

GOVERNMENT EXPANSION FOR WORLD WAR II: DECATUR, ILLINOIS, AS A MODEL

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Liz Kulka completed her B.A. in history at Eastern in 1995. This paper represents a part of her honors undergraduate thesis, which examