members of the Council of Europe first.

While EU membership means the subsequent loss of some

sovereign rights for a country—a necessary step to ensure that mutual democratic decisions can be reached with other EU countries—membership in the Council of Europe is not governed by a legal contract. Rather, the Council of Europe supports the assembly of member states in order to determine minimum standards in various domains and to assure the fulfillment of these standards. This paper focuses on one aspect of the area of “human rights”—the right to one’s own language.

The Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The title of the *Charter* distinguishes between regional and minority languages, but what is the difference? Languages of migrant groups and dialects of the official languages of countries do not count as regional or minority languages. In other words, the population of a certain region must recognize the languages as actual languages and not as dialects, and the languages must be native to that region.¹³ As Jan Wirrer, Low German scholar at the University of Bielefeld, explains, minority languages include those that belong to an ethnic or religious minority. Low German is therefore not a minority language, but a regional language.¹⁴ Six minority languages are recognized in Germany, but Low German is the only recognized regional language.

In the 1980s, members of the Council of Europe began to recognize a problem with regional

and minority languages in Europe: they were threatened, oppressed or beginning to disappear. In 1984, a debate began in Strasbourg that continued through the 1980s and into the post-Cold War era, culminating in 1992 with the passage of the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*.

Some scholars remain critical of the *Charter*. For example, M. Nic Craith, professor of European Culture and Heritage at Heriot Watt University in Scotland, criticizes how the *Charter* defines “Europe” and asks whether immigrants are not Europeans. She asserts that the *Charter* ignores the linguistic and cultural multiplicity and the diversity that exists in Europe.¹⁵ According to Craith, the *Charter* also perpetuates the idea that languages are of greater importance than dialects.¹⁶ Grin, Riagáin and Jonsdóttir also mention that the *Charter* does not encompass sign languages.¹⁷ Although these criticisms are relevant, I can refute them. Indeed, the *Charter* was written with the interests of European countries in mind, but other countries can sign the *Charter*: it does not concretely define the sociopolitical space of Europe. Furthermore, the founders of the *Charter* wanted the definition of “language” to remain open to interpretation, so that a dialect group could identify as a language group, for example. Most important is that a unified European body—the Council of Europe—acknowledges the diverse multilingualism of Europe as an important aspect of its heritage.

¹¹ Further information about the Council of Europe and the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* can be found on the Council of Europe website: <http://www.coe.int>.

¹² M. Nic Craith, “Facilitating or Generating Linguistic Diversity: The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages,” in *Minority Languages in Europe*, ed. Gabrielle Hogun-Brun and Stefan Wolff (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 56.

¹³ Peter Kraus explains that programs for the instruction of migrant languages do not exist to preserve linguistic diversity; instead, they exist to ensure that the speakers of these migrant languages do not become “semi-lingual,” which can result in social discrimination. According to Kraus, the language programs that exist for first-generation German residents of Turkish heritage are good examples of programs for migrant languages. Kraus, Peter A., *A union of diversity: language, identity and polity-building in Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 99-100 and 106-107.

¹⁴ Jan Wirrer, “Zum Status des Niederdeutschen,” *Zeitschrift für Germanistische Linguistik* 26 no. 3 (1998): 334.

¹⁵ M. Nic Craith, 59.

¹⁶ M. Nic Craith, 61.

¹⁷ François Grin, Dónall Ó Riagáin and Regina Jonsdóttir, 64.

The *Charter* also recognizes that regional and minority languages are a threatened part of Europe's cultural heritage. Language is a living aspect of culture, and one goal of this *Charter* is to enable speakers of these languages to use their language in private and public life. Since many international charters and contracts focus on specific groups of people, this *Charter* is quite unusual in that it makes the languages themselves the focal point of the document.¹⁸ As of today, 33 of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe have signed the *Charter*; 25 of these have chosen and ratified specific stipulations from which member states can choose.¹⁹ Germany signed the *Charter* in 1992 but ratified it in 1998. M. Nic Craith describes the ratification process as "intensive," because it requires participating countries to choose which specific stipulations to ratify.²⁰ The countries choose not only the stipulations they will accept, but since most countries have more than one regional and/or minority language, they must also choose the languages to which each stipulation will apply. Grin, Riagáin and Jensdóttir describe the process with the French term *table d'hôte*, which implies that the countries choose stipulations for every "course."²¹ Sixty eight stipulations are offered as options in the *Charter*; at least 35 stipulations must be chosen for each language.

Bremen and Lower Saxony chose many of the same stipulations for Low German. These stipulations are taken from the articles addressing *Education, Media, Administrative Authorities and Public Services,*

Cultural Activities and Facilities, and Economic and Social Life. In addition to these sections, Lower Saxony also ratified some stipulations from the article Transfrontier Exchanges.

Low German: Northern Germany's regional language

In a survey by the *Gesellschaft für angewandte Sozialpsychologie* (Society for Applied Sociology or GETAS) from 1984, more than a third of respondents—35 percent—answered that they could speak Low German *very well* or *well*.²² This survey included the regions of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Northern Lower Saxony/Bremen, Southern Lower Saxony, and parts of North Rhine-Westphalia: in other words, linguistic regions in the former Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany). Fifty percent of the respondents from Bremen and Northern Lower Saxony—the largest percentage of self-identified Low German speakers in the former FRG—answered that they could speak Low German *very well* or *well*.²³ See Figure 2. The importance of Low German in Bremen and Lower Saxony could not be denied.

Between 1984 and 2007, however, the number of Low German speakers in Germany declined by more than half. In a 2007 survey by the *Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache* (Institut for Low German Language), only 14 percent of respondents self-identified as able to speak Low German *very well* or *well*. Although Bremen's 23 percent was above average, Lower Saxony represented the average with 14 percent of

¹⁸ Craith, 57-58.

¹⁹ A complete list can be accessed on the Council of Europe website: "European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, CETS No. 148: Signatures and Ratifications," <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=148&CM=8&DF=&CL=ENG>.

²⁰ Craith, 57.

²¹ François Grin, Dónall Ó Riagáin and Regina Jensdóttir, 64.

²² Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert*, 14-15.

²³ *Ibid.*, 16.

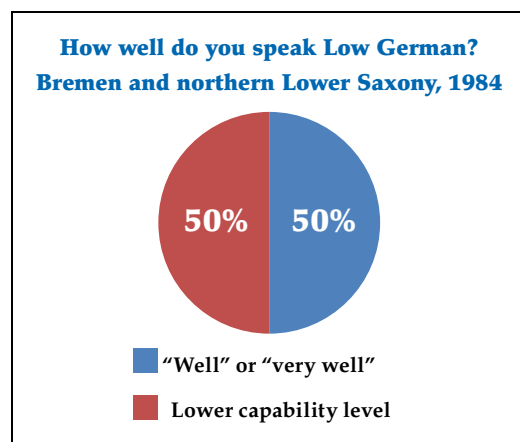


Figure 2. Source: Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert* (Leer: Verlag Schuster, 2008), 16.

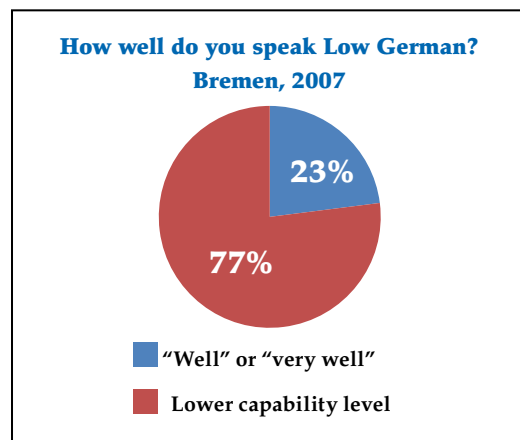


Figure 3. Source: Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert* (Leer: Verlag Schuster, 2008), 32.

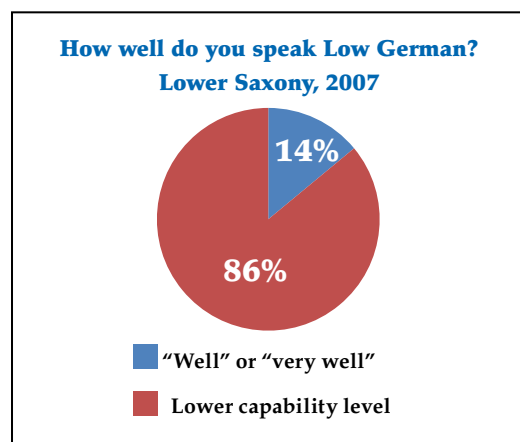


Figure 4. Source: Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert* (Leer: Verlag Schuster, 2008), 32.

respondents self-identifying in this way.²⁴ See Figures 3 and 4. Given the data, it is no surprise that protecting the Low German language has become a political topic.

It must be noted that the regions in the 2007 survey probably contributed to the different results. The 1984 survey included Northern Lower Saxony and Bremen as a single region. The southern part of Lower Saxony, a separate entity in the 1984 survey, had a substantially smaller number of people that self-identified as Low German speakers (26 percent could speak Low German *very well* or *well*).²⁵ In the 2007 survey, however, Bremen and Lower Saxony were separate regions, and Lower Saxony encompassed both the northern and southern parts of the federal state.

Furthermore, it must also be noted that the 1984 survey included only the western part of the entire Low-German-speaking region, which extends into the former East Germany. In contrast, the 2007 survey included the Low-German-speaking regions of the former East Germany as well, which includes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and parts of Saxony and Brandenburg. German reunification and the subsequent addition of new regions to the 2007 survey could also explain in part the different results.

The wording of answers was another important variable in the two surveys. The 2007 survey offered *somewhat* and *only a few words* as answers to the questions “Do you speak Low German?”, while a *little* was an option in the 1984 survey. Although this is a small change, it

points to interesting information about the linguistic landscape of the respondents. In 1984, 21 percent of survey participants responded that they spoke a *little* Low German.²⁶ In comparison, in 2007 23 percent of Germans answered that they could *somewhat* speak Low German. Another 25 percent identified as being able to say only some words: in other words, they could *not* speak the language proficiently.²⁷ This last number suddenly becomes noteworthy when one considers that these participants probably would have answered that they could not speak Low German in the first survey. The problem is clearly not that Low German is disappearing from the regional culture. Rather, the problem is that the number of Germans who can competently speak Low German is sinking, which the Council of Europe recognized when it adopted the *Charter* in 1992.

These data encompass only the *speakers* of Low German. Naturally, there are also Germans who understand Low German, even if they do not speak it with any degree of proficiency. In the 2007 survey, 58 percent of people in Bremen and 47 percent in Lower Saxony self-identified as having a *very good* or *good* understanding of Low German.²⁸ However, it is important for a living language to remain spoken: understanding regional languages is useless if the goal is for these languages to survive in today’s global society. When the number of speakers is distributed according to age, it becomes clear that younger Germans speak and understand

less Low German than older generations. Throughout Germany, only five percent of the 2007 survey participants 35 years and younger could speak Low German *very well* or *well*; only 26 percent of participants in this age group understood the language *very well* or *well*.²⁹

The differences in the results of this age group and the 50+ age group are astonishing: in 2007, 21 percent of participants in the older group could speak Low German *well* or *very well*, while 58 percent could understand the language *well* or *very well*.³⁰ These data distinctly illustrate why Low German is recognized as a threatened regional language.

One task of the *Charter* is to enable the population of a given region to continue using the language in private and public life with both oral and written competencies. Attaining this goal requires state funding, which in turn requires commitment from politicians.

The politics of implementing the *Charter*

The small number of Low German speakers does not correspond with general public opinion regarding the importance of funding Low German language programs. In 2007, 76 percent of the population in Bremen—three out of four people—and 81 percent of the population in Lower Saxony responded that they believed Low German language programs should be better funded. Only 17 percent in Bremen and 15 percent in Lower Saxony responded that they did not think that Low German should be better funded. Only four and three percent

²⁴ Möller, 32.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 65, 67.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 65, 67.

respectively did not have an opinion, and only two and one percent respectively had no answer or did not know.³¹ An overwhelming majority of the population in these federal states believed in fostering and promoting the Low German language.

Was the language not already being funded at the time of the 2007 survey? In Germany, the *Charter* came into effect in 1999. In 2007, the Council of Europe wrote its third progress report on the *Charter* in Germany. In response to this report, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers recommended measures that Germany should take to ensure the continued preservation of its regional and minority languages. Among the recommendations: increase the number of class hours for Low German and create concrete guidelines for Low German instruction in northern German schools.³²

Only after a fourth report from the Council of Europe in 2011, which addressed the critical need for increased funding for Low German instruction in the schools, did the discussion about increased funding become a priority.³³ In the Lower Saxon *Landtag*, or state parliament, in Hannover, the capital of Lower Saxony, discussions still take place today among politicians regarding continued funding for Low German.³⁴ Although there are naturally differences in opinion, Frauke Heiligenstadt, Minister of

Educational and Cultural Affairs in Lower Saxony, stated in October 2014 in an interview with *Die Welt* that the representatives had rarely been so united on an issue.³⁵ Low German is even sometimes used among the representatives in the Lower Saxon *Landtag*: when former representative Claus-Peter Poppe left the parliament for the mayor's office in October 2014, he gave his farewell speech in Low German.

The *Bundesrat für Niederdeutsch*, or Federal Council for Low German, calls for the implementation of the *Charter*. Since 2002, the Federal Council represents the interests of the entire Low-German-speaking population in northern Germany. Representatives of Low German speakers from the eight federal states where Low German is spoken determine the "lines for modern language politics."³⁶ During the legislative period that ended June 2015, the Federal Council's 18 members designated education politics as the focal point of their work, probably in reaction to the negative report from the Council of Europe (2011), which addressed education.³⁷ Christiane Ehlers, chief executive of the Federal Council for Low German and a research fellow at the Institute for Low German Language, believes the importance of this work lies in its human rights focus.³⁸ Other regions of Germany and Europe that want to focus on the

preservation of their regional and minority languages could introduce similar councils charged with focusing on how such issues can be better navigated in their respective political systems.

The native language of most Germans is High German, the official language of the country. Camille C. O'Reilly, social anthropologist at Richmond, the American International University in London, argues that these Germans take the connection between language and culture as a given. People who identify with another language, e.g. a regional or minority language, often have to defend the connection between this language and their culture.³⁹ Just because High German is the official language of Germany does not mean that this is the only language that can define the culture. Sükrü Senkal, a politician with Turkish heritage in Bremen, stated it best: "I know through my own experience how important one's language of origin is for one's identity."⁴⁰ Because the Low German language is an integral part of Bremen's culture, Senkal actively advocates for the further protection and preservation of Low German.

The Council of Europe's call for better integration of Low German in the northern German school system in 2011 reinvigorated the issue in the Bremen *Landtag*. In 2012, the *Landtag* established the

³¹. Möller, 54.

³². "Recommendation RecChL(2008)3 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Germany" (Council of Europe, 1032nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, Strasbourg, 2008).

³³. "Empfehlung RecChL(2011)2 des Ministerkomitees über die Anwendung der Europäischen Charta der Regional- oder Minderheitensprachen durch Deutschland" (Europarat, 1114. Sitzung der Stellvertreter der Minister, Straßburg, 2011)

³⁴. Despite the fact that Lower Saxony did not ratify the stipulations relating to education at the elementary and secondary level, Low German is slowly becoming a part of the curriculum in this federal state. For further information on this topic, refer to the section *Low German in the education system*.

³⁵. "Plattdeutsche Debatte im niedersächsischen Landtag," *Die Welt*, 22 Oct 2014, <http://www.welt.de/regionales/niedersachsen/article133552534/Plattdeutsche-Debatte-im-niedersaechsischen-Landtag.html>.

³⁶. "Bundesraat för Nedderdüütsch mit frischem Wind," *Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache*, 2 Juli 2014. http://www.ins-bremen.de/fileadmin/ins-bremen/user_upload/presse/ins020714.pdf.

³⁷. Education politics are discussed in the section *Low German in the education system*.

³⁸. "Bundesraat för Nedderdüütsch mit frischem Wind."

³⁹. Camille C. O'Reilly, "When a Language is 'Just Symbolic': Reconsidering the Significance of Language to the Politics of Identity" in *Minority Languages in Europe*, ed. Gabrielle Hogun-Brun and Stefan Wolff, 20.

⁴⁰. Frauke Fischer, "Bremer wollen das Plattdeutsche retten," *Weser Kurier*, 23 April 2012, http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/vermishtes2_artikel,-Bremer-wollen-das-Plattdeutsche-retten-_arid,120991.html.

Low German Advisory Board (*Beirat Platt*), charging it with making a more concerted effort to place Low German in the center of society again by concerning itself in particular with the implementation of the *Charter* in Bremen.⁴¹ Politicians and experts from Low German associations and institutions are among the members of this advisory board. The group aims to establish Low German in the schools and to make the language visible in the regional culture again.

III. LOW GERMAN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Different stipulations in Bremen and Lower Saxony

Bremen and Lower Saxony approach Low German differently in their respective education systems. Bremen ratified the stipulations of the *Charter* that focus on the preservation of Low German in elementary and secondary schools, but Lower Saxony did not.⁴² Schools in Lower Saxony are therefore not required to make Low German a part of the elementary and secondary curriculum.⁴³

However, my research shows that Lower Saxony has nevertheless made important advancements regarding the preservation of Low German in its education system. Roland Henke confirms this conclusion in the following statement:

However, it is also possible to live and implement the spirit of the *Charter* without having formally drawn a legal regulation... It is, however, often

overlooked that Low German... is nevertheless supported in the affected school types, and Lower Saxony does not need to fear a comparison with other states. Lower Saxony feels obligated to fulfill this requirement, even without having officially subscribed to the measures.⁴⁴

In other words, Lower Saxony offers an insightful contrast to Bremen.

Elementary school programs

For the first time in 2014, many elementary schools in Bremen offered Low German on their lesson plans, and not solely as an elective. To anchor this initiative further, supplemental activities such as Low German reading competitions are encouraged. At the *Grundschule Arsten*, for example, the entire school learns the same sentence in Low German every week, which does not just enhance the pupils' Low German lessons, it also helps create a community within the school. In Bremen, the Institute for Low German Language helps search for qualified teaching staff and supports the advanced training of these teachers.⁴⁵

The Lower Saxon State Education Authority (*Landesschulbehörde*) in Osnabrück, encourages schools to sign up to be a Starter-School or a Project-School; schools have various options, given that Low German is not a required subject. At three schools in the Municipality of Schwanewede, Low German is offered as an elective. The

Grundschule Neuenkirchen has offered Low German as an elective since 1995; the school began the initiative after passage of the *Charter* but before Germany ratified the document.⁴⁶ Other schools in Lower Saxony utilize other methods aimed at preserving the regional language: Andrea Cordes, the consultant for regional and minority languages in Lower Saxony, is an elementary school music teacher. Not only does she teach songs in Low German in class, but the students learn numbers in Low German, for example, so that they learn practical applications for the language.⁴⁷

In March 2014, the Lower Saxon Ministry for Educational and Cultural Affairs recognized four elementary schools as "Low German Schools"; these schools actively engage with their students' acquisition of Low German and can be used as examples for other schools looking to achieve similar results. When a school is awarded this honor, it receives a certificate and a plaque using the typical pronunciation and spelling of their regional variety of Low German. Such recognition is important for encouraging continued participation in Low German initiatives, especially as Lower Saxon schools are not required to offer Low German. Such recognition and support from the Ministry of Educational and Cultural Affairs can help preserve similar programs in the future.

⁴¹ "Neu in Bremen: Beirat Platt," *Bundesrat für Nedderdüütsch/Bundesrat für Niederdeutsch*, Oktober 2012, http://www.bundesrat-nd.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134%3Aneu-in-bremen-beirat-platt&catid=62%3Abremen&Itemid=76&lang=de.

⁴² Both Bremen and Lower Saxony ratified the stipulation for Low German in preschools. However, since the initiatives in elementary and secondary schools provide a better overview of the influence of the *Charter* in the school system, I chose to focus mainly on these areas of the school system.

⁴³ Frerk Möller, "Niederdeutsch: das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld," in *Niederdeutsche Sprache und Literatur der Gegenwart*, hrsg. von Dieter Stellmacher (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2004), 291.

⁴⁴ All translations my own unless otherwise noted. Roland Henke, "Niederdeutsch (und Saterfriesisch) in der Schule" in *10 Jahre Europäische Sprachencharta in Niedersachsen*, hrsg. von Jörg Peters und Gabriele Diekmann-Dröge (Oldenburg: Isensee Verlag, 2010), 70.

⁴⁵ For further information about the Institute, refer to the section *Culture and daily life*. Frauke Fischer, "Plattdeutsch als Profil," *Weser Kurier*, 27 Juli 2014, http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/politik2_artikel,-Plattdeutsch-als-Profil-_arid,908136.html.

⁴⁶ Jutta Kuper, E-mail Message to Author, 27 August 2014.

⁴⁷ Jochen Brünner, "Wie man Plattdeutsch besser verankert," *Weser Kurier*, 22 April 2013, http://www.weser-kurier.de/region/delmenhorst_artikel,-Wie-man-Plattdeutsch-besser-verankert-_arid,552753.html.

Low German after elementary school

At the Lower Saxon *Realschule Edeweicht*, pupils can learn Low German as a foreign language; indeed, Low German fulfills the foreign language elective. The Lower Saxon Ministry for Educational and Cultural Affairs has named another *Realschule* in Leer a “Low German School.”⁴⁸ Unfortunately, there are fewer Low German initiatives in the secondary schools at this time than in the elementary schools. The secondary school programs, however, are projected to grow as elementary school programs develop. Roland Henke emphasizes: “The goal must therefore be to win more elementary schools for the preservation of regional and minority languages. The fruits of early multilingualism could then be harvested at the secondary level.”⁴⁹

In Lower Saxony, the universities in Göttingen and Oldenburg offer Low German courses of study within their German departments. The University of Bremen focuses not only on its Low German curriculum, but also on its students’ professional competency: they can now complete internships at Bremen schools for university credit.⁵⁰ Additionally, many community colleges and adult education centers throughout the Low German linguistic region offer Low German courses that provide greater access to the language in communities.⁵¹

A look at the future

According to the recommendation by the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers (2014), Low German should eventually have the same status in the curriculum as all other subjects in Bremen schools.⁵² Although this is an honorable goal, such large steps require time. Above all, school districts need time to hire educated teachers and to secure teaching materials. The schools in Bremen—and in Lower Saxony—have already made significant steps toward preserving the Low German language.

Low German in elementary school classes could inspire young students to continue learning languages. This is especially important in today’s globalized society, where communicating with other regions of the world has become an integral component of many people’s professional and personal lives. In the spirit of the *Charter*, it would be important for such classes to offer students a solid foundational knowledge of the language so that they can remain lifelong learners of Low German and its accompanying culture.

IV. CULTURE AND DAILY LIFE The Institute for Low German Language (*Das Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache*)

To speak a language is a part of the human experience: it is through languages that people experience their own cultures.⁵³ The Institute for Low German Language in

Bremen plays a leading role in the maintenance of this regional language by working not only with schools in the Low-German-speaking region, but also with authors, musicians and media outlets, so that Low German can remain accessible to people in this region.⁵⁴ Without the Institute’s outreach, the Low German language would not have become so well established in the five areas of culture and daily life that I discuss in this section.

Literature and theater

From 1990 to 2000, an average of 150 new Low German books were published every year in Germany.⁵⁵ There is also an initiative throughout the Low-German-speaking region to make literary translations in Low German accessible in bookstores and libraries. Classics such as *Gulliver’s Travels* by Jonathan Swift and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell have already been translated into Low German.⁵⁶ The importance of such translations will be evident as the initiatives in the schools continue to expand.

Through collaborative efforts in 1992 between the Lower Saxon city of Soltau, the *Freudenthal-Gesellschaft*⁵⁷ and the University of Göttingen, the *Bibliothek Regionalliteratur der Lüneburger Heide* (Regional Literature Library of the Lüneburger Heide) was founded in Soltau. It makes approximately 1500 books and magazines accessible, many of which are in Low German.⁵⁸ The library at the Institute for Low

⁴⁸ Susanne Schrammar, “Sechs Schulen ausgezeichnet - Kultusministerin Heiligenstadt verleiht erstmals die Titel ‘Plattdeutsche Schule’ und ‘Saterfriesische Schule,’” *Niedersächsisches Kultusministerium*, 6 März 2014, http://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/portal/live.php?navigation_id=1820&article_id=122583&_psmand=8.

⁴⁹ Roland Henke, “Niederdeutsch (und Saterfriesisch) in der Schule”, 73.

⁵⁰ Frauke Fischer, “Plattdeutsch als Profil,” *Weser Kurier*, 27 Juli 2014, http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/politik2_artikel,-Plattdeutsch-als-Profil-_arid,908136.html.

⁵¹ Frek Möller, “Niederdeutsch: das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld,” 297.

⁵² “Recommendation CM/RecChL(2014)5 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Germany,” Council of Europe, 1200th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies, Strasbourg, 2014.

⁵³ Camille C. O’Reilly, 17.

⁵⁴ “Was macht das Institut?” *Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache*, <http://www.ins-bremen.de/de/das-ins/aufgaben.html>.

⁵⁵ Frek Möller, “Niederdeutsch: das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld,” 318.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁵⁷ Further information about the Freudenthal-Gesellschaft: <http://www.freudenthal-gesellschaft.de>.

⁵⁸ Frek Möller, “Niederdeutsch: das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld,” 308.

German Language in Bremen is also open to the public.

According to Frerk Möller, “theater in Low German is an integral factor of this linguistic landscape.”⁵⁹

There are three professional Low German theater associations in Germany, one of which is for Bremen and Lower Saxony (the other two are in Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern). But professional actors are not the only people who use Low German on stage: throughout northern Germany, there are an estimated 4,240 theater groups that perform pieces in Low German.⁶⁰ One example comes from the East Frisian region of Lower Saxony: in 1992, *Das niederdeutsche Theater für Kinder und Jugendliche* (Low German Theater for Children and Youth) was founded by various East Frisian organizations in the region. This theater group creates an interest for Low German among the younger generation, because the theater pieces themselves are directed toward a young audience and can easily be performed by younger actors.⁶¹ Theater programs for children and youth are vital for the preservation of a regional language.

Tourism and marketing: Low German as economic commodity

While a *Germanistik* student at the University of Hamburg, Kristina Meissner wrote her Master’s thesis about the Low German language. In an interview with the Swedish *Språktidningen* (“Language

Magazine”), Meissner emphasized that it is a natural reaction in today’s globalized society to demonstrate a greater interest in local or regional issues.⁶² Eunike Piwoni, a sociologist at the University of Bamberg, points to Germany’s 20th century history—most notably the Holocaust—as an influential factor shaping German national pride. Due to the tragic events of the Second World War, many Germans must confront how they will overcome the past, according to Piwoni, and this process can lead to feelings of shame.⁶³ In this case, regional and minority languages could play an important role in Germany, since they are bound to specific regions and groups of people instead of to the country and its problematic past.

Meissner also believes that the increased interest in Low German could be seen as a reaction to the infiltration of the English language in German and European media sources, particularly in advertisements.⁶⁴ In 2011, *Der Spiegel* reported that most German consumers do not understand what German businesses try to convey in their English advertisements.⁶⁵ The Low German language could counterbalance this problem: the language offers many consumers in northern Germany something “foreign” that is also *heimatlich*, or connected to home. In the 2007 survey by the Institute for Low German Language, 91 percent of Germans from Low-German-

speaking regions agreed that Low German is *heimatlich* to them.⁶⁶ Jutta Kuper, a Low German teacher in the Municipality of Schwanewede in Lower Saxony, confirmed: “Low German is always connected with cultural topics...very *heimat*-related.”⁶⁷ Marketing the “*heimat*-related” regional or minority language could be an effective strategy in other parts of Europe. Ireland offers a good example of this approach: Campbell, Bennett and Stephens demonstrate in their study of the Irish language that regional traits can be effectively used to gain a wide clientele.⁶⁸

British linguist Gertrud Reershemius supports this observation. In the 1980s, tourism became an important part of the economy of Eastern Friesland, a region in Lower Saxony that has historically retained its own dialect of Low German. At that time, the growing tourism industry needed an identity to market the region as a tourist destination and chose to form that identity by capitalizing upon the East Frisian dialect. This language, which had previously been stigmatized, suddenly became an important part of the regional culture. Today, this language helps the region represent itself as bilingual.⁶⁹

Reershemius analyzed 12 issues of the *Ostfriesland Magazin* between July 2008 and June 2009 to gain an overview of the use of Low German in public texts. Primarily in High German, the *Magazin* reports on

⁵⁹ Frerk Möller, “Niederdeutsch: das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld,” 309.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 309.

⁶¹ Ibid., 315.

⁶² Carl Undéhn, “Schnack mol wedder platt!” *Språktidningen*, Februar 2013, <http://spraktidningen.se/artiklar/2013/02/schnack-mol-wedder-platt>.

⁶³ Eunike Piwoni, “Latent but Not Less Significant: The Holocaust as an Argumentative Resource in German National Identity Discourse,” *German Politics and Society* 31, no. 3 (22 Sept 2013).

⁶⁴ Carl Undéhn, “Schnack mol wedder platt!,” <http://spraktidningen.se/artiklar/2013/02/schnack-mol-wedder-platt>.

⁶⁵ “Denglische Werbung: Worst Case ist keine Wurstkiste.” *Der Spiegel*, 4 May 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/karriere/berufsleben/denglische-werbung-worst-case-ist-keine-wurstkiste-a-760476.html>.

⁶⁶ Frerk Möller, *Plattdeutsch im 21. Jahrhundert*, 24.

⁶⁷ Jutta Kuper, E-mail Message to Author, 1 March 2015.

⁶⁸ Karen Campbell, Billy Bennett and Simon Stephens, “Utilising a Minority Language to Develop Brand Identity: An Evaluation of Current Practice Using the Irish Language,” *Irish Marketing Review* 20, no. 1 (1999): 68.

⁶⁹ Gertrud Reershemius, “A New Role for Low German? Language Insertion as a bilingual practice in the process of language shift,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15, vol. 3 (2011): 384 & 392.

the Eastern Frisian region. Since the *Magazin* is intended for both inhabitants of the region as well as for tourists, the challenge is to use the language in such a way that readers who only speak High German can still understand the purpose of the Low German.⁷⁰

First, Low German is inserted into the text only in certain contexts, e.g. in columns, aphorisms and humorous texts that do not focus on current events.⁷¹ In this sense, Low German never competes with English, since Low German often draws on nostalgia and local topics, whereas English is used to focus on current regional and national topics and on the future.⁷²

In most cases, Low German is used as a marketing method: names of some business and products are either completely in Low German, or they consist of a mixture of High German and Low German. An example of this is *Dörpmuseum* meaning “village museum,” where *Dörp* is the Low German component meaning “village,” and *Museum* is the High German component meaning “museum.”⁷³ Reershemius believes this is an intelligent strategy since Low German seems authentic and elicits the consumer’s nostalgic feelings that are tied to the language.⁷⁴

Reershemius’s research shows that regional and minority languages can be strategically used to assure a particular society of its values. The reader—or the consumer—feels as though he/she is part of a special community when a regional or

minority language is added to a text. However, these language communities must also be defined in public space. In Eastern Friesland, Low German is integrated into public spaces by means of street signs, advertisements, building names, etc., in order to preserve the regional language identity in a physical way.⁷⁵ As these examples in Eastern Friesland show, the *Charter* fosters the use of Low German in private and public spaces.

Low German in the Bundesliga

In Bremen, Low German experienced its soccer debut in the German *Bundesliga*, the federal soccer organization, in recent years: since 2013, the Werder-Bremen team’s fan shop has advertised in Low German. During the 2014/15 season, fans could buy scarves with Low German inscriptions for the first time. The team’s slogan “Lebenslang Grün-Weiß,” or “Lifelong Green-White,” was translated into the Low German “Op Ewig Gröön-Witt” for new fan articles. This strategy may have been influenced by that used by Spanish soccer team FC Barcelona, whose slogan “Més que un club” is in Catalan, not Spanish.⁷⁶ Such measures bring the regional or minority language into the public arena and contribute to a greater awareness and appreciation of these languages and their cultures.⁷⁷

Music

De Fofftig Penns, founded in 2003, is an electro hip hop band from

Bremen. With hit songs such as “Löppt,” “Dialektro,” and “Platt,” the band raps about Low German and the culture of northern Germany. The band received the Heinrich Schmidt Barrien Prize in 2010, which honors the famous Low German author. The prize was created in 2000, after the ratification of the *Charter*, to encourage people and institutions to work toward preserving the Low German language. The band often creates new messages in Low German for their fans using the smartphone app Snapchat and is active on the social media platform Instagram.⁷⁸

In 2013, the band was chosen to represent the federal state of Bremen in the *Bundesvision Song Contest*. This was a new recognition of the Low German language, which could previously be heard at the *Liet International* competition; musicians who perform songs in a regional or minority language can participate in this contest. *Liet International* was a Frisian initiative that first took place in 2002. Since 2006, the competition has taken place annually, each year at a different location in Europe. The Council of Europe began to oversee the competition in 2008, after agreeing that the competition embodies the message of the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. De Fofftig Penns participated in this competition in 2009, after which a new competition was formed solely for songs in Low German: called *Plattsounds*, it takes place every year in the Lower Saxon city of Oldenburg.⁷⁹

⁷⁰ Gertrud Reershemius, 390.

⁷¹ Ibid., 388-389, 392.

⁷² Ibid., 391.

⁷³ Ibid., 390-391.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 390, 392.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 386.

⁷⁶ Further information: <http://www.fcbarcelona.com/club/board-members/detail/card/more-than-a-club>.

⁷⁷ “Plattdeutsch in der Bundesliga,” *Institut für niederdeutsche Sprache*, 23 Juli 2014. <http://www.ins-bremen.de/de/aktuelles/presse/news/detail/artikel/plattdeutsch-in-der-bundesliga//backpid/103.html?cHash=0ce181da0d476e4ec4cfce548e684053>.

⁷⁸ The band’s username on both Snapchat and Instagram is defofftigpenns.

⁷⁹ “Press Release: Liet International, Oldenburg, Germany, 12 December 2014,” *Liet International*, 24 Nov 2014, <https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/Source/PressReleases/LietInternational2014pressrelease.pdf>. For more information, refer to www.liet-international.com.

⁸⁰ Further information about Ina Müller: <http://www.inamueller.de/#seite-op-platt>.

⁸¹ “Spannende Geschichten von Plattdeutschen aus der ganzen Welt,” *NDR Fernsehen*, <http://www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/start158.html>.

Another musician is Ina Müller, who comes from a Low-German-speaking family near Cuxhaven in Lower Saxony. She is the moderator for *Inas Nacht*, or “Ina’s Night,” a beloved television program that often features songs in Low German.⁸⁰

Digital media: television and radio

Between 1982 and 2006, *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* (NDR, Northern German Broadcasting), televised the series *Talk op Platt* (Talk in Low German). The series was then renamed *Die Welt Op Platt* (The World in Low German). With this new name and the new globally oriented topics presented in the show, NDR illustrated not only that Low German could be international, but showed that the language still carries important meaning for Germans from the Low-German-speaking region who live abroad.⁸¹ This initiative has contributed to a more comprehensive appreciation of the Low German language. NDR’s Low German competition, *Vertell doch mal*, is also popular throughout Northern Germany.⁸² This contest collects Low German short stories about a given topic and publishes the best 25 in a book—an effective method of encouraging members of the audience to utilize their own language skills.

A noteworthy initiative by NDR was its translation of the cult television series *Neues aus Büttenwarder* (Something New from

Büttenwarder) from High German into Low German. The “new” Low German series premiered in 2013, 16 years after the original series first began to air, marking the first time a series was translated into Low German. The original actors recorded the dubbed version, which consisted of a “lightly stylized ‘literary’ Low German.”⁸³

NDR 1 Niedersachsen broadcasts a variety of radio programs in Low German that are also accessible as podcasts. Among these are a daily program, *Hör mal ‘n beten to* (Listen a little bit), and a weekly program, *Düt und dat op platt* (This and that in Low German).⁸⁴ In contrast, Radio Bremen uses a modern method to provide access to Low German: since 2009, the station offers an online Low German course. The lessons consist of listening and grammar exercises and vocabulary pertaining to the themes of each lesson (the theme of the first lesson is “Die Kneipe,” or “The Pub”).⁸⁵ In 2012, Radio Bremen expanded on this program by creating a free smartphone app, *Op Platt*, which offers short lessons and current news headlines in Low German.⁸⁶ These services are an effective variation on language education and encourage interest in Low German among younger listeners.

In November 2014, a conference took place in Berlin that focused on the languages in Germany affected by the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. Among other

topics, the conference attendees discussed the issue of creating a stronger presence for Low German in the German media: despite the progress already made, the Council of Europe desires a greater presence.⁸⁷ Naturally, the position of Low German in the German media could be improved upon, but as I have demonstrated above, Bremen and Lower Saxony have already made great strides.

V. CONCLUSION

“One generation is all that is necessary for a language to disappear from daily life.”⁸⁸ With this statement, Stefan Mähl, a linguist at the Swedish University of Uppsala, describes the importance of protecting not just Low German, but other regional and minority languages as well. There are 59 other languages in Europe that are either repressed or threatened. The speakers of these languages need their governments to take concrete measures that ensure the continued use of these languages. This case study about Low German in Bremen and Lower Saxony shows measures taken in one region that can already claim success.

One critique of such language protection is that many of these languages are “only symbolic.” This statement implies that Low German has no real communicative function in society and thus raises many questions. Are some languages more important than other languages?

⁸² Christoph Ahlers, “Platt im NDR” in *10 Jahre Europäische Sprachencharta in Niedersachsen*, hrsg. von Jörg Peters und Gabriele Diekmann-Dröge (Oldenburg: Isensee Verlag, 2010), 140.

⁸³ Paul Barz, “Hochdeutsch nur im Notfall: Die Kult-TV-Serie ‚Neues aus Büttenwarder‘ wird platt gemacht,” *Die Welt*, 16 Mai 2014, <http://www.welt.de/110282>.

⁸⁴ For the complete list of Low German offerings by NDR throughout northern Germany, see http://www.ndr.de/kultur/norddeutsche_sprache/plattdeutsch/Plattdeutsch-in-Radio-und-Fernsehen,platt710.html.

For the Low German offerings in Lower Saxony specifically, see <http://www.ndr.de/ndr1niedersachsen/sendungen/Plattdeutsche-Angebote-auf-NDR-1-Niedersachsen,ndrnds230.html>.

⁸⁵ “Plattdeutschkurs: Moin moin, un willkamen bi de Plattsnackers,” *Radio Bremen*, 6 Mai 2009, <http://www.radiobremen.de/wissen/dossiers/plattdeutsch/plattdeutschkurs/intro100.html>.

⁸⁶ “Wi snackt Platt! Plattdeutsch-App fürs Handy,” *Radio Bremen*, 14 September 2012, <http://www.radiobremen.de/wissen/dossiers/plattdeutsch/platt2198.html>.

⁸⁷ “Recommendation CM/RecChL(2014)5 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Germany,” Council of Europe, 1200th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies, Strasbourg, 2014.

⁸⁸ Carl Undéhn, “Schnack mol wedder platt!” *Språktidningen* (februari 2013), <http://språktidningen.se/artiklar/2013/02/schnack-mol-wedder-platt>.

Are only some languages worth protecting? According to O'Reilly, this statement suggests that regional and minority languages are "somehow secondary or of lesser significance," which can lead to a lack of appreciation for these languages.⁸⁹

Low German belongs to and shapes the identity of this region. Although High German is the official language of Germany, Low German is present in the lives of the people of Bremen and Lower

Saxony, as I demonstrate in this paper. This statement applies not only to the older generations, but also increasingly to the younger generation, a group of people who now have greater access to the language because of the *Charter*.

The preservation of regional and minority languages is a defining step to ensure the continued linguistic diversity of a place, and thus its cultural heritage. The efforts of Bremen and Lower Saxony in politics, in the education system and in daily

life have given the inhabitants of this region the opportunity to continue speaking the language. Bremen and Lower Saxony can serve as a model for other regions of Europe that want to protect their regional and minority languages. If Bremen and Lower Saxony continue their efforts to maintain Low German, younger generations will also eventually view the language as worth protecting.

⁸⁹ Camille C. O'Reilly, "When a Language is 'Just Symbolic': Reconsidering the Significance of Language to the Politics of Identity" in *Minority Languages in Europe*, ed. Gabrielle Hogun-Brun and Stefan Wolff, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 18 & 30.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

After my freshman year of school as a Mechanical Engineering, I approached Erin Mannen, a Mechanical Engineering PhD student with a Biomechanical focus working in Professor Lisa Friis' lab. She talked to me about her project regarding a novel Spine Testing Machine and she suggested that proposing a project for an Undergraduate Research Award (UGRA) would be an excellent experience and enable me to work as part of her research over the summer. I got the UGRA and I became involved in her lab and her research.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

The research process is different than I expected because projects do not always go as planned. Sometimes it is necessary to find several different ways to approach a problem and if everything fails, you have to think of a new solution. This process can be tedious and very time-consuming, especially if you are talking of an experiment with a one month duration. If things did not work out at the beginning, the entire month's work can be wasted.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

My favorite part of doing research is the thinking process and trying to find new solutions, new approaches that usually build up from existing literature. Research can be a long process and sometimes it can take you in a different direction than originally intended, but having results that make sense and that take you a step closer to a solution is definitely a very rewarding experience.

Estimating Fluid Local Velocity within a Novel 3D Collagen Matrix Perfusion System

Ana Villanueva

ABSTRACT

Traditional cell culture, performed on flat surfaces under static conditions, does not accurately represent physiologic conditions. As an alternative, groups have applied interstitial fluid flow (0.1- 2.0 $\mu\text{m/s}$) through a 3D cell-embedded extracellular matrix (ECM). Cells sense the flow via mechanotransduction, a process by which cells sense mechanical forces and resultantly respond with biochemical signaling. Previous work demonstrates enhanced cell morphogenesis under interstitial flow conditions. However, fluid flow is poorly described within these systems, stressing the need for a well-characterized 3D interstitial flow system. Understanding fluid mechanics within a perfusion system will help elucidate cellular response to flow-induced mechanical forces.

The objective of this study was to quantify the fluid flow velocity through a controlled ECM. The changes in the collagen concentration are directly related to the fibril density of the collagen (stiffness).

A fluorescent Rhodamine solution was pumped at a constant flow rate through a collagen matrix-containing chamber. The resulting flow front was visualized at the center of the chamber using a fluorescent microscope. A Matlab program was developed to track the light intensity between time points to provide measures of flow velocity.

The results suggest that collagen concentration affects the estimated velocity measurements. As collagen fibril density increases, the resistance to flow increases, leading to a decrease in estimated velocity. These results validate the device's ability to consistently distribute flow over a range of ECM stiffness. Control and quantification of local fluid velocity is essential for future experiments in which cells will be embedded in the collagen matrix to observe cell response to fluid flow.

Keywords: Cell, matrix, interstitial fluid flow, perfusion chamber.

INTRODUCTION

Interstitial fluid surrounds and nurtures the cells in the tissues and supports nutrient and waste exchange. For more than half a century, the understanding of the functionality of interstitial fluid has increased and it has been established that it has a substantial role in cell signaling and cell morphology (1). It is also established that cells have an improved and physiologically relevant response in a 3D in-vitro system than in a two dimensional (2D) in-vitro system (2). About 20% of the human body is composed by interstitial fluid (3). However, groups working with in vitro systems had long been considering interstitial fluid a negligible variable due to its slow velocity in the human body (0.1-2.0 $\mu\text{m/s}$), ignoring the mechanical forces and pressures in the system. Recent works have investigated the effect of interstitial fluid flow in tissue engineering, such as inducing blood and lymphatic capillary morphogenesis in vitro (3), promoting morphogenesis in perfused organ cultures(4), inducing cell and matrix alignment (5), and inducing cell migration along streamlines (6).

Currently, perfusion systems for in-vitro cell culture purposes are used to study interactions between cells, their surrounding extracellular matrix (ECM) and the effect of interstitial fluid. Advances in microfluidic perfusion systems have filled several gaps in morphogenesis—the process

that causes an organism to develop its shape— and angiogenesis—the process through which new blood vessels form from existing vasculature—assays, such as the control of the flow rate and complex networks. However, a deficiency in these microfluidic systems is that groups have developed working microchannel configurations involving Human Umbilical Vein Endothelial Cells (HUVEC) monolayers with cross sections that do not resemble the in vivo cylindrical lumens(7). Novel techniques that solve this challenge by creating a network that lines up with the HUVECs are difficult to reproduce and low throughput (8). Another disadvantage is the lack of control of the extracellular matrix (ECM), assuming that the mechanical forces are negligible. When flowing a controlled flow rate, the fluid path is observed on the top of the matrix, instead of visualizing the flow going through the ECM.

Perfusion systems at a macro and micro scale involving the cell, matrix and fluid dynamics are challenged by the compaction of the ECM and the fluid channeling around the matrix (5). The fluid mechanics of these macro scale systems are solved using Brinkman's equation to estimate velocity (9-11) and 3D modeling (computational fluid dynamics) of the perfusion chamber (12). While a controlled fluid flows through the collagen matrix, the effect of the resistance in the system is not taken into consideration (13). A disadvantage

to Brinkman's equation is the assumption of continuum fluid and uniform velocity, as they do not mimic physiological conditions, instead of local values for the velocity profile.

While few groups have been able to recreate these complex cell-matrix-fluid dynamics within in-vitro assays, their systems have been limited on both a matrix and fluid flow standpoint. When developing a 3D perfusion culture system, it is essential to define matrix structure-mechanical properties as well as quantify and validate the flow and velocity profiles through the fibrous system.

This study addresses the two main questions regarding interstitial fluid flow through tunable collagen matrices: the effect of the matrix structure on the velocity profile and the flow rate measurement.

METHODS

A. Device specifications

A compliant red silicon was acquired (McMasterr, Elmhurst, IL) with a 1.58mm thickness. The device is a square cut from the rubber with 18mm on each side. The inside chamber is a square with 8mm on each side. Glass coverslips seal the chamber using glue (Gorilla Epoxy 25ml Syringe). Also, a pair of 23G needles were placed on opposite sides of the perfusion chamber (Figure 1). A subsequent surface

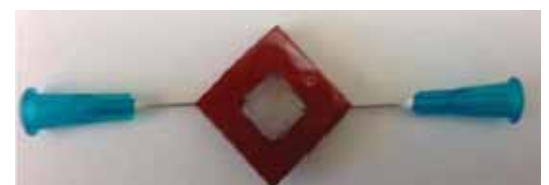


Figure 1. Perfusion chamber with 18mm on each side. The inside square has 8mm on each side. Glass coverslips sealed the chamber using epoxy glue. 23G needles.

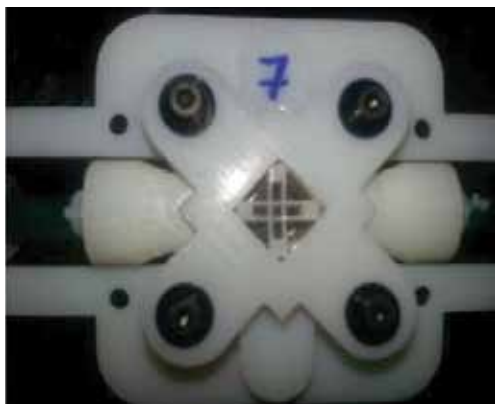


Figure 2. 3D printed structure modeled in Solidworks to ensure stability and to center it with the microscope.

treatment injecting the Poly-L-Lysine to the chamber and rinsing it with Milli-Q ensures the adhesion of the collagen matrix to the chamber walls. The perfusion chamber was placed into a 3D printed structure to ensure stability (Figure 2).

B. Matrix Formulations

Type I collagen oligomers were isolated from porcine dermis and standardized as described previously (Kreger et al., 2010). Collagen-fibril matrices were prepared by neutralizing the oligomer solution according to established methods (Kreger et al., 2010). The oligomer concentration of the polymerization reaction was modulated to obtain different collagen matrix stiffness values, which is directly related to the fibril density of the collagen (Kreger et al., 2010). Collagen-fibril matrices were prepared at 0.74mg/mL, 1.45mg/mL, 1.94mg/mL and 2.56mg/mL to achieve matrix stiffness values of 50Pa, 200Pa, 350Pa, and 600Pa, respectively. The neutralized collagen solution was injected into the perfusion chamber and subsequently inserted into an incubator to polymerize.

C. Interstitial flow in 3D system

To analyze the velocity of the interstitial flow mimic, fluorescent

dye (Rhodamine 123, 50 μ M) was pumped through the perfusion chamber at a constant flow rate of 10 μ L/sec using a peristaltic pump (FCS2 & FCS3 Micro-Perfusion Pump (Low-Flow), Bioptechs, Butler, PA) connected to the device (Figure 3). The flow rate was measured at the inlet and outlet of the device. The inlet value was set by the controls of the peristaltic pump and the outlet value was measured by the distance traveled by the fluid on the outlet tubing at a measured time (Figure 4).



Figure 3. A peristaltic pump was connected to the perfusion chamber at a flow rate of 10 μ L/sec to flow fluid through the chamber.



Figure 4. The outlet flow rate was measured by the distance traveled by the fluid on the outlet tubing at a measured time.

D. Microscope imaging

Upon initiation of flow, time-lapse images within the center of the tissue construct were collected using a 4X objective on a fluorescence microscope (Nikon Eclipse TE2000-S), with a numerical aperture (N.A.) of 0.2 and a B-2A filter.

E. Matlab Program

A Matlab (MathWorks, Torrance, CA) program was developed to process the time-lapse fluorescent images and determine temporal changes in light intensity across an image (a

single time point) (Figure 5). It then plotted the light intensity curve for all time points. Half maximum intensity of the fitted data (light intensity for all time points) was plotted to find the location of the time points over the time per pixels. The results were plotted in a position over time graph and its slope is the velocity.

RESULTS

The images of collagen microstructure indicate that the collagen-fibril matrices have sufficient porosity and mechanical integrity to support interstitial fluid flow as the ECM remains intact throughout the duration of perfusion experiments (Figure 6). Future studies would involve taking 3D stacks of the collagen microstructure before and after flow conditions, and using correlation techniques to determine the stress and strains on the ECM. Understanding fluid-induced ECM deformation will provide insight on its stability over time.

Results indicate that the flow rate measurement at the inlet and outlet of the device was not statistically different (Figure 7) over the range of collagen-fibril matrices tested.

The measured average velocities were statistically different between 50 Pa and 200 Pa matrices, with 200 Pa measuring a slower velocity than 50 Pa (Figure 8). Interestingly, however, the velocity increases and is statistically significant when comparing 200 Pa to 350 Pa. However, velocities for 50 Pa and 350 Pa were not statistically different.

DISCUSSION

The flow rate measurement denotes that a range of matrix stiffness does not have an effect on the flow rate. However, it was observed that an increase in fibril density imposes larger resistances that would affect flow rate. Using a 600

Pa stiffness ECM (n=2), the flow was significantly impeded (less than 10% of input flow rate), with no leaks found in the system (data not shown). This suggests that the system has an upper-limit on the pressure that can be applied to the inlet; however, further work must be done to form a more conclusive statement. Furthermore, the method for measuring flow rate should be improved, as error could have been introduced through a couple of ways. The tubing was very compliant, making it difficult to keep straight when taking measurements. Additionally, slight human error could be introduced, as marking the start and end position by eye has its obvious limitations. A more accurate method would be to use a scale to weigh the volume of output fluid. This would eliminate all previously mentioned issues.

The velocity decreases as the fibril density (stiffness) increases, due to the change in resistance of the collagen matrix when the collagen concentration is changed. The inconsistencies found for 350 Pa could occur due to many factors that come into play. First, the average max intensity of 350 Pa ECMs (n=4) was 141.6 units, while 50 Pa was 83.42 units, and 200 Pa was 93.45 units. The light intensity of the 350 Pa matrix was 51.5% higher than the 200 Pa matrix and 69.7% higher than the 50 Pa matrix. Since light intensity is a correlated measure of Rhodamine concentration, these results suggest an increased Rhodamine concentration within the 350 Pa matrix. One explanation of these results is that the increased fibril density decreases the diffusivity of the system, therefore leading to increased concentration. The concentration build-up occurs when Rhodamine enters the system at a faster rate than it is able to travel through the ECM. Additionally, preliminary experiments were performed to optimize fluorescent

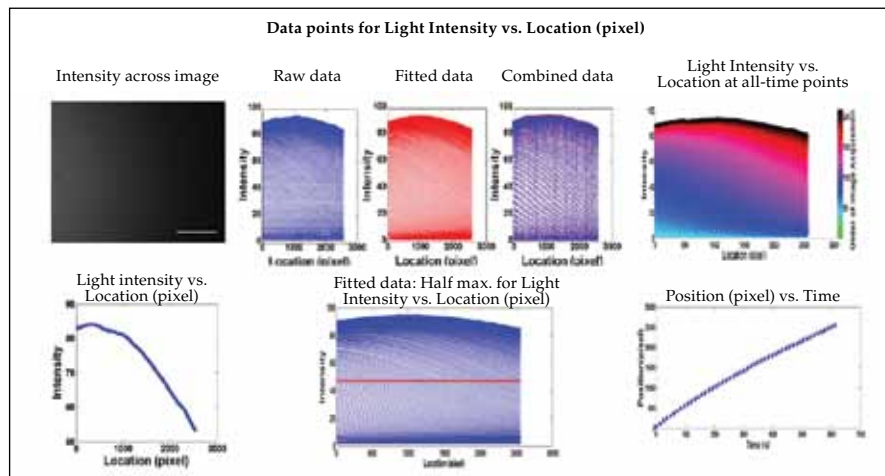


Figure 5. A Matlab program calculates the velocity profile. Using the fluorescence microscope, images are taken during the flow front experiment. The program processes the images and plots a light intensity vs. location (pixel) curve for all images. Half the maximum intensity from the fitted curves for the light intensity vs. location (pixel) finds the location. Then, it plots the light intensity vs. location at all-time points of the images to obtain the curve for the position (pixels) vs. time. The slope of the position vs. time is the velocity profile. Scale bar = 500 μm .

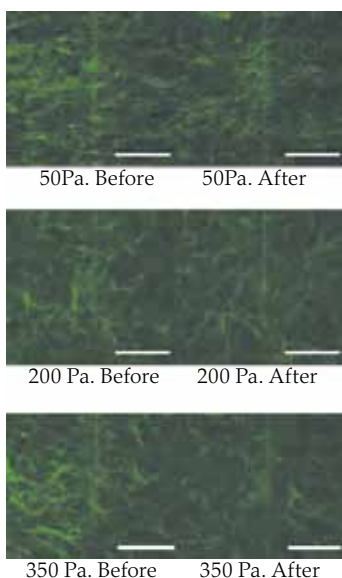


Figure 6. A confocal microscope collected images of the microstructure before and after the presence of the fluid flow. The images of collagen microstructure indicate that the collagen-fibril matrices have sufficient porosity and mechanical integrity to support interstitial fluid flow as the ECM remains intact throughout the duration of perfusion experiments. Scale bar = 100 μm

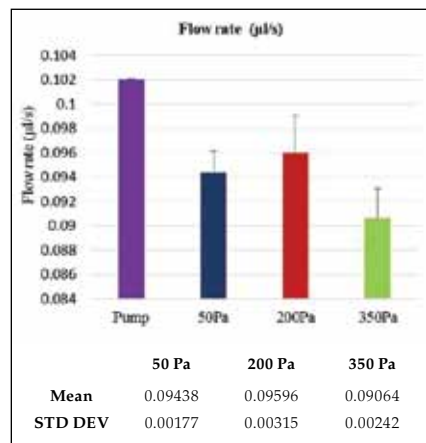


Figure 7: Flow rate measurement ($\mu\text{L/s}$) for a flow front at the outlet of the perfusion chamber (error bars represent STD DEV of calculations).

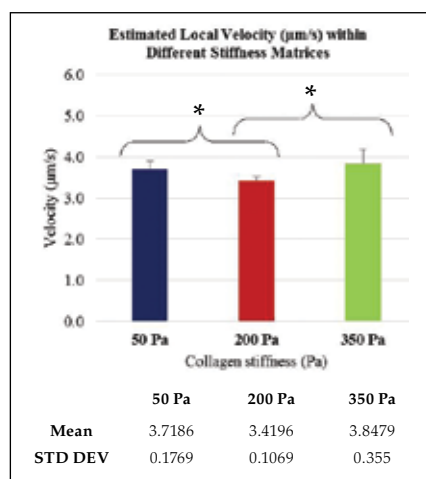


Figure 8: Velocity calculations ($\mu\text{m/s}$) for a flow front through different collagen matrix stiffness (error bars represent STD DEV of calculations). Means with different letters are significantly relevant (*, $p < 0.05$).

dye concentration (data not shown). These experiments determined the working range of the Rhodamine solution, and additional observations of higher velocity measurements when more concentrated Rhodamine solutions. An important consideration on the optical setup is the area of excitation. This area significantly affects overall light intensity readings, as an excessively large illumination area results in background intensity contributed by surrounding Rhodamine beyond the field of view. It is therefore important to choose the minimally acceptable illumination area, large enough to encompass the camera's field of view while small enough to reduce background noise. Secondly, the diffusivity of a species depends on its concentration, with higher concentration gradients increasing the rate of diffusion. Therefore, employing a higher concentration would in effect increase the measured velocity, as the diffusive component of the flow will have increased. Therefore, the increased velocity in the 350 Pa could be attributed to background illumination and altered diffusion. Further experimentation with different microscope settings and concentrations is required to confidently determine the cause for the increased velocity in 350 Pa.

Data suggests that flow remained constant between the different ECM formulations at the inlet and outlet of the tubing (Figure 7); fluid velocity decreased as the fibril density and matrix stiffness increased (Figure 8). An explanation, supported by the law of conservation of mass, would be that the velocity streamlines were narrower (and therefore faster due to a nozzle effect) in the 50 Pa matrix, and streamlines became increasingly wider (and slower) as the matrix stiffness increased since more fibrils obstruct the path. Probing

this would require a closer study of the obtained concentration profiles. While there was no geometric quantification on the concentration profiles, there are notable differences in the concentration gradients and shape that could inform streamlines. For example, increasing fibril density decreased the observed velocity from 50 to 200 Pa, as it was measured over the center of the construct. A possible explanation for this would be that the streamline within the 50 Pa is narrower, and therefore should move through the ECM faster; however, the 200 Pa matrix has a wider streamline, therefore perceived velocity would be lower. Further development of Matlab code to quantify concentration profiles, along with COMSOL model development, will allow accurate predictions of streamlines within a device.

CONCLUSION

The flow rate measurement denotes that a range of matrix stiffness does not have an effect on the flow rate. However, previous experiments suggest that an increase in the fibril density imposes larger resistances that would affect flow rate. A more accurate method for the flow rate

measurement would be to use a scale to weigh the volume of output fluid.

The velocity decreases as the fibril density (stiffness) increases, due to the change in resistance of the collagen matrix when the collagen concentration is changed. However, further experimentation with different microscope settings and concentrations is required to confidently determine the cause for the increased velocity in 350 Pa.

Images collected by the confocal indicate that the collagen-fibril matrices have sufficient porosity and mechanical integrity to support interstitial fluid flow as the ECM remains intact throughout the duration of perfusion experiments.

The next step is the Fluorescence Recovery after Photobleaching (FRAP) technique to obtain diffusion coefficients to enter into the COMSOL model to estimate the local fluid velocities for more accurate results (Figure 9). The control over local fluid velocity is essential for future experiments in which cells will be embedded in the collagen matrix to observe cell response to fluid flow.

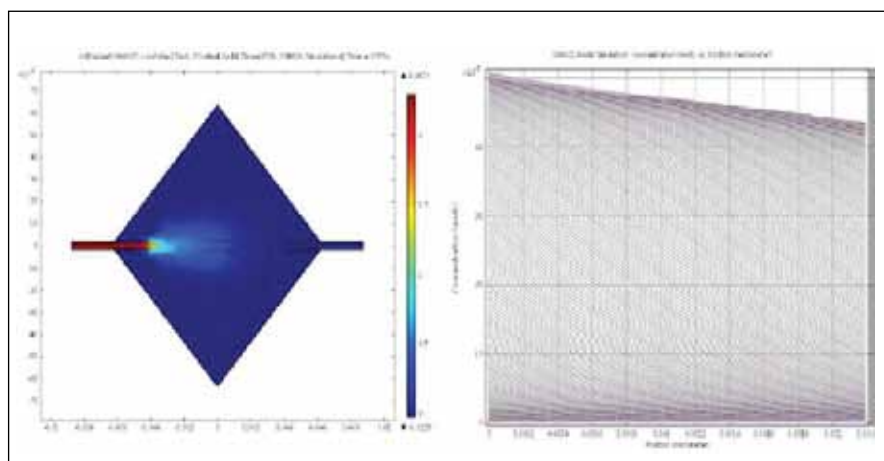


Figure 9 . COMSOL program models the inside of the perfusion chamber and the trajectory of the fluorescent particles flowing through the device to estimate the local fluid velocities.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

I was unsure if research could be applied to a project outside of the sciences, but my Honors advisor, Dr. Anne Dotter, encouraged me to look into it.

Ever since my first design class, I've been fascinated with typography and the endless amount of detail that goes into creating a cohesive set of letters. The subtle differences in letter drawings can convey unique subliminal ideas; text can seem professional, comical, chic, or angry depending on the typeface that a designer chooses.

With that in mind, I wanted to try my hand at creating my own typeface during my semester abroad in Trier, Germany. I knew that other designers had created typefaces inspired by specific places or objects, and I wanted to challenge myself to create a unique interpretation of my city within the limitations of a typeface.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

My research process is very different from the creative process I take for designing. Though I try to manage my design process into steps, I change my mind frequently and allow myself to explore many different concepts and mediums before settling on a final piece. The research process has been much more streamlined. I have one clear goal for my research and a fairly simple path for solving that problem.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

I love the moments when a solution suddenly appears. Like when a letter suddenly feels right, or I read a quote that helps me understand. Pure inspiration. As cheesy as it sounds, learning something new or finding sudden clarity is so worth all of the preparation that goes into that one moment.

Type in Trier: The Relationship between Letters and the Oldest City in Germany

A. Claire Zimmerman

INTRODUCTION

There are countless elements that make a city unique. The people, language, location, climate, architecture, customs and currency of a city all contribute to the experience of being in a place. Even the kinds of letters, or fonts, which are used in a city can add to its individuality. Is it possible to draw one font that could encapsulate all of the type that is used in a city? Even further, can a typeface translate the collective feeling of

being in a city, in its letterforms?

This is a particularly difficult task.

Type designers must try to create an expressive shape that is still recognizable as part of the alphabet.

There are only so many ways to manipulate a letter, and many of those manipulations are of the slightest detail. It is not unheard of though, and designers like Tobias Frere-Jones and Susan Kare have successfully translated the characteristics of a city to clear letterforms. Frere-Jones

designed the typeface Gotham using inspiration from lettering on New York City skyscrapers, and Kare created Monaco, Chicago and Geneva for Apple computers in the 80s. Here lies my task: to describe the feeling of a place in a sublime typeface design. My research is inspired by the location of my semester abroad in Trier, Germany. When finished, the typeface will not only be an expression of a time and place, but a tool for communication.

BACKGROUND AND INSPIRATION

A typeface is a set of letters drawn in a similar style and used for print or digital text. The letters in a particular typeface have been standardized so that they can appear the same in any application. The beginning of our contemporary definition of a typeface dates back to the creation of movable type. Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of movable type, transformed the world of reading and communication by allowing printers to set individual letters on a printing press. Before movable type, printers created woodcut blocks for a single page. The new, more malleable system allowed for a faster, cheaper means of printing and the spread of information throughout the West. Gutenberg's invention changed the way we treat and design typography.ⁱ

Today, one encounters typefaces not only in printed materials, but on the internet, mobile devices and various computer programs. There are multiple classifications for these typefaces based on the characteristics of their stroke width, style and shape. The most basic



Figure 1: An example of type with and without serifs.

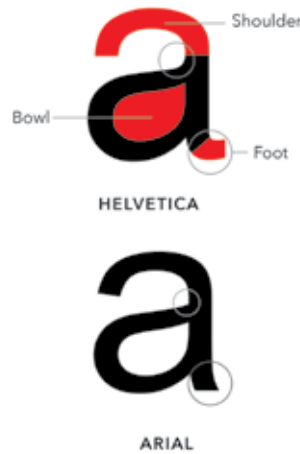


Figure 2: The slight differences between Arial and Helvetica.

distinction is between serif and sans serif typefaces (Fig. 1). Serif typefaces are characterized by a small projection at the end of a stroke. Sans-serif type does not have any added projections.

Within these categories, there are specific details that differentiate one typeface from another. For instance, Arial and Helvetica may look similar from far away, but close up they use different angles and curves (Fig. 2). In Helvetica's lowercase "a," the angle between the bowl and the shoulder is a smooth curve. In Arial this same angle is sharp and pointed. The foot on Helvetica is a small 90-degree angle with curved lines. Arial's foot does not make a big angle, but gradually veers to the right.

Though these characteristics may seem insignificant, even the smallest details contribute to how we understand words. For instance, most scholarly articles are set in Times New Roman, Baskerville or Garamond because they are legible, professional and do not distract from the content of an essay. If a scholar sets his or her proposal in

Comic Sans, the article would seem immature and silly. In this example, it is evident that the way a letter is drawn plays a role in our perception of words themselves. In all, the work of a type designer requires intense and thoughtful attention to detail.

But how does a typeface contribute to a city, you ask? Each city has its own unique history, climate and culture, and the type both adds to and reflects that. The lettering for the Paris Metro, for instance, is a recognizable part of the city. The signage was designed in 1900 by architect and furniture designer Hector Guimard. Guimard was inspired by the Art Nouveau movement and took cues from natural forms for his typeface.

ⁱⁱ While the Paris metro type is quirky and organic, the typeface for the New York Subway is stark and neutral. Since the late 1960s, the New York City Subway has used Helvetica and Akzidenz-Grotesk in its signage. That year the city undertook the massive project of simplifying the way-finding system used for its maps and signs. Bob Noorda and Massimo Vignelli provided a uniform way-finding for the subway system.ⁱⁱⁱ In both New York and Paris, the type for the subway system speaks to the uniqueness of the city. This is just one way that type can be specific to a place.

Other experienced typographers have explored this idea of fonts relating to a city. For example, the studio of Hoefler & Frere-Jones created the font Gotham based on type on buildings in Manhattan. These letters were created by engineers and architects as labels for buildings. Though the letters co-founder Tobias Frere-Jones found are not part of a specific typeface, they reflect the style of the 1930s and 40s. He collected hundreds of photos of these letters and used them as the basis for his drawings.^{iv}

GOTHAM

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Figure 3: The complete alphabet for Gotham.

Gotham is an assimilation of these examples, and directly reflects the city of its origin (Fig 3).

CREATIVE PROCESS

My research follows the example of Hoefler & Frere-Jones mentioned above (and is still incomplete because my semester in Germany is not yet over). Just as the designer found typography in Manhattan from which he based his font, I use found typography for my preliminary sketches. Below is a brief outline of my process.

- Study Trier's history, lifestyle and visual characteristics.
- Collect inspirational type that epitomizes the feeling of living in Trier.
- Sketch letters by hand and try to find the appropriate proportions, style and weight for the letters in the phrase "hamburgerfonts," a standard phrase used by type designers to test how the letters read and look next to each other.^v
- Refine and finish letters in Adobe Illustrator until they work as a cohesive set.
- Create usable typeface that others can download and use with the program FontLab.

RESULTS

1. Understanding Trier

Trier is the oldest city in Germany, founded by Augustus in 16 B.C. At one time, it was the capital of the Roman Empire, and some Roman ruins still remain today. The city is situated on the most Western

side of Germany, a 30 minute drive away from Luxembourg. The Mosel River runs through the city from North to South.

The lifestyle in Trier is still characterized by its history and geography. The architecture of the town center retains an old world charm; pastel buildings with ornate window frames are set close together on cobblestone streets (Fig. 4). The population is largely Catholic, and Easter holidays are public days off.



Figure 4: The Trier town square on a busy Friday.

There are also few stores open on Sunday, a religious day of rest. In addition, the river seems to create a relaxed lifestyle in the city. It is popular to barbecue and drink beer along the banks of the Mosel River. One might see tour boats and kayaks float down the river while people stroll or exercise on the adjacent walking path (Fig. 5). Classes are less strenuous than in the United States, and restaurant service takes its time.



Figure 5: A view of Trier and the Mosel River from above.

2. Collecting Inspiration

Before beginning my classes in Trier, I took time to visit other notable European cities. The type in each city varied greatly from one to the next. The more I took pictures, the more I realized that the type used for street signs and building markers most often reflected the feeling of the place.

For instance, in Valencia, Spain, the house numbers are colorful, floral and ornamental (Fig. 6). Those characteristics are also visible in the downtown plaza (Fig. 7). This pattern continues for the following images. In Copenhagen, the street sign type looks condensed and friendly, just like the buildings along the city's famous Nyhavn Canal (Fig. 8, 9). In Bruges, the sewer covers have an elaborate, traditional letter "b" in the center (Fig. 10). The Bruges Town Hall shares this medieval, ornate aesthetic (Fig. 11). Lastly, in Gimmelwald, Switzerland, a chalet displays unique lettering that matches the quaint, organic feeling of the small mountainside town (Fig. 12,13). Taking pictures outside of Trier adds another spectrum to my research.

With this understanding of where to find type in the city, I looked for unique type on the streets and buildings in Trier. On one town outing, I noticed lettering on the side of a café in the town square (Fig. 14). The text reads (in Latin): "Ante Romam Treviris Stetit Annis Mille Trecentis. Perstet et Aeterna pace froator. Amen." (Translation: "1300 years before Rome was Trier / May it continue to consist, eternal peace to rejoice"). The building is called the Steip, nicknamed the "Red House," and acted as a meeting place, courthouse and inn in the late 17th century. The original building was destroyed in a bombing during WWII, but it was so important to the city that it was reconstructed and opened anew in 1970.^{vi}

Figure 6:
A house
number in
Valencia,
Spain.



Figure 7: A city
garden in the
heart of Valencia.



Figure 8:
A street
marker in
Copenhagen,
Denmark.



Figure 9:
Nyhavn Canal
in Copenhagen,
Denmark.



Figure 10:
A sewer
pipe cover
in Bruges,
Belgium.



Figure 11:
The Bruges
Town Hall.



Figure 13: A view
of Gimmelwald
in the Swiss Alps.



Figure 12: Type
on a chalet in
Gimmelwald,
Switzerland.



Figure 14: An
inscription on
the Red House
in the Trier
town square.





Figure 15: A building marker on a house in Trier, Germany.



Figure 16: A detail of a fountain inscription.

The lettering epitomizes the description of Trier from my research: historic, relaxed and friendly. The lines are thin and flowing, peaceful. The “R” has an extended flourish. There are even playful swirling additions to the “A” and “P.” The serifs help to make the type feel traditional. The lowercase “a” looks unbalanced, but its awkwardness is charming. The type as a whole has a unique character that differentiates itself from other cities.

3. Sketching

This Steip type, plus a few photos from a nearby fountain and house (Fig. 15,16), serve as the basis for my letterforms. Pieces that felt unique, like the “a,” “e,” “R,” and “i” are evident in my sketches (Fig. 17). My goal is to take these antique letterforms and translate them into a typeface that would be clear and even enough for contemporary use.

With the inspiration that I have already gathered, I can now translate their quirks to other letterforms

(Fig. 18). The wavy crossbar in the capital “A” takes inspiration from the lowercase “e.” The top point, or apex, of the “A” borrows from the split top of the lowercase “i.” I will continue to draw the rest of the alphabet with an attention to these details. The rest of my process will follow as I have already mentioned, from drawn letters, to the computer, to working font file. Once the typeface is a working tool, I can test how it works in applications. I would like to see the font applied to a proposal of the branding for Trier itself. I can showcase my letters on business cards and pamphlets that advertise for the city.

CURRENT CONCLUSION

The most important element of my letters, in the end, is that they create the feeling of being in Trier. In *Metro Letters*, Deborah Littlejohn boils down how to create a successful place-inspired typeface: “No matter how strong the concept, how well drawn the letterforms, how exciting the technology, the most important criteria for making a decision about type as a representative of a city has to be concerned with how the type feels.”^{vii}

I was worried that during my process, I wouldn’t be able to tell if the letters had the quality I was looking for, that I wouldn’t be able to translate a feeling into a form. This has not been the case thus far, though, and when the right letter comes up, it is clear. It seems the more I draw letters, the more I can see the personality that certain proportions and widths create. The type has a face, as its name implies, that either fits the character of Trier or doesn’t. By the end of my time here, I hope to have a complete alphabet, including accent marks and punctuation.



Figure 17: Sketches for the first letters of the typeface.



Figure 18: An explanation of the details in the Trier inspired typeface.



Figure 19: Final version of font.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

I became interested in this topic while enrolled in Dr. Wuthrich's capstone seminar course this semester.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

The research process is not as straightforward as I expected. I had to narrow the scope and topic of my paper significantly from the beginning of the semester.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

My favorite part of doing research is learning new things about fascinating subjects and contributing to the academic body of knowledge.

"I Don't Want to Grow Old and Weak Like You!": Conceptions of Idealized Masculinity in Pre- and Post-Revolutionary Iranian Cinema

Benjamin Ale-Ebrahim

ABSTRACT

Iranian women are often at the forefront of feminist discourse on gender roles in the Middle East. There can be no question that this is important work and there are many questions about feminine gender roles in the Middle East and Iran that remain unanswered. However, gender norms in this family-centered society are often shaped by their relation to the opposite sex. As such, social scientists must understand both men's and women's roles in order to gain an appreciation for the complexity of social dynamics in a predominantly gender-segregated country like Iran. While most literature on the subject of gender in Iranian cinema focuses on women, little has been written explicitly about men and masculinity. This paper will attempt to close some of the gaps in this research by contrasting the category of the "ideal Iranian man" in popular films from two major periods in Iranian cinema—the highly Westernized era of the 1960s and 70s and the politically Islamist era of the 1980s and early 90s. Just as the nature of the Iranian national consciousness underwent a drastic change following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, so too did the nature of Iranian gender norms. By analyzing two films each from the pre- and post-revolutionary eras using three important variables—class conflict and religious piety, male-female sexual dynamics, and age differences among men—I will trace the path of these changes and suggest reasons for the similarities and differences one can observe between pre- and post-revolutionary Iranian films.

INTRODUCTION

Iranian women are often at the forefront of feminist discourse on gender roles in the Middle East, and for good reason. As the more obviously “gendered” half of the population, questions abound regarding women’s social status, women’s representations in the media, and women’s roles in constructing national consciousness. There can be no question that this is important work and there are many questions about feminine gender roles in the Middle East and Iran that remain unanswered. However, due to predominantly patriarchal social norms prevalent in the region, women in Iran do not enjoy many of the same rights and privileges that their fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons do. Gender norms in this family-centered society are often shaped by their relation to the opposite sex. As such, social scientists must understand both men’s and women’s roles in order to gain an appreciation for the complexity of social dynamics in a predominantly gender-segregated country like Iran.

While most literature on the subject of gender in Iranian cinema focuses on women, little has been written explicitly about men and masculinity. This paper will attempt to close some of the gaps in this research by contrasting the category of the “ideal Iranian man” in popular films from two major periods in Iranian cinema—the highly Westernized pre-revolutionary era of the 1960s and 70s and the staunchly reactionary and politically Islamist post-revolutionary era of the 1980s and early 90s. Just as the nature of the Iranian national consciousness underwent a drastic change following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, so too did the nature of Iranian gender norms. By analyzing two films each from the pre- and post-revolutionary eras using three important variables—class conflict

and religious piety, male-female sexual dynamics, and age differences among men—I will trace the path of these changes and suggest reasons for the similarities and differences one can observe between pre- and post-revolutionary Iranian films.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND GAPS IN RESEARCH

Though not comprehensive, a substantial amount of research exists regarding femininity and idealized notions of womanhood in Iranian cinema. According to Hamid Naficy, women in pre-revolutionary Iranian cinema can be categorized into three main “types:” female “blood relations” of male characters, who are “pure” and “virtuous;” wives of male characters, who are also pure to some extent; and “women entertainers,” who exist purely for male characters’ pleasure (2011: 289). Idealized women, the first two types in the scenario outlined above, are typically associated with the home and private spaces. Impure women of the third type are associated with public spaces, like teahouses and brothels (Naficy 2011: 289). A man has the power to remake an impure woman by marrying her or giving her his patronage. As such, women in this era of Iranian film do not possess a great deal of agency and depend heavily upon their male relatives and lovers to provide for them.

Pre-revolutionary Iranian cinema has a generally “bitter look, because most of its characters are anti-heroes, alone in a world that offers them no hope of justice” (Mirbakhtyar 2006: 98). Due to the oppressive political conditions under the Pahlavi regime, in which artists and intellectuals living in Iran were unable to voice their true opinions, the filmmakers of this period focused their narratives on “rebellious characters who were in conflict with a political order and society that denied them their basic rights” (Mirbakhtyar 2006: 99). They focus extensively on

urban-rural, class, and age conflicts as Iran slowly emerges from its traditional way of life and becomes a modern industrial nation. Iranian cinema instructs theatergoers on how to cope with this new way of life, “usually, though not always, suggesting naïve solutions” (Sadr 2006: 1). As an outlet for artistic and political expression and an instructive tool for the reigning elite, cinema in Iran would continue to influence the national consciousness in much the same way following the 1979 Islamic Revolution as it had in the late Pahlavi era.

Following the violent political upheaval at end of the 1970s, Iranian cinema “was for a time virtually extinguished” (Sadr 2006: 187). Women in Iranian films “went back under the veil” and the new regime’s censors restricted any plotlines that did not conform to “a rigid code requiring Muslim women be shown as chaste and maternal, never sexualized” (Sadr 2006: 188). The first few post-revolutionary Iranian filmmakers to emerge from the confusion and chaos of the revolution were primarily concerned with creating an “Islamic cinema” (Mirbakhtyar 2006: 107-8) palatable to the ayatollahs newly in charge of the country. Once this new crop of producers and directors gained a significant amount of filmmaking skills, they began to look at cinema “more and more as a form of artistic expression, instead of viewing it strictly through the lenses of religion and ideology” (Mirbakhtyar 2006: 108). In other words, once cinema had “proven itself” as potentially beneficial to the goals of the revolutionary government, it was allowed to flourish once more—albeit within the limits of the official moral codes.

Women in the post-revolutionary era continued to be portrayed on screen as either innocent wives and mothers or corrupt degenerates (Derayah 2010: 151). In the early years of the revolution, women were

“structurally absent” from films until the mid-1980s (Naficy 2012: 111-135). At this time, they began to gain a “background presence” until the late 1980s when women were moved into the “foreground” of Iranian cinema plotlines (Naficy 2012: 111-135). According to Najmeh Moradiyan Rizi, the compulsory veiling of Iranian women in film was intended to “control the female body and make heterosexual desire highly masculine” (2015). As women were compelled to don the veil in public spaces, including on screen, they surrendered control of their own bodies to the men in charge of public morality (Moradiyan Rizi 2015). Men continued to exercise control over Iranian women in the immediate post-revolutionary years, just as they had control over women in the late Pahlavi era.

Despite political progress toward freedom of expression and the improvement of the status of women’s rights in Iran beginning in the late 1980s, women’s portrayals in Iranian film from the 1960s through the 1980s remained defined by their subordination to men, while the two-dimensional characterization of female characters as either pure (*khaales*) or morally corrupt (*faased*) persisted. The ideal woman remains one’s mother, sister, or wife, while the street entertainer or dancer elicits no empathy, for she is merely the object of one’s carnal desires. Although the 1979 revolution changed the language and codes with which Iranian women were oppressed on screen, her oppression did not relent. Rather, the defining event that shifted representations of femininity in Iranian film did not occur with the 1979 revolution but several years later. What remains unclear is whether cinematic portrayals of Iranian men remained constant over this same time period and, if there was a thematic shift in the representation of masculinity

in Iranian film, how the men of post-revolutionary Iran compare to the men of the pre-revolutionary era. Perhaps a look at masculinity in another national film tradition can provide further context for understanding gender norms in Iranian cinema.

In their discussion of feminist literature on Hollywood cinema, Cohan and Hark write that by “concentrating on the female body as the primary stake of cinematic representation,” feminist scholarship generally ignores “the problem of masculinity that motivates the system” (1992: 1). In other words, one must study men and masculinity in order to gain a nuanced appreciation for normative gendered behavior in any patriarchal society, whether in the United States or Iran. They further argue, “the scant attention paid to the spectacle of men ends up reinforcing the apparent effacement of the masculine as a social construction in American culture” (Cohan and Hark 1992: 3). By studying the construction and negotiation of masculinity on screen, one begins to question the dominant ideal of a patriarchal society that the man is normal and undifferentiated while the woman is abnormal and secondary to men. In this paper, I will engage in a similar process in my analysis of Iranian gender norms, with a particular focus on masculinity.

Currently, there is no substantial body of literature discussing masculinity in Iranian cinema during the immediate pre- and post-revolutionary eras. As such, this paper can begin to address this neglected topic by combining previous research on feminine gender norms in Iranian cinema with analysis of masculinity in other film traditions. I lay out my theoretical framework for achieving this goal in the section below.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the years since Michel Foucault first published his monumental *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (1980), it has been essential to complicate such categories as gender and sexuality when analyzing cultural change. This process involves an *Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 2012) in which the researcher must investigate the history and political implications of cultural forces that construct normative behavior. This essay seeks to conduct a Foucauldian archaeology of the category of the “ideal man” in two important and contrasting eras of Iran’s cinematic history.

According to the most contemporary gender theorists, especially Judith Butler in her influential *Gender Trouble* (2002), masculinity and femininity consist of a performance in which we all engage in our daily lives, often unaware that we are simply acting in the ways we are taught within the boundaries of our cultural upbringing. It is the job of the researcher, then, to make explicit these ways of enacting gender and their limitations within any specific cultural context. This theoretical paradigm is especially useful for analysis of visual media, including film. Through content analysis, one can get at such complex notions as the definition of masculinity and manhood in Iranian society and how these definitions have changed over time.

Some studies exist that examine how masculinity is constructed in Iran and other Muslim-majority countries. Amar (2011) writes that masculinity in the Middle East is often understood in the popular Western imagination as “in crisis,” “hypersexualized,” and dangerous to the order of the state. He proposes a more nuanced understanding of Middle Eastern men in critical scholarship, conscious of the history of colonialism in the region and

of class distinctions among each society in question. As such, we can infer that the motivations and representations of upper-class Iranian men in cinematic portrayals are going to be significantly different from those of middle- and lower-class Iranian men. There exists a hierarchy of power, in which those in power—the Iranian clerics who determine media policy and prominent film producers and directors who work within politically determined boundaries—have different motivations from those they seek to influence—the Iranian theater-going public. Because of the inherent connection between Iran’s theocratic elite and film production, social class and religious piety have much to do with Iran’s conception of itself as a nation and these themes inevitably find themselves being replicated on screen.

Similarly, Bruce Dunne, in his *Power and Sexuality in the Middle East* (1998), writes that “sexual relations in Middle Eastern societies have historically articulated social hierarchies” in which men are dominant and women are submissive. One’s gender identity is traditionally inextricable from one’s sexuality. Therefore, in order to be a “real man,” one must engage in heterosexual activity—ideally, getting married and fathering children. Women are expected to be mothers, protecting the nation’s moral foundation by instilling within the next generation the ideals of the past. Men are unquestionably superior to women in this traditional framework, and manhood rests in sexual activity and virility. Both masculinity and femininity serve vital and complementary roles in maintaining the structure of the state and of devout Islamic society.

Finally, Peter Hopkins (2006) contends that there are two dominant discourses of Muslim masculinities—that of virile

aggression and that of academic effeminacy. As such, all men in a predominantly Muslim society will fall somewhere on a spectrum from the virile young man, promiscuous and womanizing, to the respected older scholar, aloof and asexual. Homosexual tendencies are, theoretically, tempered by homosociality. That is, men are encouraged to befriend one another but to seek sexual release with women, not among themselves. Generally, although older men are well respected in traditional Iranian value systems, the old man is perceived as impotent and lacking of some measure of masculinity. Younger men possess a more potent form of masculinity, dangerous in its disregard for social norms.

In this paper I intend to use these three variables, namely class differences and their relation to religious piety, male-female sexual dynamics, and age differences among men, to analyze and compare four films from the pre- and post-revolutionary eras of Iranian cinema. I will then determine whether or not the frameworks provided above can adequately explain the phenomenon of masculinity in Iranian cinema or whether they should be modified to reflect the Iranian case. This will be completed through analysis of a “typology” of Iranian masculinity, as described below.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper I will provide an archaeology of masculinity in two major periods of Iranian cinema. These two periods are: the late Pahlavi era of the 1960s and 70s, and the 1980s and early 1990s immediately following the 1979 Islamic Revolution. I will analyze two films from each period, focusing on how masculinity is presented across the spectrum of Iranian society, its foundations in sexuality and men’s relationships with women,

and the political aspects of manhood. I will now describe my reasons for periodizing Iranian cinema in this fashion and for my choices in films to analyze.

I have chosen to focus my research on what I view as two distinct time periods in the history of Iranian cinema. The film of the late Pahlavi era provides a baseline with which to analyze the changes in Iranian society after the 1979 revolution. As such, it is important to understand how masculinity functioned in this time period in order to grasp the changes that were to come. The film of the years immediately following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, in which Iran turned its back on the Western world and asserted a distinctly Islamist political orientation on the international stage would, in theory, differ in its portrayal of men and masculinity from the Pahlavi era against which it rebels. By comparing these two contrasting eras, one following directly after the other, I hope to shed light upon the effects of the 1979 Islamic Revolution on gender norms and idealized conceptions of masculinity in Iran.

In choosing only two films from each time period, I have had to be selective in which films I feel would provide the most valuable information for my analysis of masculinity in Iranian cinema over time. Primarily, I looked for films that attempt to depict life in Iran with some degree of realism. Heavily metaphorical or stylistic films, like Mehrjui’s *The Cow* (1969) and Makhmalbaf’s *The Cyclist* (1987) were excluded from my analysis. I still want to focus on fictional films, and so I excluded documentaries and biographies from my study. Additionally, because I want to understand the Iranian national consciousness from an official perspective, I chose films that were screened in Iranian cinemas and

therefore made it past government censors. I have not included films that were banned even for a time in Iran, including *Bashu, the Little Stranger* (Bayzai, 1986) and *Hajji Washington* (Hatami, 1998). Furthermore, I excluded any Persian-language or Iranian-made films that are not set in Iran, such as *Turtles Can Fly* (Ghobadi, 2004). This left me with a narrower set of films from which to choose, but I still had to exclude several options. At this stage of my search, I focused on films that had prominent male protagonists. This excluded Meshkini's *The Day I Became a Woman* (2000), Majidi's *Baran* (2001), and Farhadi's *About Elly* (2009), among others. At the end of this process, I was left with Iranian-made feature films set in Iran that attempt to depict the everyday life of men and boys. Where there were more than two films that fit this category in either era, I chose the most popular ones among Iranian cinemagoers.

My list of films to watch for this study is as follows: from the late Pahlavi era, I have chosen *Qeyzar* (Kimiayi, 1969) and *Gozaresh* (Kiarostami, 1977), and from the 1980s and early 90s, I have chosen *Marriage of the Blessed* (1989) and *Hamoun* (Mehrbani, 1990). From these films, I will tease out common themes in the popular depiction of masculinity in both the pre- and post-revolutionary eras of Iranian cinema. In order to do this, I will watch for the three variables I have discussed above—class differences and religious piety, male-female sexual dynamics, and age differences among men.

In addition to these three main variables, I will pay close attention to what happens to men and boys in relation to the following categories: place of birth (urban/rural), place of residence (urban/rural), age, occupation, military

service (veteran/not veteran), social class, level of religiosity (devout/secular), marital status (married/unmarried/divorced/widower), health status, and parenthood status (father/childless). In this way, I intend to create a profile for each major male character in these films in an attempt to understand his background and gain insight into the motivations for his actions. This will result in the compilation of several “types” of Iranian man that will shed light on the popular conception of masculinity in each time period.

Similarly, in creating profiles for each major male character, I will also pay attention to his sexuality and relationship with women and girls. Especially in the post-revolutionary era when the sexes are so strictly separated from each other, understanding a male character's relationship with the members of the opposite sex will shed light not only upon his personal relationship with women but will also provide information on the “type” of Iranian man he represents. Categories and tropes that I will look for in this section include: relationship with mother, relationship with father, relationship with children, relationship with wife/fiancé, aggressiveness towards women, aggressiveness towards other men, passivity towards women, passivity towards men, flirtatiousness, and other expressions of sexuality or virility.

Finally, I will consider the political implications of masculinity in both eras of Iranian film. Whether as the model for the ideal family, a metaphor for the Iranian fatherland, or as a heroic martyr of the revolution, manhood in all eras of Iranian film is inherently entwined with the politics of the time. Tropes I will look for in this section include: men's roles in service to the state, characteristics of the “ideal Iranian

man,” which men are “successful” and why, which men are “heroes” and why, and issues of crime and punishment.

MEN IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY IRANIAN CINEMA

I will begin my analysis by discussing two films from pre-revolutionary Iran. It is important to understand these films as a baseline for the rest of my analysis, as post-revolutionary Iranian cinema is both a continuation of and reaction to the themes present in the films from the late Pahlavi era. I will give a brief synopsis of each film, followed by a discussion of the typology of Iranian men in the film of this period, expressions of sexuality and virility, and political implications in relation to the three main variables I have discussed above—social class and its relation to religious piety, male-female sexual dynamics, and age discrepancies between men.

Qeyzar (1969)

Qeyzar is the story of a young man's quest to avenge his sister's honor after she is raped by three brothers and commits suicide in shame. This drama film follows



Courtesy: Film Society

Behrouz Vossoughi, one of the most famous Iranian actors of the time, as Qeysar—the brooding hero. He comes into conflict with several characters at various points in his quest, most notably with Mansour Ab-Mangol—one of the men responsible for his sister’s rape—and with his uncle, a cautious and reserved older man who advises his nephew to refrain from violence. In the end, Qeysar succeeds in killing all three brothers responsible for the death of his sister but suffers a life-threatening stab wound at the hands of Mansour and is captured by the police in a dramatic end to this story.

Gozaresh (The Report) (1977)

This film follows the story of one middle-class Iranian family on the cusp of the 1979 revolution; it is a bitter portrait of modern Iranian life among the wealthy, Westernized elite. The protagonist of this film is a morally flawed tax collection official by the name of Mohammad Firouzkoui. After a dispute with an older gentleman from rural Iran accusing him of taking bribes, Mohammad is laid off from his



Courtesy: Filmoteca

government job and this causes conflict with his family. Mohammad has a wife named Azam and a very young daughter at home. The narrative follows the daily life of this small family through various arguments and internal struggles, eventually ending with Azam attempting suicide and Mohammad spending the night at a hospital by her side.

There are a few distinct types of pre-revolutionary Iranian man that emerge after viewing these two films. They can be broken down into three major categories: the brooding anti-hero; the older, socially conservative father figure; and the sexually virile foil. Both Qeysar and Mohammad Firouzkoui fall under the category of the brooding anti-hero. Despite their obvious character flaws—Qeysar openly drinks alcohol and frequents bars while Mohammad gambles and accepts bribes at work—they are portrayed in a sympathetic light in their interactions with women and girls. Qeysar’s sense of duty to avenge his sister’s honor implies that his masculinity is inherently tied to female chastity and macho displays of violence. He identifies himself as a *pahlavaan* (a “champion” or “hero”) in an argument with his older uncle, justifying his noble quest. Similarly, though he is portrayed as a greedy scoundrel at work or a liar and a cheat in his marriage, Mohammad is generally a protective and loving father. When he takes his daughter with him to a bar—normally not something a good father would do—he hides the fact that he is drinking alcohol from her and brings her a sandwich to eat in the car while she waits for him. The protagonists of these two films follow Mirbakhtyar’s (2006: 98-99) model of pre-revolutionary anti-heroes, stuck in conflict between their internal desires and the existing socio-political system in which they live. Qeysar seeks revenge for his sister’s death while Mohammad seeks self-

fulfillment in a loveless marriage.

The second important type of pre-revolutionary Iranian man is the older, socially conservative father figure. In *Qeysar* this model can be seen in Qeysar’s uncle, while in *Gozaresh* the older man who accuses Mohammad of bribery falls into this category. In contrast to the hot-blooded Qeysar, the young man’s middle-aged uncle serves as a wise, restrained foil to his nephew’s youthful masculinity. Upon reading the news that his niece has committed suicide after being raped in a note she has left, he refrains from telling his sister—the girl’s mother—what truly happened to her daughter, saying, “It’s good that she left this world.” He believes that the older woman should not be exposed to the horrible truth, stoically refusing to answer her pleas for more information. Furthermore, he expresses a different form of masculinity than Qeysar when he criticizes his nephew for setting out on a killing spree to avenge his sister. He urges the young man to respect the honor of his elders and not to worry his mother by embarking on a dangerous quest. In an argument with Qeysar, he calls him young and thoughtless (“*to javaan-i! bifekr-i!*”). Qeysar’s uncle defends himself from Qeysar’s criticism by saying, “The older you get, the closer to God.” It is clear, then, that the two central male characters of this film have vastly different notions of what it means to be a man and what type of behavior manhood entails.

Similarly, one of Mohammad’s elderly clients accuses him of accepting bribes and emerges as a father figure, attempting to enforce traditional social norms. This man speaks with a rural accent and unsuccessfully appeals to the traditional morality of the young men who work in the tax collection office. Outraged at Mohammad’s attempt at bribery, he shouts, “Aren’t you ashamed, young man?” He

then appeals to a perceived common identity, saying, “We’re all Muslims, aren’t we?” He explains that he is happy paying his taxes because the government provides service to the poor, but corruption enrages him because money from bribes only go to the one who accepts them. After Mostapha’s plea that Mohammad has a wife and children to worry about at home, the man retorts that “these kind of people don’t spend money on their family.” As we have seen with *Qeysar*, there is a distinct conflict between the morality expressed by older men and that of younger men. Class differences also play into this exchange regarding proper manly behavior, with the lower-class older man calling upon a perceived common religious identity when disputing with the higher-class younger men in the tax office.

The third type of man in this era of Iranian cinema is the sexually virile foil, providing a contrasting model of male-female sexual dynamics than the anti-hero. While *Qeysar* and *Mohammad* have some redeeming qualities, their promiscuous counterparts do not. *Mansour Ab-Mangol*, *Qeysar*’s enemy and one of his sister’s rapists, is sneaky and lurks in the shadows—he runs from his enemy rather than confronting him directly. He refuses to admit wrongdoing when he is confronted at the beginning of the film by *Qeysar*’s younger brother, whom he proceeds to kill. *Mansour* rapes *Qeysar*’s sister, setting the long string of events into motion that lead to his death. *Mansour* is the opposite of the ideal Iranian man—the audience is meant to despise him for his violation of female chastity and *Qeysar* righteously kills him in the final scene of the film. Not quite so obviously flawed, *Mohammad*’s friend *Mostapha* encourages him to go out drinking with some of their coworkers, thereby encouraging *Mohammad*’s infidelity. He spends

time with prostitutes, drinks alcohol, and gambles his money away at casinos and encourages *Mohammad* to do so as well. *Mostapha*’s bachelor status allows him to act out while *Mohammad* is punished in his home life for doing similar actions.

While idealized men in these films do not always treat women with respect, with *Qeysar* ignoring his mother’s warnings against his murderous quest and *Mohammad* cheating on and beating his wife, ideal forms of masculinity in the pre-revolutionary era of Iranian film are generally associated with sexual fidelity and equitable treatment of women and girls. Older men attempt to reign in the reckless virility of younger men, as female chastity is associated with family honor. The men who do not treat women with respect, especially *Mansour* but also *Mohammad*, are punished for their action—*Mansour* is murdered while *Mohammad* loses his job, loses face, and is forced to take his wife to the hospital after she attempts suicide. In general, then, masculine models of behavior parallel *Naficy*’s (2011: 289) two-fold model of femininity: the men who respect women in the private sphere and do not succumb to the temptations of corrupt women in the public sphere are successful, while the men who do not respect female chastity or who engage with corrupt women are not successful.

Politically, men are idealized for their willingness to stand up for their personal morality against a perceivably unjust society. *Qeysar* emerges as the hero despite warnings from his mother and uncle not to embark on his quest. The elderly client at *Mohammad*’s office stands up for his rights in the face of government extortion and successfully achieves his goal of suspending the younger man from his job. This fits in with *Mirbakhtyar* (2006: 99) and *Sadr*’s (2006: 1) model of men as “rebellious characters”

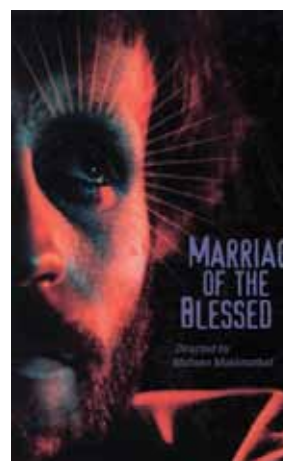
who served as instructive models to the Iranian theatergoing public. These anti-establishment political models, and a great deal of public discontent, led to the events of the 1979 revolution.

MEN IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY IRANIAN CINEMA

In post-revolutionary Iranian film, one witnesses both a distinct break from previous cinematic codes as well as a great deal of continuity in the tropes filmmakers employ. Through discussion of the themes present in post-revolutionary Iranian cinema, one can begin to understand the effect the revolution had on the representation of masculinity on screen.

***Marriage of the Blessed* (1989)**

This film follows the story of a soldier, *Haji Agha Pakdel*, returned home from the brutal Iran-Iraq war and his struggle to re-adapt to civilian life. He battles post-traumatic stress disorder and attempts to reintegrate into a society that does not conform to his idealistic morals. After returning home from the hospital to his wealthy fiancée (*Mehri*) and his job as a photojournalist, he begins to notice that the revolutionary ideals he fought so hard to defend in the

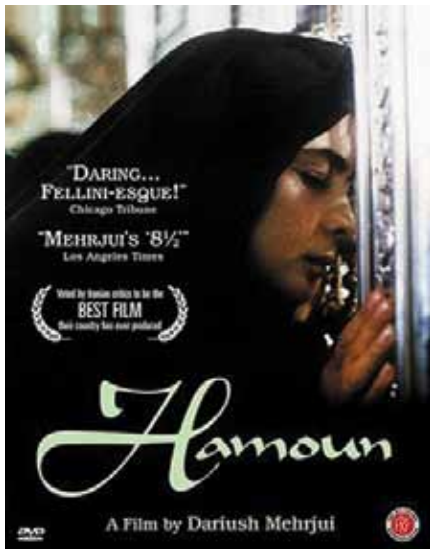


Courtesy: Firouzan

war with Iraq are not being practiced by many Iranians on the homefront. During his wedding, he attacks the decadence of the elite society and runs away from his privileged life to live homeless on the street. The film closes as a photojournalist attempts to take a photo of him living in a slum, with Haji rebuffing the camera.

Hamoun (1990)

This film follows the story of Hamid Hamoun, a married PhD student who struggles to balance his work life with his home life. His wife, Mahshid, is an aspiring painter who comes from a wealthy family. Mahshid wants to divorce Hamid and both hire lawyers to argue their respective cases in court. Through a complicated series of flashbacks and dream sequences, the viewer of this film begins to understand the beginnings of Hamid and Mahshid's



Courtesy: IMDb

complex relationship. Hamid sets out on a quest to reunite with his spiritual mentor and old friend Ali, but cannot find him. Hamid is obsessed with religion and the story of Abraham's "divine madness" in his love for God and willingness to sacrifice his own son—he conflates his love for Mahshid with Abraham's

love for Isaac. After an unsuccessful attempt to shoot Mahshid with a shotgun, Hamid runs into the ocean in a fit of madness and the film drifts off in a dream sequence where he is rescued by Ali and Mahshid and they throw a party on the beach.

Iranian men in post-revolutionary cinema can be categorized into several broad categories. These include: the crazed, idealistic young man; the wealthy older foil; and the just-out-of-reach spiritual mentor. The main characters in both of the films included in this story, Haji Agha and Hamid, fall into the category of the idealistic young man. Haji Agha Pakdel, whose name roughly translates as "clean-hearted man who has made the Hajj pilgrimage," suffers from psychological trauma and struggles to reconcile his revolutionary ideals with everyday Iranian life. When he returns from the hospital after being injured in the war, his doctor advises him not to watch films about tragedies in other parts of the world so as not to trigger any painful memories. Haji goes against this advice and watches news reports about the war in Lebanon and famines in Africa, saying, "the oppressors have returned" and "it is like before the revolution." His fiancée Mehri worries about him, telling him, "You're torturing yourself. So what if the rich are returning? You do not represent the nation!" Despite this, it is clear that this is exactly how Haji sees himself—as the embodiment of the ideal revolutionary martyr. He refuses to develop film that depicts uncovered women at his job, for example, and is obsessed with photographing the poor and dispossessed in his journalistic career. Ironically, as he and Mehri go out one night on a photo-shoot, they are arrested by the Basij (morality police) and must go to the police station to prove they have a government permit to photograph.

It seems that even the most idealistic young revolutionary cannot escape government harassment.

Similarly, Hamid is portrayed as a crazed academic, obsessed with his work and unconcerned with his family. Mahshid accuses him of being "obsessed with himself," unconcerned with her and their daughter. Hamid protests this notion, contending that he is "weak in the face of power," going on to name his "mother, father, country, and Mahshid" as the powerful forces that influence the course of his life. When he listens to Mahshid describe to her psychologist her marital struggles with him, Hamid reminds himself that "her bills break my back" —who is she to complain when he has to deal with the economic problems of the family? Furthermore, Hamid's character flaws are consistently described as being common to all Iranian men. Mahshid's psychologist comforts her that "it's common to all Iranian men to terrorize." Mahshid's mother, in a confrontation with Hamid about why he refuses to grant her daughter a divorce, says "you're like all men—egotistical and abusive." Hamid is not alone in his self-obsession and disregard for others.

Both Haji Agha and Hamid come into conflict with older men who are generally wealthier and wiser than their younger counterparts. Mehri's wealthy father stands in sharp contrast to Haji's idealistic naiveté. Though he admires aspects of Haji's character, he does not consider him a suitable match for his daughter. He thinks he is crazy and unable to provide economically for his daughter due to his mentally unstable state, saying "I love Haji like a son, but he cannot work." He would rather Mehri marry one of the many rich suitors he has lined up for her, but he accepts his daughter's choice when she emphasizes that only Haji can make her happy. Haji does not have a fond impression

of this future father-in-law, telling Mehri that “your father will defeat the revolution from the inside.” Because he is a wealthy businessman, Haji doubts his concern for social justice and therefore does not respect him. As we have seen in the previous two films, there is a sharp contrast between the ideals and conceptions of masculinity embodied by younger men versus older men in this film. Hamid’s lawyer also provides an older, wiser foil to his character. When advising him to go through with his divorce, the lawyer says to Hamid, “You sold yourself to get rich. You chose a beauty, she no longer wants you. Better off with a monkey.” The lawyer has no time for sentimentality and is only concerned with practical matters in regards to Hamid’s marital situation. He advises his younger client to “divorce her [Mahshid],” for she “has the upper hand.” Because Mahshid comes from a wealthy family and Hamid can only rely upon his academic credentials, his lawyer tells him to get out of this emasculating situation and move on to a more comfortable family life as a divorced man.

The third type of man common to both films is the elusive spiritual mentor to the main character. For Haji Agha, he is his own spiritual mentor in that he cannot seem to live up to the high revolutionary ideals he sets for himself. People both respect and pity Haji for his inability to distinguish between idealism and the reality of everyday life. Mehri’s brother admires him when he says, “Brother Haji’s camera is the anxious eye of the revolution.” When discussing his daughter’s impending marriage, Mehri’s father states his admiration for his future son-in-law’s military service and idealism. Haji is criticized, however, for his extreme devotion to his ideals. One of Mehri’s friends visits a medicine woman to buy a charm for her friend, saying she is “going

to marry a nitwit.” Mehri herself accuses her fiancé of “enjoying acting the martyr.” Haji alienates those around him with his erratic and strange behavior, especially during his wedding speech. Rather than thank his guests for coming, he uses this opportunity to decry the opulence of the Iranian upper class. He begins to chant —“Eat the food robbed from the poor. Robbed food is delicious! Robbed food is delicious!” (*haraam-khori khoshmaze ast!*). After this stunt, he is forcibly taken from the microphone and runs away to live in poverty.

On the contrary, Hamid seeks spiritual guidance from two mentors—the prophet Abraham and an old friend named Ali. As he writes his PhD dissertation on the subject of “Abraham’s love and faith,” he also attempts to emulate the life of the ancient prophet. He says at one point, “one must be like Abraham —willing to destroy one’s life to regain her [Mahshid].” Hamid’s search for spiritual guidance in the life of the prophet Abraham also leads him to seek out his old mentor Ali. Ali is an elusive character in this film —he is only seen in passing or in dream sequences and does not speak to Hamid directly. Ali is a middle-aged to older man who seems to possess some sort of mystical knowledge that Hamid finds enticing. As Ali searches for his children throughout the film, he evades Hamid’s attempts to find him. At the end of this film, it is Ali who rescues Hamid from the ocean in his dream and joins him for a party on the beach along with other important people in the younger man’s life. Though Hamid seeks the advice of Ali and comes very close to meeting with his long-lost mentor on several occasions, it is only in his mind that he actually finds the older man and talks with him.

Following the revolution and its new set of morals, obvious expressions of sexuality are largely

absent in both of the films from this period. Male-female dynamics are largely restricted to the home and the marital relationship; Haji Agha and Hamid are not tempted to cheat on their wives and fiancées with women in bars and teahouses. Rather, their relationship struggles emerge from both men’s internal discontent and dissatisfaction. Hamid’s self-obsession drives Mahshid away, while Haji Agha’s obsession with living out the ideals of the revolution drive him from mainstream society completely. On the spectrum of potent virility to academic effeminacy that Hopkins (2006) discusses, both protagonists from the post-revolutionary era tend heavily toward the latter.

Politically, both films fall in line with the revolution’s emphases upon anti-Westernization, populism, and elevation of the status of religion in everyday life. Both Haji Agha and Hamid are deeply religious, almost to the point of insanity. They both search for guidance in the ideals of Shia Islam—especially self-sacrifice and martyrdom. Haji Agha is disgusted by the amount of class distinction that still exists in the post-revolutionary era, using his wedding as a pulpit from which to decry the decadence of his future father-in-law’s lifestyle. Hamid is also troubled by class differences, with many of the arguments he has with his wife centering on money and finances. In the post-revolutionary era, unsurprisingly, the highly religious lower class is idealized while the secular upper classes are decried and protested against by the main characters in both films.

DISCUSSION

In both the pre- and post-revolutionary Iranian films I have analyzed, a constant trend remains the conflict between young and old men regarding proper masculine behavior. In all

four films, older men constantly criticize their younger counterparts for not behaving in traditionally masculine ways. Qeyzar's uncle criticizes his nephew for his hot-blooded pursuit of revenge while, in *Marriage of the Blessed*, Mehri's father finds Haji Agha unsuitable to marry his daughter due in part to his unwavering devotion to revolutionary ideals. Older men respect the boundaries society has placed upon their behavior while younger men appear to be motivated primarily from an inner sense of what's right, regardless of what society has to say. In *Gozaresh*, Mohammad feels entitled to accept bribes for his own personal benefit while Hamoun attempts to shoot his wife in emulation of the prophetic command to "destroy one's life in order to regain it"—both in clear violation of social and legal norms.

Similarly, social class creates conflict among the men in the films included in this study. In *Gozaresh*, the elderly customer of the tax office is outraged that all of the younger men in the office are defending the practice of bribery. In *Marriage of the Blessed*, Haji Agha is outraged at the social inequity that still pervades post-revolutionary Iranian society and blames the rich for "defeating the revolution from within." In both *Marriage of the Blessed* and *Hamoun*, the main characters' fathers-in-law disapprove of them because they come from a lower social class than the women they wish to marry. The men who occupy the upper classes of Iranian society are depicted as uninterested in the fate of the lower classes and seek to maintain the status of their families by opposing their daughters' marriages to men of lower classes. While younger men generally occupy the upper classes in the pre-revolutionary films and older men the lower classes, the opposite is true for post-revolutionary films.

Despite this shift in demographics, the class conflict remains constant in both eras of Iranian cinema.

The instructive nature of Iranian cinema is another theme that has remained constant in post-revolutionary films. Despite vastly different socio-political conditions, Iranian filmmakers continue to provide behavioral models in their films after which the Iranian public can model themselves. Just as one could identify with the urge for revenge after a great injustice, as in *Qeyzar*, or the strained family dynamics present in *Gozaresh*, one can also identify with Haji Agha's frustrated revolutionary fervor and Hamid's quest for self-fulfillment and greater meaning in life. While these models may suggest "naïve solutions" (Sadr 2006: 1), they also represent the dominant social concerns of the time and reflect a range of broader social trends that dominated the Iranian national consciousness following the 1979 revolution.

Haji Agha, in his war-hardened, mentally unstable state, acts not just as a model for the reaction to the harsh realities of the post-revolutionary era and the brutality of the Iran-Iraq war, he forces the audience to question the morality of the revolution and the war themselves. If a pious, talented young man such as Haji Agha can be tainted so severely by war and revolutionary fervor, how much more so the masses of less-gifted and less-ideological young Iranian men of the time? In many ways, Hamid is a model of the ideal Iranian man of the post-revolutionary era—he studies diligently and engages in a quest for spiritual meaning. However, he too is deeply flawed. If such a man—who, on the surface, is perfectly admirable—can maintain such deep character flaws as Hamid's self-obsession and disregard for his family, where should the masses of

young Iranians look to find a proper role model? The simplistic good-versus-evil dynamic one observes in pre-revolutionary Iranian cinema is completely shattered in the post-revolutionary era.

Despite the various continuities one can observe in both eras of Iranian film, one major difference is the breakdown of simplistic conceptions of masculinity in the post-revolutionary era. Qeyzar is potently masculine and, despite a few minor character flaws, generally heroic in his cinematic portrayal. With Mohammad's character, one can begin to observe the complication of the simplistic hero-villain dynamic. However, he is still generally successful in his family life; despite her suicide attempt, his wife survives and the two continue to raise their daughter together. Haji Agha and Hamoun are more nuanced characters—both attempt to maintain their families while struggling with mental illness. While the pre-revolutionary model of Iranian manhood appears to be either potently masculine or strikingly impotent, the post-revolutionary one allows for more complexity.

This complication of the hero-villain dichotomy reflects a changing understanding of male-female sexual dynamics in the post-revolutionary era. In the pre-revolutionary era, women were either chaste and motherly or promiscuous and objectified (Naficy 2011: 289). In the post-revolutionary era, one can begin to see a shift in gender norms that would become more prevalent in the late 1980s (Naficy 2012: 111-135). As women move to the foreground of Iranian cinema, they become increasing more complex characters. Because of the symbiotic relationship that exists between the sexes in any patriarchy, this also means that men's portrayals also

become more complex and nuanced. While the pre-revolutionary era consisted mainly of macho men and damsels in distress as well as adulterous husbands and desperate housewives, the post-revolutionary model of gender relations consists of empowered women and their impotent, fanatical husbands.

Considering the Islamic nature of the 1979 revolution, it is no surprise that conceptions of religious piety and their association with social classes underwent a significant shift in the post-revolutionary era. Whereas religiosity is mainly associated with the powerless lower classes in the pre-revolutionary era, as exemplified by the incident between Mohammad and his elderly customer, religious piety is mainly associated with heroic men and is admired by members of the upper class in the post-revolutionary era. Although Haji Agha himself comes from a lower class background, his future father-in-law (somewhat begrudgingly) admires him for his revolutionary zeal. Hamid has also managed to marry a woman of a higher social class, yet still he is obsessed with religion and martyrdom. This trend of idealization of religious fervor makes sense in light of the fact that the new government promotes and maintains Islamism as the basis of its identity. Any film produced in this era cannot be too critical of religion for fear of censorship.

In general, then, representations of masculinity in the post-revolutionary era differ from those of

femininity in several important ways. Whereas women's portrayals in Iranian film from the 1960s through the 1980s remain defined by their subordination to men, cinematic portrayals of men in Iranian cinema of the same time period are not defined by their relation to women so much as they are to broader social changes. Men become more complex characters after the revolution, as they must deal with an entirely new set of socio-political circumstances. No longer brooding anti-heroes acting in defiance of government oppression, men in the post-revolutionary era reflect a new national turn inward. These men seek self-fulfillment and the realization of their ideological goals, just as the revolutionary government struggles to build a new state after the collapse of the old regime. For men, who have always been more politically empowered than women in Iran, the revolution resulted in a complete shift in their worldview and this shift is reflected in the cinema of the period.

CONCLUSION

While this research sheds light upon the portrayal of masculinity in the films I have analyzed above, this study should not be used to draw broad conclusions about masculinity as portrayed in the whole of Iranian cinema or Iranian society writ large. I conceive of these films as brief snapshots into the consciousness of each individual filmmaker who produced them, inevitably recreating—on some level—the

ideals of masculinity and manhood he encounters in his daily life in Iran. In this way, these films can serve as microcosms of Iranian conceptions of masculinity, but they are no more than this.

Despite this caveat, there are a few words to be said about general trends observable in the forms of masculinity depicted in pre-revolutionary Iranian films as compared to post-revolutionary ones, as discussed above. Gender norms and conceptions of masculinity in Iranian cinema are very large topics and further research is needed to determine an accurate and nuanced archaeology of the "ideal Iranian man" across the history of Iranian film. It is the hope of this researcher that this study can serve as a basis for such a long-term project. Future avenues of research must include a more comprehensive survey of Iranian cinema, not just in the time period addressed but also in the number of films analyzed. It would be very interesting to see whether the trends discussed in this paper hold true for films produced in the 1990s and beyond, especially as the corpus of Iranian cinema constantly expands in size and quality of production.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

In the spring of 2015, I approached Dr. Steve Ilardi to ask for advice on how to get more experience in academic research, writing, and data analysis. At the time, Dr. Ilardi's Therapeutic Lifestyle Change (TLC) program had generated data on participant adherence that had not yet been analyzed. This project is my analysis and interpretation of those data.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

This project afforded me a different perspective on the entire research process because I started "in the middle of things." Dr. Ilardi and his graduate students, Christina Williams and Yevgeny Botanov, developed TLC and collected the data that I used for this project before I came to KU. My work began with the analysis and assimilation of multiple spreadsheets and documents on the participant adherence data. From this experience, I learned that data are very much alive. Even though I was not there for the original data collection, I was able to come up with an independent hypothesis and examine the data to see whether or not it was supported.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

My favorite part of doing research is writing up the final product. It's so much fun to see everything come together in words.

Better Adherence, Better Outcome: Differences in Depressed Participants' Adherence to Elements of the Therapeutic Lifestyle Change Protocol

Carina Fowler, Christina Williams, Yevgeny Botanov, & Stephen S. Ilardi

Depression is a devastating illness. It is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and it afflicts 6.7% of Americans every year ((World Health Organization [WHO], 2012; National Institutes of Mental Health [NIMH], 2014). Worse, there is considerable evidence that traditional therapy—particularly drug therapy—is not particularly effective (Whitaker, 2010; Krystal, Sanacora, & Duman, 2013). The data from the STAR*D trials conducted by NIMH demonstrated that, among 4,000 depressed patients given standard antidepressant drugs, only slightly more than one quarter of

these patients achieved remission after 3 months (Krystal et al., 2013).

Researchers have begun investigating new avenues for treating depression, in large part because of the inadequacy of standard antidepressant treatment. Omega-3 supplementation, bright light exposure, and exercise all have a positive impact on depressive symptoms (Grosso et al., 2014; Even, Schroder, Friedman, & Rouillon, 2008; Josefsson, Lindwall, & Archer, 2014). The Therapeutic Lifestyle Change (TLC) program combines these approaches, finding that they are even more effective together

than separately (Ilardi et al., 2012).

A major problem for the success of any treatment is participant adherence (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2013). The CDC estimates that roughly 50% of medications are not continued as prescribed (2013), and others studies suggest that adherence to non-medication regimes—such as exercise plans—is even worse (Robison & Rogers, 1994; Findorff, Wyman, & Gross, 2009). It seems that not following the doctor's orders really makes a difference too. Research shows that adherence really matters for determining

patient outcomes across a wide variety of illnesses, with this relationship being strongest for chronic illness not treated with medication (DiMatteo, Giordani, Lepper, & Croghan, 2002).

Because depression is a chronic condition that the TLC program treats without medication, and because depression itself is known to be a risk factor for non-adherence (DiMatteo, Lepper, & Croghan, 2000), this research seeks to answer two major questions about the impact of participant adherence on depressive symptoms:

1. Are participants more likely to adhere to one element of the treatment than another?
2. Does overall adherence to the TLC protocol influence the degree of therapeutic effect?

METHOD

Participants

The sample considered here consists of 95 TLC participants aged 18-65 who met DSM-V criteria for clinical depression and did not have a comorbid DSM-V disorder. Trained clinicians administered a full Structured Clinical Interview for DSM Disorders (SCID) in order to confirm depression status.

The Protocol

The TLC protocol consisted of fourteen 1.5 hour-long group sessions over the course of 14 weeks. Two co-therapists led the sessions, which were split roughly in two. For the first half of the session, one co-therapist led a discussion of adherence to the protocol, while for the second half, the other therapist trained participants in the protocol. Each week, a different core component of TLC was presented. The protocol consisted of six core components: omega-3 supplementation, exercise, bright light exposure, anti-ruminative strategies, sleep habit improvement, and social support. Only adherence

to omega-3 supplementation, exercise, and bright light exposure are considered in this presentation. This decision was made due to missing data and difficulty in calculating adherence indices for the other elements of the protocol. For the treatment elements examined in this work, the specific protocols were:

- Omega-3: one supplement containing 1000 mg EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and 500 mg of DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) every day.
- Exercise: 30 minutes per day, three times a week.
- Bright Light: 10,000 lux for 30 minutes per day, every day.

Measures

All participants completed our measures of depression and adherence at the beginning of each meeting. Depression was measured using the Beck Depression Index (BDI), and adherence was measured using weekly record forms. On the weekly record form, each treatment element was listed beneath each day of the week, and participants indicated with a yes or no whether or not they adhered to the given treatment element for each day listed.

Adherence Indices

In this study, adherence specifically refers to the percent of the time participants followed the TLC protocol for each treatment element. The adherence index for omega-3 supplementation was calculated as the number of days out of 7 that participants took the supplement. For exercise, the adherence index was the percent of minutes out of 90 that participants reported for that week. For bright light exposure, the adherence index was calculated as the percentage of days out of 7 that participants reported obtaining at least 30 minutes of bright light exposure. The mean of these weekly scores was taken over fourteen weeks to calculate a mean percent

adherence score for each client on each individual element. Finally, an overall adherence score for each client was calculated by taking the mean of the individual element adherence scores.

Results

Omega-3 supplementation had the highest mean percent adherence ($M = 63.9\%$) followed by exercise ($M = 54.5\%$), and then bright light exposure ($M = 48.2\%$). We conducted a within-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test if mean adherence significantly differed among the three treatment elements. The overall model was significant, $F(2, 188) = 51.65, p < .001$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that the mean adherence scores for each element significantly differed from one another, with all p -values < 0.001 . Figure 1 depicts the differences in mean percent adherence scores for each treatment element.

The different types of adherence were highly correlated with one another (all r values > 0.8). This finding suggested that all three adherence variables were measuring the same construct—overall adherence. For this reason, we first conducted a linear regression of final BDI score on overall adherence with pretreatment BDI as a covariate. The overall model was significant, with $F(4, 90) = 6.245$ and p -value: 0.000176 . This regression found that

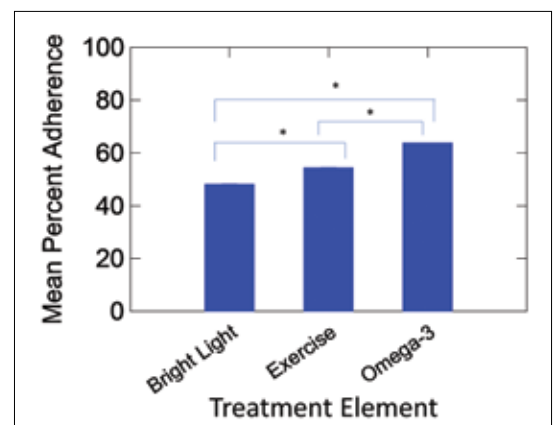


Figure 1. Mean Percent Adherence Scores for Each Treatment Element

overall adherence had a statistically significant impact on reducing final BDI score, $\beta = -0.31$, $p = 0.002$. Our multiple R^2 for this regression equaled 0.2172, signaling that overall adherence and pretreatment BDI score explained 21% of the variance in final BDI. Pretreatment BDI was added as a covariate in order to control for the fact that people who began the TLC program with lower BDI scores were more likely to complete treatment with lower BDI scores as well, even though the scores would have improved. See Table 1.

	Standardized Beta Coefficient	P-Value
Pretreatment BDI	0.30	0.002*
Overall Adherence	-0.31	0.002*

Table 1: Linear regression of final BDI score on overall adherence with pretreatment BDI as a covariate

Separate regressions of final BDI score on participant mean weekly exercise, bright light, and omega-3 adherence with pretreatment BDI as a covariate were also conducted. These results are displayed in Table 2. Since adherence to one treatment element was highly correlated with adherence to the other treatment elements, a model containing all three types of adherence had high multicollinearity. In order to avoid this problem, we regressed BDI on each individual treatment element. These regressions show that adherence to each treatment element was predictive of outcome, but not *uniquely* predictive.

	Standardized Beta Coefficient	P-Value
Pretreatment BDI	0.30	0.002*
Exercise Adherence	-0.31	0.002*

	Standardized Beta Coefficient	P-Value
Pretreatment BDI	0.31	0.002*
Exercise Adherence	-0.26	0.001*

	Standardized Beta Coefficient	P-Value
Pretreatment BDI	0.31	0.002*
Omega-3 Adherence	-0.30	0.002*

Table 2a, b, and c: Separate regressions of final BDI score on participant mean weekly exercise, bright light, and omega-3 adherence with pretreatment BDI as a covariate

DISCUSSION

Previous studies have shown that adherence directly relates to outcome, particularly for illnesses that are chronic and not treated with medication (DiMatteo et al., 2002). The linear regression in Table I suggests that this finding extends to depression treated with the TLC protocol. Better adherence generally meant a better outcome for participants.

Our finding that omega-3 supplementation had the best adherence, followed by exercise, and then bright light exposure is fairly consistent with the broader literature

on adherence. To our knowledge, no previous work has been done to examine the rate of adherence to omega-3 supplementation, making it difficult to find a true reference point for our finding. However, taking an omega-3 supplement is the element of the protocol most like taking a medication or an antidepressant. A study by Lingam and Scott found that median non-adherence for antidepressant medications was 53% (Lingam & Scott, 2002), while studies of medication adherence for chronic conditions in non-depressed individuals ranges from 43% to 78% depending on the ailment being treated (Osterberg & Blaschke, 2005). Our mean percent adherence for omega-3 supplementation of 63.9% falls within this range. For exercise, our mean percent of 54.5% is similar to that found by studies of exercise adherence among specific populations, such as women and the elderly (Miranda et al., 2014; Findorff, Wyman, & Gross, 2009). However, to our knowledge, no studies rigorously examine adherence to an exercise regime among depressed patients. A study by Michalak et al. finds that average adherence to bright light exposure among patients diagnosed with seasonal affective disorder was 59.3%, which is substantially higher than our mean of 48.2% (2007). However, this study contained only 19 participants and was conducted over four weeks, limiting its generalizability.

One factor influencing the pattern of adherence observed is the amount of time required to follow each element of the protocol. Conceivably, omega-3 supplementation had the best adherence because it required the least amount of time per week. Taking an omega-3 supplement takes less than 30 seconds each day. In contrast, following the exercise protocol required 90 minutes of participants' time per week, while following the bright light protocol

required participants' time every day—a total of 210 minutes per week. Thus, the element that required the most time had the poorest adherence, while the one that required the least time had the best.

Another factor possibly influencing the pattern observed is American culture. In the U.S., we tend to prefer to treat sickness with medication rather than with lifestyle changes. So, it would follow that the element of the protocol that just requires taking a “pill” would have the best adherence. Americans also generally seek to avoid publicizing any psychiatric or psychological conditions. While one can easily take a pill without alerting a close friend or a loved one, it is much more

difficult to begin a regular exercise regime or to spend 30 minutes each day obtaining bright light exposure without someone noticing. It is possible that we observed lower adherence for the exercise and bright light elements because some participants were attempting to hide their depression status from others.

A major limitation of this research is that it relied exclusively on a weekly self-report measure of adherence. It is possible that from one week to the next participants did not accurately remember on which days they followed the protocol versus on which days they did not. It is also possible that participants may have intentionally misrepresented their adherence. Future research

should include additional measures of adherence to improve these issues. For example, in order to verify exercise adherence, participants could be given a heart rate monitor that records the amount of time spent exercising. A clever method of verifying bright light adherence comes from the Michalak et al. study mentioned above. In this work, the light boxes given to clients were outfitted with hidden recording devices that monitored the amount of time the boxes were turned on. However, since TLC permits clients to obtain their bright light exposure from outside, we would still rely on a self-report measure of outdoor bright light exposure.

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

I became involved in research in my first year at the University of Kansas. I worked with Dr. Susan Earle, curator of European and American art at the Spencer Museum to place a sculpture in its time period and original location. It was a wonderful chance for me to explore hands-on, object-based learning. Now, I'm able to take graduate seminars in my field of art history, and research topics as varied as Chinese export porcelain and French painting.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

The research process is different than I expected in that it is so malleable and ever-changing. The project proposal and the final draft of my paper are two very different things.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

The hands-on nature of research and the chance to look at one object in such depth are by far my favorite parts of research. I could never have that kind of experience in a classroom!

Chinese export porcelain and global spaces of imagination

Julia Reynolds

ABSTRACT

This paper will examine a Chinese porcelain plate from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The plate was produced in Jingdezhen, China ca. 1785-90 and acquired in Iran in 1888. It is painted in pink enamel with a landscape scene in the center and a double border around the edges. The landscape depicts pagoda houses interspersed with rocks, flowers, and trees. It is heavily stylized so as to seem "exotic" and "oriental" to the European eye. The double border consists of a diaper border outlined with a spearhead border. While the plate was manufactured at the site of the imperial kilns, it was intended for export to Europe as part of Chinese porcelain trade. This is made evident in the English transfer-print decoration with its clear, crisp lines and decal-like look. Its purchase in Iran reflects British influence in Persia, which was a colonial subdivision of the British Empire from 1783 to 1971. This paper will consider the Chinese porcelain plate from the perspective of material culture and globalization as well as a limited amount of post-colonialism. Lines of questioning will include: the original setting in English dining customs and culture, its situation within the World Ceramics galleries of the Museum, and the role of British imperialism and its influence on those who used and consumed the Chinese porcelain plate. This will allow for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the artificial construction of China in the British Empire.

This paper will examine a Chinese porcelain plate (fig. 1)¹ in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum from the perspective of material culture and globalization. The plate is of European shape produced in China ca. 1785-90 and acquired in Iran in 1888. While the Victoria and Albert Museum purchased it in Iran, the British occupied the southern portion of Iran from 1763 to 1971, which indicates that a citizen of the British Empire owned it. The plate is painted with pink enamel in the manner of English transfer-print decoration. The pink enamel is known as “famille rose.” It originated in Europe in the Rococo era ca. 1750, and was used at the porcelain manufactories of Bristol and Staffordshire in England. This is seen in a cream pitcher made of hard-paste porcelain painted with pink enamel produced



Figure 2. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

in Bristol ca. 1770-1781, which is also in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 2).² Famille rose was introduced to China during the reign of Kangxi (1654-1722). Ordinarily, it was applied to the surface of glazed pottery, which had been fired, and was then re-fired at a lower temperature.³

The Chinese porcelain plate has a double border of diaper pattern edged with gilt. Within the double border is a flower motif composed of oriental lilies with large blossoms. The central design is a variation of the traditional Chinese landscape theme. The landscape is heavily stylized so as to appear “exotic” and “oriental” to the European eye. It is composed of Chinese architecture interspersed with rocks, flowers, and willow trees and branches. The Chinese architecture includes an open pavilion and a number of ornamental imitations of pagodas,



Figure 1. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

with a tiered roof and curved steps. It is located on a watercourse, which allows for a sense of perspective. It is also notable that there are no Chinese figures within the scene as were present in the blue and white “Willow Pattern.” This allows for a European audience to insert itself within the scene as a space for global imagination and creation.⁴

This paper will begin with a detailed description of material culture and globalization. It will look at the importance of engaging with material culture and the impact of globalization in the British Empire ca. 1785-1790. Modes of production will then be discussed at both Chinese and European porcelain manufactories. The Chinese porcelain plate will be looked at in its original setting in English dining custom and culture as well as its situation within the World Ceramics galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which offers a chronological and world-wide introduction to the Far East and South East Asia, the Middle East, and European ceramics prior to 1800. The conclusion will determine that British imperialism influenced those who used and consumed the Chinese porcelain plate. This method of organization will allow for a more thoughtful and organized presentation of information, as well as a more complete understanding of Chinese porcelain, often called “China,” as it was used to construct an artificial image of China within the British Empire.⁵

¹ “Dish,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O33681/dish-unknown/>

² “Cream Jug,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O248369/cream-jug-bristol-porcelain-factory/>

³ “Dish,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O33681/dish-unknown/>

⁴ Gerritsen and Riello. “Spaces for Global Interactions,” 112

⁵ For this and the following paragraph, please see Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, “Spaces of Global Interactions: The Material Landscapes of Global History,” in *Writing Material Culture History*, ed. by Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 112

⁶ Gerritsen and Riello, “Introduction,” 4

MATERIAL CULTURE

Material culture history helps us to understand objects as they relate to the everyday lives of ordinary people who lived in the past.⁶ However, “common people” did not necessarily leave behind the written records of kings, queens, prime ministers, and generals. Their lives are more easily traced through the material goods that they bought, sold, and used, which was a practice common to both the rich and poor. The “consumer revolution” of the eighteenth century, when more goods were available to larger social groups than ever before, was the catalyst for much historical research in the 1980s and 1990s. This was followed by studies of consumption patterns in Renaissance Italy, early modern continental Europe, and the nineteenth and twentieth century. More recently, consumption has been studied in the cultures of the Ottoman Empire, the Persian Empire, Ming and Qing China, and Colonial Latin America as part of an engagement with global history.

This is a relatively recent field of inquiry that has arisen over the past thirty years or so.⁷ Originally, it was the domain of sociology, anthropology, and archaeology, and was used to investigate pre-historic and ancient as well as non-Western cultures.⁸ However, it has become a part of other disciplines since history’s ‘material turn.’ Accordingly, material goods and artifacts serve as sources of information about past cultures and the social, cultural, and economic relationships of people’s lives. Within art history, this is represented by the transition from the fine arts and two-dimensional artifacts of painting, drawing, and sculpture to the decorative arts and three-dimensional artifacts. The

decorative arts include ceramic art, glassware, furniture, interiors, metalwork, textile arts, and woodwork. Most often, these art forms were made for use in the home and were ascribed special meaning by those who owned and used them.

While the worth of material culture studies in strengthening our understanding of the written and visual past has been made evident, there are several areas of limitation as well.⁹ Material limitation offers the perspective that the vast majority of objects do not survive. Although it is important for art historians to consider existing objects in relation to those that are absent, this is not always possible. Within the decorative arts, metalwork was often melted down for the sake of the precious metals and jewels. Another complication is that objects have often lost the context that made them meaningful. This de-contextualization must be acknowledged in art historical research. There are also conceptual limitations wherein objects survive over a period of time. The Chinese Ming vase is both a source for historians in the present and an object that existed 400 years ago when it was made. Since then, it may have lost one of its parts, or been chipped or broken.

There are also practical limitations in material culture studies. Many objects have restricted access. Those that are on display in museums and galleries are typically unavailable for close inspection by researchers. The vast majority of objects that are in storage are accessible only in cases in which the curators believe it will not endanger the object.¹⁰ There are also a number of objects that cannot be handled, such as ancient and medieval textiles.

Another consideration is that not all objects are in museum collections. Many are held by antique dealers, auction houses, private collectors, and other sources. This makes material culture a logistically complex area of study that requires the art historian to consult archives and textual sources such as exhibition catalogues, museum indexes, and online databases and resources. While material culture studies has the ability to enrich the study of art history, it must be approached with due consideration.

Although there are limitations to material culture studies, this paper will attempt to address them. While material limitation is a consideration, there are more than 1,000 pieces of Chinese porcelain in the Victoria and Albert Museum produced between 1750-1800 alone. While the pink enamel painted porcelain is not as well-known as the blue and white ware is now, it was a popular option at the time. De-contextualization requires the use of non-academic sources such as cookbooks and etiquette guides that provide insight into the English dining customs and cultures of the period. Practical limitations must be acknowledged as the most challenging to address. There is one photograph of the Chinese porcelain plate available on the Victoria and Albert Museum website. The description is also incomplete, and there is no mention of the gilding on the edges of the plate. However, the image is detailed enough to allow for close observation.

GLOBALIZATION AND TRANS-NATIONALISM

It is worth considering material culture outside of the traditional national boundaries.¹¹ The

⁷ Anne D’Alleva, “Art’s Context,” in *Methods and Theories of Art History*, ed. by Anne D’Alleva (London: Laurence King Publishing, Ltd, 2012), 53

⁸ Gerritsen and Riello, “Introduction,” 1

⁹ For this and the following paragraph, please see Gerritsen and Riello, “Introduction,” 8-9

¹⁰ Gerritsen and Riello, “Introduction,” 9

¹¹ Gerritsen and Riello, “Spaces of Global Interactions,” 111

theoretical and practical analysis of objects is one way to study wider geographies and connections between areas of the world.

Globalization began in the early modern period ca. 1400 to 1800 when new commodities circulated across continents and global markets. This is explained by many economists and economic historians via the intensification of the world mercantile networks as the result of new and more direct maritime routes and the fact that cheaper Asian wares found easy markets in Europe and, over time, also in the New World. However, this interpretation has been challenged in recent years by showing how early modern consumers were neither satisfied by unadulterated commodities or by simple customization. These commodities bore in their designs, forms, and materials if not the knowledge, then at least the appreciation of wider geographies.

Chinese blue and white ware, manufactured in China and exported to other parts of Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America, as well Indian cotton textiles decorated with colorful motifs were equally successful in the global market. They were traded by the millions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the English, Dutch, and French East India companies. These porcelains and cottons were integrated into the daily lives of these millions of people. Chinese porcelain was not only an alternative to local earthenware and other ceramics, but also an “imagined world” for the owner and consumer. According to Anne Gerritsen, these commodities “created a series of associations and ideas about its provenance.” This contributed to these commodities as new spaces for global interaction

and “reconfigured geographies” so that societies who were thousands of miles apart formed a connection.¹²

But the “imagined worlds” that commodities inhabited were mediated ones. They were the result of negotiation in which those imagined spaces emerged from a dialogue between producers and consumers.¹³ This is seen in the European shape of the porcelain plate, for which the East India trading companies supplied models and patterns for the Chinese potters. While the average English man or woman spent most of their life within a few miles, they became conscious of an expanded world through artifacts and commodities such as the Chinese figures on the surface of a Willow Pattern porcelain plate. Although porcelain had been manufactured in Europe since Meissen ca. 1710, it continued to have a Chinoiserie theme that allowed for the imagination of other worlds. People were able to interpret and extrapolate from their own viewing experience in a way that contributed to a sense of the “global imaginary.”

This sense of the global imaginary was closely intertwined with the way that China was treated within the British Empire. The British Empire was comprised of dominions, colonies, protectorates, mandates, and other territories ruled or administered by the United Kingdom. It began with overseas colonies and trading posts established by Britain in the late sixteenth to early eighteenth century. When this Chinese porcelain plate was produced ca. 1785-1790, England had relinquished its thirteen colonies in North America and turned to Asia, Africa, and the Pacific for economic sustenance. However, it remained powerful

and influential enough for George Macartney, 1st Earl Macartney, (1737-1806) to comment “of this vast empire on which the sun never sets, and whose bounds nature has not yet ascertained.” Britain became interested in China for its Chinese tea, porcelain, and silk. However, it did not have enough silver to trade for these resources.

The British resolved this issue through the trade of Indian opium. While Britain did not rule in Mainland China as it did in India and British West Africa, it still maintained a level of influence over its economic and political affairs. This is made evident by the East India Company’s production of opium, which was a highly lucrative commodity that had been banned in China by the Imperial edict of 1729. The increase of opium in the late eighteenth century contributed to the social instability that resulted in the First Opium War (1839-1842) and the Second Opium War (1856-1860). This relates to the Chinese porcelain plate in that citizens of the British Empire felt to be in a position of power and privilege over those of China. Consequently, they were able to define the way that they “performed” or “presented” China. The plate was then considered to represent China, even though it was European in shape and English in decoration.

PORCELAIN MANUFACTORIES

This Chinese porcelain plate was produced at Jingdezhen, in Jiangxi province, southern China. It is located in the transitional area between the Huangshan-Haiyushang mountain range and the Plain of Poyang Lake. Jingdezhen is named for the emperor Jingde (1004-1007) because the site of the imperial

¹² Gerritsen and Riello, “Global Spaces of Interaction,” 121

¹³ Gerritsen and Riello, “Global Spaces of Interaction,” 121

kilns was established during his reign.¹⁴ Jingdezhen has produced most of China's porcelain for more than 1,000 years. It is rich in natural resources of porcelain stone, Kaolin, coal, tungsten, gold dust, cuprum, fluorite, sulfur, limestone, and marble. Kaolin has been removed from active reserves for going on 300 years. The combination of raw materials, fuel, and cheap transport allowed it to produce porcelain for Asia, Europe, and America for several centuries. The significant state support it received was also helpful. Most Chinese emperors regarded Chinese porcelain as a profitable trade, with the notable exception of the first Ming emperor, Hongwu (1368-1398).

Hongwu tried to outlaw trade, but this ban was not effective and profitable trade continued into the Ming and Qing dynasties. There were once more than three hundred porcelain factories contained in Jingdezhen.¹⁵ The porcelain produced was pure white in color and without stain. The merchants who sold it referred to it as "Jao-chou Jade," and it was considered more beautiful than the red porcelain of Chen-ting-fu and the emerald green porcelain of Lung-ch'uan-hsien. While porcelain was considered a refined art, the porcelain manufactories were considered centers of manufacturing rather than centers

of art production.¹⁶ This is because of the perception that Jingdezhen relied on Peking, Nanking, Canton, and Europe for designs and decoration in the absence of local inspiration. This is made evident in the commissioning of dragon bowls, huge slabs, and pinth for columns for the Imperial Court at Peking, as well as the European shapes and patterns produced for the East India Companies seen in the Chinese porcelain plate.

While Jingdezhen made porcelain for Asia, Europe, and America, it was not well known outside of China.¹⁷ This is because of its location in Mainland China and the Chinese policies of relative isolationism. Jingdezhen is located about 300 miles inland from Shanghai, which is located on the Yangtze River Delta in Eastern China and served as a favorable port with economic potential for Europe, and required a boat trip up the Yangtze River into Po Yang Lake and then to the Chang River. Although it is more accessible today, it was likely not known by the citizens of the British Empire who would have purchased and gifted, and used and consumed this Chinese porcelain plate. Given that porcelain is not perishable, the remote location and minimal interaction of Jingdezhen with other countries was not a major issue for European porcelain trade. However,

Europe was not satisfied with sourcing their porcelain from China.

Chinese and Japanese porcelains were highly esteemed in the eighteenth century, but Europe wanted to be able to produce their own porcelain. The German alchemist Johann Friedrich Bottger discovered the materials required to produce white, translucent, high-fired porcelain in 1709.¹⁸ His patron, Augustus the Strong, then established a porcelain manufactory at Meissen, Germany in 1710. The manufactory developed a new and extensive range of enamel colors and the painters excelled at Chinoiserie and the traditional Chinese landscape theme. These fanciful depictions of an imagined China were the most popular form of decoration in this era. The success of Meissen led to the establishment of other porcelain manufactories in Europe. Chelsea was the most important porcelain manufactory in Britain and was established in 1743. It was closely followed by Bow in 1747, Royal Crown Derby in 1750, and Royal Worcester in 1751.

While the porcelain manufactories in Britain produced materials of fine quality, they did not allow for the global spaces of creation provided by authentic Chinese pottery. The East India Company may have dictated the European shape of the plate,

¹⁴ For this and the following paragraph, please see "The Chinese Imperial Kilns at Jingdezhen," The British Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/article_index/c/the_chinese_imperial_kilns_at.aspx

¹⁵ For this and the following paragraph, please see Chiang Chi, "A Memoir on Porcelain Manufacturing," *Ching-Te-Chen: Views of a Porcelain City*, ed. by Robert Tichane (New York: New York State Institute for Glaze Research, 1983), 43

¹⁶ Tichane, "Conclusion," 422

¹² Gerritsen and Riello, "Global Spaces of Interaction," 121

¹³ Gerritsen and Riello, "Global Spaces of Interaction," 121

¹⁴ For this and the following paragraph, please see "The Chinese Imperial Kilns at Jingdezhen," The British Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/article_index/c/the_chinese_imperial_kilns_at.aspx

¹⁵ For this and the following paragraph, please see Chiang Chi, "A Memoir on Porcelain Manufacturing," *Ching-Te-Chen: Views of a Porcelain City*, ed. by Robert Tichane (New York: New York State Institute for Glaze Research, 1983), 43

¹⁶ Tichane, "Conclusion," 422

¹⁷ Robert Tichane, "Preface," in *Ching-Te-Chen: Views of a Porcelain City*, ed. by Robert Tichane (New York: New York State Institute for Glaze Research, 1983), ix

¹⁸ "German and Austrian Porcelain in the Eighteenth Century," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed May 15, 2015 http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/porg/hd_porg.htm

and the English transfer-print decoration, but it was more of a source of connection with China for the British person who used and consumed it as Chinese.¹⁹ The British Empire influenced the perception of China as “exotic” and “oriental” in that Britain was the absolute and China was the other.²⁰ China was defined and differentiated with reference to Britain and not Britain with reference to China. Because of this, the traditional Chinese landscape that the British perceived to be “Chinese” became an authentic representation of China to the Western world. This Chinese porcelain plate provided the impetus for an imagined space that contributed to the global image of China.

CULTURE AND CUSTOMS OF ENGLISH DINING

It is worth considering how the plate would have been used as part of a material culture perspective. The French court of Louis XIV



Figure 3

established the customs of dining throughout Britain and mainland Europe with service à la Française. Service à la Française dictates that all of the dishes are placed on the table in a prescribed location for each course (fig. 3).²¹ The diners then help

themselves to the dishes nearest them and pass their plates to their neighbors for those that are out of their reach. After each course has been served, servants have a limited role confined to distributing the oil and vinegar and bread, as well as refilling the drinking glasses after washing them. It was considered poor form for servants to serve the diners, or to disturb the dishes once they were in place. While on the European continent, meals may consist of eight courses, including dessert, they were typically limited to three courses in England, following which the women retired to the drawing room for tea and the men remained around the table for drinks.

The first course was made up of soups and stews, vegetables and boiled fish and meats arranged in a centerpiece. Toward the end of the first course, “remove” dishes of meat or fish were placed at the end of the table and were intended to help with the wait between courses. The second course also consisted of vegetables, meats, and fish, with the addition of pies and baked goods. The second course was arranged in the same manner as the first and there would be remove dishes afterward as well. Elaborate desserts were popular in this time period and

often consisted of fresh and sugared fruits, sweetmeats, jams, jellies, and sugar sculptures intended to evoke gardens, architecture, and pastoral scenes. These natural themes were also evoked in the elaborate dinner and dessert services, such as the

Swan Service from Meissen ca. 1739-1740. The service is decorated with oriental flowers and a gold rim.

Porcelain sculptures conformed to this “natural” and “oriental” theme as well. The British Ambassador Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams had a great Meissen service gifted to him by Augustus III of Saxony in 1745, which included dessert dishes in the form of artichokes, laurel leaves, and sunflowers, as well as 166 figures, of which 54 had a pastoral theme and 34 were connected to the hunt. These natural themes are echoed within the landscape theme of this Chinese porcelain plate. There is also an additional element of the “exotic” and the “oriental.” Given that China is often seen as more natural and unspoiled than the West, it is understandable that the Chinese landscape was chosen with this theme in mind. It is also worth mentioning that most large households had a French confectioner to prepare sweetmeats and sugar sculptures for the dessert course. The design and decoration of the plate was still visible beneath these fine and “foreign” desserts.

It is worth considering French cooking in the light of “spaces for global imagination” because it can be inferred that the Western world was feminized and romanticized as well. While the average English man or woman was more familiar with France than China, it was still considered foreign and “exotic.” Both China and France contributed to the culture and customs of fine dining in England. This demonstrates the far-reaching influence of the British Empire. France was in the midst of the French Revolution (1789-1799) when the Chinese porcelain plate was produced ca. 1785-1790. During the French Revolution, the British supported the Revolutionaries both to weaken France and to uphold the

¹⁹ Gerritsen and Riello, “Spaces of Global Interactions,” 121

²⁰ Simone de Beauvoir. *The Second Sex*. Ed. and trans. H. M. Parshley. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. (1949) 1993.)

²¹ Ivan Day, “Pleasures of the Table,” *Historic Food*. Accessed June 22, 2015. <http://www.historicfood.com/Pleasures-of-the-table2.htm>

British liberal ideas. By employing a French confectioner to prepare sweetmeats and sugar sculptures, Britain subtly reinforced the power dynamics of the Britain-France relationship in a way similar to China.

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL ARTIFACTS

The Chinese porcelain plate is located in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Museum's collection includes more than two thousand years of art in every medium from many parts of the world.²² The Museum was established in 1852, following the success of the Great Exhibition of the previous year. It was founded with the intention to make works of art accessible to everyone, to educate working and middle-class people, and to provide inspiration for British designers and manufacturers. Generous funding meant that the Museum was able to make many important acquisitions. The Museum moved to its present site in South Kensington in 1857. In 1899, Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone of a new building designed to give the Museum a façade and grand entrance. In honor of this occasion, it was renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in memory of the support that Prince Albert had given to the foundation.

The Victoria and Albert Museum is the largest museum of decorative arts in the world and is comprised of more than 2,263,314 objects. However, only about 60,604 objects are on display. In the twentieth century, the Museum has continued to expand its historical collection as well as to acquire contemporary objects. While the Museum's collection is international, it has a number of important British works in the area of silver, ceramics, textiles, and furniture. These objects are

intended to provide insight into the history of design in the British Isles, as well as to broadly portray their cultural history. Additionally, the Museum has a strong Asian collection due to Britain's long "association" with India and South East Asia. Their East Asian collection is considered the best in Europe, and has an emphasis on ceramics and metalwork. There are more than ten Asian galleries that explore themes such as "Influences from Beyond Europe," and "Ceramics Study Galleries Asia and Europe."

The Ceramic Study Galleries house most of the Museum's ceramics collections and spans from Asian and Middle Eastern



Figure 4

ceramics to European pottery prior to 1800. The Chinese porcelain plate is housed within Room 145: World Ceramics (fig. 4).²³ The displays are organized chronologically and explore the "interchange of taste, style, and technology, between the East and West," as exemplified by the spread of blue and white ware from China to the Middle East and on to Europe. The gallery contains many of the Museum's masterpieces and spans more than 4,000 years of ceramic history, from 2500 BCE to present. By presenting this Chinese porcelain plate as part of this composite of cultures and time

periods, it is seen as "exotic" and "oriental," but not Chinese. While "correctness" is often considered the domain of the nineteenth and twentieth century, it is no more prevalent in this display than that it was when the plate was used in English dining ca. 1785-1790. Although people are no longer reliant on Willow Pattern porcelain for their construction of China, they still seem to heavily depend on it, as evidenced by this display.

BRITAIN AND THE ART OF EMPIRE

The history of this Chinese porcelain plate is marked by British imperialism. This is evidenced by the English culture and customs that combined elements of France and China to produce a uniquely British way of dining. This way of dining was characterized by the use of cultural domination and appropriation. By referring to the Chinese porcelain plate merely as "china," with an emphatically lower-case "c," Britain reduced China to a subordinate and lower-caste position within the Western world. China effectively became the artificial and inauthentic, heavily-stylized landscape that was displayed on the plate. It represented everything that Britain was not: the passive, feminine "Orient." This is made clear by the absence of figures, which allowed the British viewer to gaze without fear of confrontation. Because of this, the plate created a space of imagination in which the British viewer had absolute authority.

The legacy of British imperialism is also made evident by the display practices at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is shown passively within sleek modern cabinets with metal bases and glass shelves as compared to the way it was originally used and displayed. It is

²² For this and the following paragraph, see "A Brief History of the Museum," Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 4, 2015. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/a/a-brief-history-of-the-museum/>

²³ "The Ceramics galleries: old and new," Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 15, 2015 <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-ceramics-galleries-old-and-new/>

included with Asian, Middle Eastern, and European pottery before 1800, likely because it was produced in China and purchased in Iran. While it was made for and used by a British person, it is “othered” by virtue of its relationship to the Orient. Ultimately, the Chinese porcelain plate belongs in the British Galleries in company of the other objects and artifacts that belong to its time period and culture. It should be displayed actively in a way that reflects its original use. It has no more of a relationship to the ceramic art forms of the Middle East and North Africa than would a porcelain plate from the Chelsea or Bow porcelain manufactories

Additionally, British imperialism has been an important component of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Museum is located near the royal residence of Kensington Palace. This has been a residence of the royal family since the 17th century and is the official London home of

the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince Harry, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke and Duchess of Kent, and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent.²⁴ The Museum has a long tradition of royal support that began with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in the mid-nineteenth century. They hold many of the royal images of Queen Elizabeth II and recently had an exhibition entitled “Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton: A Diamond Jubilee Celebration.” While the Museum may present itself as a neutral and non-partisan institution, it relies heavily on the money of the wealthy members of society. Because of this, it must necessarily conform to their whims and fantasies in its display practices. This is why the Victoria and Albert actively perpetuates British imperialism today.

In conclusion, this Chinese porcelain plate has produced its own “world of ideas” in the spaces

of global interaction from ca. 1785-1790 to the present day. Rather than a true “model” of China, the Chinese landscape theme reflects a space for imagination through British imperialism, which has shaped the perception of China as “exotic” or “Oriental” in relation to the Western World. This space for imagination did not result in a true image of China in the eighteenth century, or today, as evidenced by the display practices at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Interestingly, the world of ideas that it has evoked has remained relatively constant. Britain is the absolute and China remains the “other,” existing only in relation to the West. While research for this paper began with the assumption that perceptions of China have changed over time, this is demonstrated not to be the case.

²⁴ “Kensington Palace,” The Official Website of the British Monarchy, accessed May 15, 2015 <http://www.royal.gov.uk/TheRoyalResidences/KensingtonPalace/Today.aspx>

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Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

I took Milton Wendland's "Studies in: Queer Film and TV" class the summer of 2012. During this class I learned that I could write on my favourite show through an academic and feminist lens. I was shown that academic work on film and television was a necessity in an ever-expanding media-based society. Milton taught me that we must be critical when watching shows because of the massive influence the media has on society and culture. I also learned that if I don't use my position of privilege as a student at a top research university to at least try to make a difference, I can't assume anything will change.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

It's a lot harder to find academic sources on my topic. Much of what I'm researching is in its infancy in terms of being studied at the academic level. There is also a huge disconnect between what is considered scholastic work and what is "merely fandom" in terms of analyzing *Doctor Who*. Given my focus on representation of women and minorities, it can be difficult to find published sources that were not written by cisgender, heterosexual, white men, which has shown me the gap in research that I aim to help fill.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

I love being able to write on my favourite show. I also greatly enjoy blurring the lines between traditionally scholastic work and the analyses done on various websites by fans. I enjoy bringing a feminist perspective into media research, particularly for a show with such a rich history of both progressive and oppressive narratives. I find it beneficial to have a plethora of voices and perspectives on any given subject, and my goal is to help make this a reality within my chosen research topic.

"Strong Female Characters" An Analytical Look at Representation in Moffat-Era *Doctor Who*

Nichole Flynn

ABSTRACT

The current era of *Doctor Who*, beginning in 2010, under showrunner Steven Moffat has presented a downward trend in the representation of nuanced female characters, as well as racial and sexual minorities. This essay will be analyzing the representation and presentation of the three main female companions under Moffat's run as showrunner, as well as those few characters of minority sexualities and racial identities. This discourse will be made through an intersectional feminist perspective with a focus on feminist TV studies, critical race theory, and queer theory. The key concepts to be included are that of agency, heteronormativity, and the male gaze.

Moffat's female characters are limited in the roles in which they are allowed to fill. While Russell T. Davies' (showrunner from 2005-2009) companions had a range of personal and public conflicts and issues, Moffat's companions are shown to only fulfil the "traditional ideal feminine roles [which] has four dimensions: fulfilling cultural standards of beauty and fashion, performing domestic/family skills, caring for and satisfying the needs of others, and acquiring male attention ." Each of the three major female characters created by Moffat are shown to only have agency when fulfilling one of these four dimensions.

Premiering on November 23rd, 1963, *Doctor Who* was the brain child of Canadian film and television producer Sydney Newman and English film and TV producer Verity Lambert. Originally, *Doctor Who* was a science-fiction show meant to use time travel as a tool to educate a young audience about history. The first Doctor was a grouchy old man played by William Hartnell who travelled with his grand-daughter Susan Foreman and two secondary school teachers, Barbara Wright and Ian Chesterton. The Doctor is a Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey who travels around the cosmos in his TARDIS (Time and Relative Dimensions in Space), a spaceship disguised as a 1950s Police Public Call Box. He is over 1000 years old and has the ability to regenerate upon death; an attribute which has allowed the show to continue over the last 51 years with over 12 actors (all white men) portraying the titular role of the Doctor. Over 80 characters, male, female, and robotic, have travelled with the Doctor as his companions. Typically, the main companion has been young, white¹, attractive, and female, often from contemporary Britain. It is through these companions that the audience is introduced to the world of the Doctor. During the long history of *Doctor Who*, there have been various show runners, and the show has gone through numerous changes in how the Doctor and companions

interact. While there were definitely problematic aspects to the Doctor/companion relationships in Classic Who, those characters are not the focus of this essay. Neither are the incredibly nuanced, although still problematic in their own sense, characters written by previous showrunner Russell T. Davies²; instead, I will be discussing the highly sexist, often racist, and frequently homophobic writing for *Doctor Who* under current showrunner, Steven Moffat. It is important to note that “showrunner” refers to Moffat’s position as head writer and producer of the show. Thus, even when an episode is not penned by him, he still holds executive power in regards to what makes it into the final product and therefore should be held accountable for problematic elements of scripts written by the other (white men) writers on his staff.³ Moffat has also written or co-written half of the episodes aired during his era⁴ and has only employed eleven other writers over the last four years⁵. Ergo, the overarching look and feel of the show is to be attributed to Moffat.

The current era of *Doctor Who*, beginning in 2010, has presented a downward trend in the representation of nuanced female characters, as well as racial and sexuality minorities. By this I mean that the characters created and written predominately by Moffat are less dynamic or “realistic” than

those written by his predecessor. One of the ways this has been studied is via the use of infographs that chart the pass/fail rate of each episode in regards to the Bechdel test.⁶ However, while important, passing the Bechdel test does not necessitate that a piece of media is “feminist” or “progressive” narratively. Thus, this essay will be examining and analyzing the representation and presentation of the three main female companions: Amelia (Amy) Williams nee Pond, Melody Pond/River Song, and Clara (Oswin) Oswald as created by and written during Moffat’s run as showrunner, as well as those few characters of minority sexualities and racial identities.

While *Doctor Who* has been written about extensively in various fields, there has been a lack of feminist scholarly discourse on the series⁷. Most of the feminist critiques of the show have occurred outside of the academic realm, most notably on Tumblr, a blogging platform which allows for the sharing of ideas and criticisms among a diverse fan base. Much of my own analysis of the show has occurred on Tumblr in part due to the active and insightful, if non-academic, running feminist critiques of Moffat and the show at large that are prevalent on certain blogs⁸. My desire when writing on *Doctor Who* is to blur the lines between “academic” and “fan” in an attempt to break down elitist

¹ Martha Jones (2007-2008) was the first and remains the only black female reoccurring companion.

² Who, along with executive producer Julie Gardner, successfully revived the show in 2005 after a sixteen year hiatus from television (broken only temporarily in 1996 with the televised movie *Doctor Who: The Movie*).

³ It is also important to note that there has not been a woman writer on the *Doctor Who* staff since Helen Raynor, whose last written two-part episodes, “The Sontaran Stratagem”/“The Poison Sky”, aired in the spring of 2008. There have only been two women directors during Moffat’s tenure: Catherine Morshead, who directed two episodes in series 5 (“Amy’s Choice” and “The Lodger”); and Rachel Talalay, who directed the two-part finale of series 8 (“Dark Water”/“Death in Heaven”).

⁴ 28/57 as of December 2014; he is also scheduled to write or co-write three of the first six episodes of series 9.

⁵ More information about the production aspects of the show can be found on the “List of *Doctor Who* serials” Wikipedia page.

⁶ Named for Alison Bechdel, the Bechdel test is a litmus test for the presence of female characters in a piece of media. In order to “pass,” a film or TV show must include (1) at least two named female characters, (2) who talk to each other, (3) about something other than a man or men. For more information on the test in general: <http://bechdeltest.com/>; for more information on the Bechdel test as it applies to *Doctor Who*: <http://www.doctorwhotv.co.uk/how-often-does-doctor-who-pass-the-bechdel-test-71608.htm>

⁷ As of the writing of this essay, there has only been one book published which analyses *Doctor Who* through use of critical race theory: *Doctor Who and Race*.

⁸ For further reading, see these feminist *Doctor Who* blogs: <http://dwfeministwatch.tumblr.com/>, <http://feministwhoniverse.tumblr.com/>, and <http://whovianfeminism.tumblr.com/>.

boundaries of who can be a “critic.” I also aim to help create a more nuanced understanding of the show within a feminist perspective. In order to achieve such lofty goals, this analysis will be made through an intersectional feminist perspective, as understood through the works of Kemberle Crenshaw, with a focus on feminist TV studies, critical race theory, and queer theory; it shall explore the concepts of agency, heteronormativity, and the male gaze, as presented within the narrative of the show.

The first of these concepts, agency, is one of the fundamental cornerstones of feminism, particularly in relation to what I call “fandom feminism,” which refers to individuals who, like myself, critically analyze popular culture while embodying feminist ideology in their worldviews. “Agency is the ability for a person, or agent, to act for herself or himself. A person who is not allowed to act for her/himself is lacking in agency, or is said to have been denied agency. In geek circles, women (real and fictional) often lack agency compared to their male counterparts.”⁹ This can be seen throughout Moffat’s era as many of the female companions’ choices are made due to the overwhelming influence of the Doctor. Moffat’s female characters are limited in the roles in which they are allowed to fill. While Russell T. Davies’ companions had a range of personal and public conflicts and issues, Moffat’s companions are shown to only fulfil the “traditional ideal feminine roles [which have] four dimensions: fulfilling cultural standards of beauty and fashion, performing domestic/family skills, caring for and satisfying the needs

of others, and acquiring male attention.”¹⁰ Each of the three major female characters created by Moffat are shown to only have agency when fulfilling one of these four dimensions.

These “traditional ideal feminine roles” in which the companions are repeatedly forced into is a result of a heteronormative worldview. “Heteronormativity means . . . that heterosexuality is the norm, in culture, in society, in politics. Heteronormativity points out the expectation of heterosexuality as it is written into our world. . . . It means that *everyone and everything is judged from the perspective of straight*.”¹¹ Thus, heteronormativity refers to the accepted narrative that people fall into distinct and complementary genders (man/woman) with natural roles in life. “On the majority of television shows heteronormativity operates in the exact same way it does in society: invisibly.”¹² While heteronormativity is present throughout the show, it is perhaps most insidious in the representation of the only reoccurring queer couple, Madame Vastra and Jenny Flint, a dynamic discussed later in this essay.

Whovian⁹ Piers D. Britton, author of *TARDISbound: Navigating the Universes of Doctor Who*, argues that Amy Pond’s narrative is a “subversion of [heteronormative] patterns” established previously on the show because she “is far less conventionally ‘romantic’ . . . [and is] both confident and frankly unsentimental about sex, and more specifically about her sexual attraction to the Doctor. . . . Amy’s sexuality is in many ways a defining element in her persona simply because it is overt and unapologetic.”¹³ However,

this reading of Amy ignores the prevalent use of the male gaze during scenes in which Amy is onscreen, particularly during the “reveal” of grown-up (19-year-old) Amy as a kissogram. While Amy may have some degree of agency in her actions and wardrobe,¹⁰ how she is shot during these scenes greatly impacts the effectiveness of said agency within the narrative. Britton also glosses over the fact that “Amy brazenly trying to kiss [the Doctor] and unbutton his shirt”¹⁴ while the Doctor is shown to be visually uncomfortable is an act of sexual assault¹¹. While this scene does establish that Amy has some degree of agency, her agency is only in relation to her sexuality and frequently presented via the male gaze. This scene is the first of several examples of sexual assault during Moffat’s era, and like those to come, this one is played for laughs. I go into further detail of this unfortunate trope in Moffat’s writing later on.

“The male gaze,” while a noticeable aspect of cinematic history, was unnamed until Laura Mulvey’s 1975 article *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*:

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female form which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Woman displayed as sexual object is the leit-motif of erotic spectacle . . . she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire.¹⁵

⁹ Whovian: one who watches/is a fan of *Doctor Who*.

¹⁰ Actress Karen Gillan has stated on the record that Amy’s micro-miniskirts were her idea.

¹¹ *Doctor Who* 5.5, “Flesh and Stone”

The male gaze is also a way of filming in which the female subject is segmented into various body parts (called fragmenting) before being presented as a complete person. This type of character presentation is a form of objectification which limits the empathy the audience feels towards the character in question. In Moffat's era, the male gaze litters the show, from the upward panning of Amy Pond in her introduction as an adult in "The Eleventh Hour" to the between the legs upward panning of Jenny Flint in "The Crimson Horror."

AMY POND—THE GIRL WHO WAITED

Amelia Pond first meets the Doctor as a young child. She quickly becomes enamored with him due to his eccentric ways and his promise to take her with him on his travels. However, what has been five minutes for him has been "twelve years and four psychiatrists"^{ix} according to a grown-up Amy Pond. Adult Amy's first appearance is via a slow lingering shot from her legs up while dressed in a police woman kissogram costume. This fragmentation of Amy in her introduction results in numerous references to Amy's legs throughout Moffat's era, including long after Amy has left the show.

It is implied in her introductory episode that much of her childhood has been shaped by the seeming abandonment of her parents as well as her sporadic and strange encounters with the Doctor, previous to her becoming a full-time companion. Thus the instant sexualization of Amy is made even more unsettling due to the previous introduction of her character as a

lonely seven-year-old child whose name the Doctor says is "a bit fairytale". Thus when adult Amy (who shortened her name due to the Doctor's influence) is overtly sexualized both by the filming of the scene and the narrative, it is implied that her sexual agency is caused by a lack of parental guidance and her abandonment by the male character. However, Amy is given very little screen time to process or express her emotions regarding her clear abandonment issues. Amy's mental health issues are ignored throughout her time as a companion, and her history of "four psychiatrists" is never brought up again in the series. Amy endures a great amount of trauma during her time as the Doctor's companion. According to Moffat, "part of the mission statement when writing a script for *Doctor Who* is how bad of a time can you give Amy Pond?"^{xi} This is made quite clear during Amy's two and a half seasons as the Doctor's companion.

Amy is continuously used as a plot device. She is given little to no agency within her life, and her history becomes so dependent on the Doctor's that her life begins to unravel without him. During one of the Doctor's many absences from Amy's life, she and her husband Rory have separated and just filed for divorce. This dismantling of her seemingly perfect marriage is apparently caused by Amy's sudden infertility, which is implied to have occurred due to the hostile and experimental nature of her "Mystical Pregnancy" in series six. Well-known feminist blogger Anita Sarkeesian discusses this common phenomenon in her YouTube series *Tropes vs. Women*. In episode

five, "The Mystical Pregnancy," Sarkeesian explains that when an author uses this trope, they are removing the autonomy of the female character and instead is using their body to move the plot along. This is exactly the case with Amy who undergoes two mystical pregnancies during her tenure on the TARDIS.

The second time^{xii} Amy is revealed to be pregnant, she believes it to be a mistake after showing no physical changes after a few months. However, Amy has actually been replaced with a doppelgänger made out of intelligent flesh while the real Amy is indeed pregnant and has been kidnapped and locked in a room strapped to a bed awaiting her time to give birth^{xiii}. One Tumblr user states that "part of Amy's mystical pregnancy allowed Karen Gillan to be sexy and running around in a mini skirt while all the while being fat, hormonal and [pregnant] behind closed doors. She needed to give birth but we needed to still be able to perve^{xiii}." This swapping of Amys and her hidden pregnancy is an overarching theme of the first half of series six, which has the Doctor scanning Amy without her knowledge in every episode as he tries to figure out how she can be both pregnant and not pregnant. While the narrative portrays the Doctor's repeated scanning of Amy and unwillingness to disclose pertinent information to her as being for Amy's own good, these actions are invasive and done without Amy's consent or knowledge. Not once does this season focus on Amy's feelings regarding pregnancy or starting a family. Instead, the Doctor is allowed to keep his theories secret from Amy,

¹² The first time is in episode 5.7, "Amy's Choice": Amy finds herself very pregnant and must choose between two realities, each of which has an aspect of life she desires but that apparently cannot co-exist. Namely, she can either travel with the Doctor having adventures, or she can settle down in a quiet town with her husband and raise a family. At the end of the episode, however, it is revealed that neither scenario was real, and that the three characters were trapped in dual dream states caused by Amy's insecurities and alien dream dust.

¹³ *Doctor Who* 6.1/6.2, 6.5/6.6, 6.7; "The Impossible Astronaut"/"Day of the Moon", "The Rebel Flesh"/"The Almost People", "A Good Man Goes to War", respectively.

thus putting her physical and mental health in jeopardy; as stated earlier, it is due to this forced pregnancy that Amy is rendered infertile.

This narrative arc is problematic and sexist for several reasons. First, the narrative strips Amy of any and all agency regarding her body and her reproductive choices. She is repeatedly lied to and denied important information and thus is not allowed to participate in the rescuing of her actual body. Instead she is regulated to a “damsel in distress,” and is not told about her predicament until the Doctor has figured out what is going on. Even then, all she is told, before effectively being killed by the Doctor, is that the body she has been living in for the past several months is a doppelgänger and she is given the ominous message to “push, but only when she says so^{xiii}”. After being obliterated by the Doctor, Amy awakens to find herself strapped to a hospital bed in a dressing gown about to give birth while her captor, Madame Kovarian, watches through a window in the door. Shortly after giving birth, her daughter is violently taken from her during the Battle of Demon’s Run, in which several brave individuals fought and died protecting her and her child. While Amy is given some screen time to process this emotional trauma, the scene does not last very long and the only form of comfort she receives is when the Doctor (allegedly her best friend) asks her husband Rory for permission before hugging her. Although this scene is short and may seem trivial, this is a reoccurring component of Amy’s arc on the show, and thus implies the male ownership of Amy by her husband. While typically the Doctor addresses Amy as “Pond,” during moments of emotional duress or potential platonic intimacy, the Doctor refers to her as Amy Williams. These moments are then followed by Rory granting permission to the Doctor,

allowing him to comfort Amy. Narratively these scenes add nothing except to reinforce the patriarchal idea that women are owned by the men in their lives, in these instances by their husbands. Once married, “Amy becomes the possession of her husband and is made an object to trade between the men. Every time the Doctor wants to hug her, he addresses Rory:

The Doctor: ‘Permission?’

Rory: ‘Granted.’

This scene is repeated so often that the Doctor no longer specifies what the permission is for^{xiv}. While each of these encounters is played as a joke, the control is real. Rory is given the power to decide if and when Amy is allowed comfort from her best friend. Sexism passed off as harmless humour is a very common form of misogyny in the media and by portraying sexism through jokes, *Doctor Who* (and by extension Moffat) is presenting these actions as acceptable to the audience.

Another major problematic element of the use of the mystical pregnancy trope is that it links Amy’s worth to her ability to reproduce. As mentioned earlier, during one of the Doctor’s absences from their lives, it is revealed that Amy and Rory are getting a divorce due to Amy’s sudden infertility brought on by said mystical pregnancy. This minor subplot of series seven presents Amy as feeling like less of a woman due to her inability to have children. By placing so much value on a woman’s ability to reproduce, the narrative is saying that infertile women are less than their childbearing counterparts.

Although the introduction to series seven emphasizes Amy and Rory’s increasingly separate lives due to their impending divorce, their conflicts are seemingly resolved by the end of the first episode. This is despite Rory telling Amy that a “basic fact of our relationship is that I love you more than you love me^{xv}.”

This statement by Rory trivializes the numerous traumatic experiences Amy has undergone during the last two seasons, including those involving her expressing her love for Rory. By having the male character emotionally blackmail the female character and then immediately follow that up with the reconciliation of said relationship, Moffat is telling the audience that if one’s partner is not acting in a way deemed appropriate by them, they have the right to attempt to control them via emotional abuse. Between this example of emotional abuse, and the previously described repeated instances of Rory controlling who Amy is allowed to interact with, their relationship is unequal and unhealthy, problematized even more so due to the narrative insistence that this is a great love story.

“The main purpose of Amy Pond was always for her to be the mother of the magical child who would be both the Doctor’s Girlfriend and Ultimate Foe. This was Moffat’s long game. Her relationship with the Doctor was predestined not because of her own, unique self but because of what would be in her uterus^{xvi}.”

RIVER SONG—THE WOMAN WHO KILLS/MARRIES THE DOCTOR

While Amy is subjected to a fair amount of misogyny during her tenure aboard the TARDIS, her development remains stronger and less narratively convoluted (and racist) than that of River Song. River Song has been heralded as the pinnacle of the “strong female character.” On the outside, she is an ass-kicking, gun-wielding, archaeologist with insider knowledge of the Doctor. However, below the surface River is a character with very little to no actual agency. Her entire life, from conception to death, is defined by or around the Doctor, including her chosen name of River Song.

River is initially introduced during Davies' era in the Moffat penned two-part episode "Silence in the Library/Forest of the Dead." During these episodes, River is established as an important figure from the Doctor's future. While this is the first introduction of River, this episode also signifies the end of River's life as she sacrifices herself to save the Doctor. Shortly after Moffat's start as showrunner, River is brought back at a much earlier point in her timeline. River's true identity is then hinted at for the next season and a half until it is revealed that she is the "Child of the TARDIS." Conceived within the time vortex, River Song, born Melody Pond, is Amy's child who was stolen at Demon's Run by a sect of the religious order "The Silence" run by Madame Kovarian. River is thus kidnapped, heavily brainwashed, abused, and fashioned into "the woman who kills the Doctor^{xvii}."

In the episode following River's "big reveal" as Melody, we are introduced to a much younger Melody who is shown to have grown up alongside Amy and Rory as their mutual best friend, Mels¹⁴. This regeneration of Melody marks the only instance of a named black Time Lord in the history of *Doctor Who*. However, this depiction of Mels is during a short montage of anti-authoritative and criminal behaviours, all occurring before the opening credits of the episode. As the montage progresses, so does the seriousness of Mels' crimes, starting first with detention and ending with jail. In each of these instances, Amy is shown waiting for Mels' release, thus juxtaposing the "lawful" white woman with the "criminal" black woman. Mels' short screen time is ended when she is shot and killed by Adolf Hitler after hijacking the TARDIS. Mels then regenerates into

the form best known as River Song, an older, attractive white woman who quickly falls in love with the Doctor, seemingly overcoming lifetimes of programming, adopts the name River Song because of the Doctor, and sacrifices her remaining regenerations in order to save the Doctor. By the end of the episode she is shown applying to the Luna University in the year 5123 to study archaeology because she is "looking for a good man^{xviii}," referring again to the Doctor.

Every major event in River's life is orchestrated by either the Silence or influenced by the Doctor, including the large span of time she spends in a high security prison after being convicted of killing the Doctor, who leaves her there in spite of him being very much alive. Nearly all of River's scenes are shot via the male gaze, including lingering shots of her cleavage, the upward panning of her body, and numerous sexist and sexual remarks made by the Doctor. These include the Doctor referring to Amy and River as "The Legs" and "Mrs. Robinson" respectively. These are two nicknames deeply rooted in sexism and are used to objectify Amy for wearing short skirts and sexualize River for being an attractive older woman. While the Doctor and River's relationship is portrayed as an epic love story transcending time and space, it is in reality largely one-sided and extremely abusive.

There are many instances of abuse depicted in this relationship, each of which are passed off as romantic. In the mid-season finale of series seven, River's wrist becomes trapped in the grip of a Weeping Angel. While she asks the Doctor for help, he insists that she change the future directly after telling her that this event is unchangeable, leaving her to escape on her own.

This results in her having to break her own wrist because the Doctor read that it would happen in a book. While this could be considered a moment of agency for River, regardless of how grim the situation is, she ultimately only breaks her wrist because of the Doctor. Her only real agency comes in her attempt to hide her broken wrist from him, but even this action is motivated by the fear that he would become angry with her. When asked why she does this by Amy, she replies with "never let him see the damage. And never ever let him see you age. He doesn't like endings^{xix}." River's only true moment of agency is in the series six finale when she decides not to kill the Doctor during a fixed point in time. However, this action is motivated by River's apparent love for the Doctor, agreeing only to reverse her decision if he marries her¹⁵.

This wedding, while manipulative, is the second wedding to be shown in two seasons; thus marking the first time in *Doctor Who* history where all of the companions are in heteronormative relationships. Though subtle, by having all of the main characters married the show is saying that marriage is the end-all-be-all of a relationship. By having the titular character, who is a thousand-plus year old alien who has been in numerous relationships of all kinds in the past, marry in a wedding that is the crucible for the episode's plot, the show is sending the message that in order for a relationship to be valid, the couple must be married. These portrayals of relationships and the focus on marriage as the end goal is heteronormative and homophobic, as well as diminutive of the Doctor's previous relationships which did not end in marriage but were just as valid. When included under Davies, weddings and marriages were shown as normal events, not the

¹⁴ *Doctor Who* 6.8, "Let's Kill Hitler"

¹⁵ *Doctor Who* 6.13, "The Wedding of River Song"

defining moment in a character's life. Instead, commitment was shown through actions and loyalty, by the characters treating each other with love and respect. This is very unlike Moffat's depictions of relationships; Amy is emotionally abused and controlled by Rory, as discussed previously, and the Doctor lies to and manipulates River constantly. By having every romantic onscreen relationship end in marriage, Moffat is sending the message to viewers that these are the only relationships worth pursuing. This is especially harmful to young girls who are witnessing these seemingly strong female companions being treated as incomplete or less than because of their marital status. Coupled with Moffat's belief that "There's this issue you're not allowed to discuss: that women are needy. Men can go longer, more happily, without women. That's the truth. We don't, as little boys, play at being married—we try to avoid it for as long as possible. Meanwhile women are out there hunting for husbands^{xx}," these scenes of "strong female characters" being defined by their spouses is sexist.

QUEERING HETERONORMATIVITY— MADAME VASTRA AND JENNY FLINT

The only deviance from this heterosexual marriage motif established in Moffat's first two seasons is in the case of Madame Vastra, "a lizard-woman from beyond the dawn of time^{lxxxi}" and her human wife Jenny Flint. These women are an interspecies lesbian couple living in Victorian London, used primarily in the narrative for shock value and homophobic jokes. While they are a lesbian couple, they are presented heteronormatively

in "Deep Breath,¹⁷" with Vastra embodying the dominant "man" and Jenny as the objectified, subservient "woman." This power imbalance is made even more insidious considering that while Vastra and Jenny are married, "for appearance's sake, we maintain a pretense, in public, that [Jenny] is my maid^{xxii}." However, this line is followed by Jenny saying "doesn't exactly explain why I'm pouring tea in private," followed by Vastra hushing her. In every scene during this episode in which Vastra and Jenny interact, there is an obvious power difference between the two; this is including the first and only kiss between them (to date) in which Vastra uses her stored oxygen to aid Jenny in breathing. Thus, their first kiss is actually an exchange of oxygen and not a romantic kiss like those the heterosexual couples have been able to share.¹⁸ In fact, Jenny is actually sexually assaulted by the Doctor in the previous episode to feature her.

In this scene, the Doctor forcefully bends Jenny over and kisses her in a shot reminiscent of the iconic VJ Day "Sailor Kiss," which was also a non-consensual kiss^{xxiii}. Jenny then slaps the Doctor, who laughs while saying "you have no idea how good that feels^{xxiv}." This scene is quickly followed by what should have been a powerful moment for Jenny as she sheds her restrictive Victorian garb to reveal a leather fighting outfit in order to defend against a group of assailants. Instead, she is overtly sexualized by both the Doctor, whose sonic screwdriver rises in his hand before he embarrassedly pushes it back down in what is most definitely an erection joke, and by the camera which pans up from between her legs before she begins

fighting. These short two scenes are indicative of the rape culture in which we live and reinforces the sexualization and fetishization of women. To have a scene of sexual assault, committed by the Doctor no less, played for laughs in a family television show as hugely successful, and historically progressive, as *Doctor Who* sends the message to millions of children, teens, and adults that this is acceptable behavior. The sexualization of Jenny is made all the worse by the fact that she is a queer woman who has shown no interest in any man, yet alone the Doctor, and (as of the airing of this episode) has yet to be seen kissing her own wife^{xxv}.

CLARA OSWIN OSWALD— THE IMPOSSIBLE GIRL

Clara is a complicated companion in that she lived and died twice before being introduced as a full time companion on the show. She is initially problematic because she is shown to only be granted access to the Doctor's world because he has become obsessed with the mystery shrouding her, a mystery she knows nothing about and is not informed of until the end of her first season as companion. In this finale, Clara is finally allowed to know who she is to the Doctor, which results in her decision to sacrifice herself to save him with the repeated assertion that she "was born to save the Doctor^{xxvi}." Again, Moffat has reduced the female companion to a secondary role, whose entire existence is shaped around the Doctor. Clara is denied any character growth or development during her time aboard the TARDIS, instead being shown as feisty and unimpressed by the Doctor while lacking any real agency of her own.

The first time the Doctor is introduced to Clara,¹⁹ she is a

¹⁶ Vastra is a Silurian, a fictional race of reptile-like humanoids

¹⁷ *Doctor Who* 8.1, "Deep Breath"

¹⁸ While this episode was nominated for the GLAAD 'Outstand Individual Episode (in a series without a regular LGBT character) award, I do not believe that said nomination detracts from the heteronormative lens through which the characters are written.

¹⁹ In person. He previously interacted with a Dalek version of her in 7.1, "Asylum of the Daleks"; this version also died saving the Doctor.

barmaid in Victorian London. However, she is also revealed to be the governess to two children of a wealthy widower. This version of Clara dies by the end of the episode while saving the Doctor. The next incarnation of Clara is again shown in a nurturing role, this time as the nanny to a family in contemporary London. Despite these versions of Clara growing up in radically different societies, they have the same personality and are resigned to doing the same type of traditionally feminine work.

When the Doctor first meets contemporary Clara, he has already been shown to have met a younger version of her,²⁰ and clearly knows much more about her than she does about him. While Clara initially denies travel with the Doctor, she soon changes her mind but is still denied full agency due to the Doctor keeping valuable information from her, namely that there are multiple versions of her throughout history. Even after this “big reveal” in the series finale, the audience still knows very little about Clara. “It seems her entire role in the series is to provide a mystery for the Doctor to obsess over. [When] the Doctor reflects on his relationship with Clara [he] focuses on Clara’s mystery. He mentions only three qualities of hers: she’s funny, she’s brave, and she’s ‘perfect’^{21 xxxvii}.” Instead of being a full and complete person, Clara is repeatedly used as a plot device to further the Doctor’s character arc. “Clara brings the Doctor out of his post-Amy and Rory depression and gives him something to obsess over, before ultimately sacrificing herself to save him^{xxxviii}.” However, “we hardly see her do any actual *saving*. She falls through fire, appears in a variety of cute period

clothes, and waves desperately at various Doctors who have been edited in from Classic *Doctor Who* episodes^{xxxix}.” As opposed to showing Clara do any actual saving, we are instead witness to the Doctor jumping into his own time stream to save her, thus stripping her of any potential agency she may have had.²²

In series eight, Clara is effectively a blank slate. No matter what happens to her or how much she may develop over the course of any given episode, she inevitably resorts back to her default template of “feisty” by the start of the next episode. The only constant throughout series eight is the newly regenerated Doctor negatively commenting on Clara’s physical appearance, or “negging” her.²³ Throughout the season, the Doctor calls Clara “an egomaniac, needy, game-player sort of person^{xxx}” and a “control freak^{xxxi}”; he describes her as being “sort of short and round-ish, but with a good personality^{xxxii}”, “built like a man^{xxxiii}”, and that “her face is so wide[,] she needs three mirrors^{xxxiv}.” “Since [the Doctor] regenerated, he’s called [Clara] fat, old, implied she smells (it’s her perfume) and now can’t tell if she’s wearing make-up or not.^{xxxv}” The Doctor is a character of authority; the “negging” of the female companion is vehemently sexist and, according to self-reports on Tumblr, has caused a rising discomfort with the show from young female viewers who now fear that the Doctor would insult them as well.

COURTNEY WOODS AND THE “MARK OF THE PLURAL”

Series eight showed remarkable improvement in the number of significant characters of color, mostly black characters. However, nearly all of these characters only appear

in a single episode, most are killed off, and of the two reoccurring black characters, both are presented in racially insensitive ways. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam discuss in their essay *Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation* that since “the ‘mark of the plural’ projects colonized people as ‘all the same,’ any negative behavior by any member of the oppressed community is instantly generalized as typical, as pointing to a perpetual backsliding toward some presumed negative essence^{xxxvi}.” This season once again presents a young black girl, Courtney Woods, as a “disruptive influence” who challenges authority. Courtney does appear multiple times during the season, even traveling in the TARDIS for a short period. However, Courtney is perpetually in trouble with her teachers and is thusly “saved” by the benevolence of the white characters, namely Clara and the Doctor, mirroring the brief introduction of Mels in series seven. Every black youth introduced in this series, even just in passing, is portrayed as either a criminal or a “disruptive influence” to those around them. The repetitive representations of black youth as criminals or problems to society is incredibly problematic. Because each of the children are shown to be unruly, anti-authoritarian, and potentially dangerous, the “mark of the plural” indicates that “representation thus becomes allegorical^{xxxvii}.” Ergo, by writing all of the young black children in a similar manner, Moffat is reiterating the tired racist tropes of the “savage” or “primitive negro,” “pointing to a perpetual backsliding toward some presumed negative essence^{xxxviii}.” Courtney’s representation is

²⁰ During a minisode, the Doctor is seen stalking Clara’s timeline, once again meeting a future companion during their formative childhood years and thus imprinting himself onto their timeline.

²¹ *Doctor Who* “She Said, He Said: A Prequel”

²² *Doctor Who* 7.13 (How they exited the time stream remains unknown.)

²³ Negging is when a person, usually a man, insults or humiliates a woman as much as he can get away with in order to lower her self-esteem and try to get her to seek his approval, while establishing himself as being of higher authority and value. It’s a manipulative, yet common tactic established by so-called “pick-up artists.”

especially problematic when viewed through an intersectional lens. She is a young black girl who is deemed “unimportant” by the Doctor, despite him previously having said that “in nine hundred years of time and space and I’ve never met anybody who wasn’t important before^{xxix}.”

MOFFAT THE MISOGYNIST

Doctor Who is a family show watched by millions of people. When a show such as this presents female characters without autonomy or agency, presents the Doctor as a sexual predator, and dismisses bisexuality as “just a phase^{xi},” it has power and influence over those watching. Moffat has repeatedly insulted women and minorities in interviews²⁴ and has allowed his personal biases to infiltrate a once beloved show. Episodes penned by him frequently fail the Bechdel test. His female characters are tepid at best and overtly sexualized at worst, and when confronted with his blatant sexism over the way he wrote Amy and River he insisted the opposite: “River Song? Amy Pond? Hardly weak women. It’s the exact opposite. You could accuse me of having a fetish for powerful, sexy women who love cheating people^{xii}.” What Moffat seems to fail to understand is that him fetishizing women is not the same as respecting them, nor is it the same as writing well-developed, three-dimensional characters. Moffat has developed a version of the Doctor that, as a queer woman, I would be terrified to travel with. Moffat’s misogyny has allowed for the lack of agency, under-characterization, monism, and invasion of bodily autonomy of the female companions in ways significantly more problematic and sexist than during the show’s original run in 1963. Through his writing, Moffat is sending the very

clear message that he does not value women, nor their stories, and by having the Doctor, a character looked up to by millions, disregard women, Moffat is saying that we the audience shouldn’t care about or value women either.

Currently, all of the writers for *Doctor Who* are affluent white men. While it is true that not all women are feminists, and that women can uphold sexist ideology just as well as their male counterparts and therefore there is no guarantee that the addition of women writers would improve representation in *Doctor Who*, it can be inferred that due to the poor representation currently, the show would greatly benefit from diversifying the writer’s room. Moffat has repeatedly shown us that he cannot write nuanced female characters. He is constantly falling back on the same tired old tropes and has not proven himself to be receptive of criticism. Thus, I fully believe that the only solution to the “Moffat problem” is to replace him as showrunner with someone more capable of writing complex female characters. I do not know who that person should be. However, I do know that the show needs more women writers to help counter-balance the overabundance of men writers.

Representation in media matters. It influences the way people view those different from them, as well as how they view themselves. Lupita Nyong’o addressed this concept perfectly when she said in an interview that “until I saw people who looked like me, doing things I wanted to do, I wasn’t sure it was a possibility^{xiii}.” It was due to seeing someone who looked like her that Lupita realized she could be an actor. These kind of realizations based off of the representation in media are common occurrences. Nyong’o was influenced by seeing Whoopi

Goldberg in *The Color Purple*; Goldberg was herself influenced to become an actress when she saw Nichelle Nichols in the original *Star Trek*^{xiiii}. More connected to *Doctor Who*, both David Tennant and Peter Capaldi were huge fans of the show growing up, and Tennant was influenced to become an actor in order to one day play the Doctor^{xliv}. Thus, by continuing to allow subpar and offensive representations of women and minorities on the show, Moffat is alienating large communities of people who may have otherwise been influenced to do great things based on the heroics of the Doctor and companions. The show has proven itself to be better in the past, and I have hope that it will become more inclusive again in the future. By analyzing the numerous intertextual problems in Moffat’s representation of women and minorities, and highlighting the ways in which his writing has hindered the enjoyment of such a beloved show, I truly hope to aid in both academic and fandom discussions of the show. By using the academic concepts explored above, I aim to enrich the average fan’s critical understanding of the show. In the same way, by using my position within the fandom, I hope to aid in the decentering of academic and critical feminist media analysis to include discourses found on popular websites such as Tumblr. By blurring together these two seemingly opposing viewpoints in my discussion of representation in Moffat-era *Doctor Who*, my goal is to show that academic and popular discourses are not so different after all and can in fact greatly benefit from each other when conducting media analysis research.

²⁴ A semi-complete list of his interviews and quotes can be found at <http://feministwhoniverse.tumblr.com/post/25598314408/steven-moffat-is-a-douchebag-the-masterlist>

Notes

- ⁱ Geek Feminism Wikia
- ⁱⁱ Helford, Pg. 13-14
- ⁱⁱⁱ Chambers, pg. 35. Emphasis in original.
- ^{iv} Ibid.
- ^v Britton, Pg. 135
- ^{vi} Ibid. Pg. 136
- ^{vii} Ibid. Pg. 137
- ^{viii} Mulvey, Pg. 9-10. Emphasis added.
- ^{ix} *Doctor Who* 5.1
- ^x Ibid.
- ^{xi} Flesh and Stone Confidential
- ^{xii} [feministwhoniverse.tumblr](#)
- ^{xiii} *Doctor Who* 6.6
- ^{xiv} Nesbitt
- ^{xv} *Doctor Who* 7.1
- ^{xvi} Coleman
- ^{xvii} *Doctor Who* 6.12
- ^{xviii} *Doctor Who* 6.8
- ^{xix} *Doctor Who* 7.5
- ^{xx} Scotsman.com
- ^{xxi} *Doctor Who* 2012 Christmas special
- ^{xxii} *Doctor Who* 7.1

- ^{xxiii} Leopard
- ^{xxiv} *Doctor Who* 7.11
- ^{xxv} Boleyn
- ^{xxvi} *Doctor Who* 7.13
- ^{xxvii} Alyssa
- ^{xxviii} Ibid.
- ^{xxix} Ibid.
- ^{xxx} *Doctor Who* 8.1
- ^{xxxi} Ibid.
- ^{xxxii} *Doctor Who* 8.2
- ^{xxxiii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxiv} *Doctor Who* 8.4
- ^{xxxv} Welsh
- ^{xxxvi} Shohat and Stam, Pg. 805
- ^{xxxvii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxviii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxix} *Doctor Who* 2010 Christmas Special
- ^{xl} *Doctor Who* 7.1
- ^{xli} Jeffries
- ^{xlii} Staff
- ^{xliiii} Hart
- ^{xliiv} IMDb

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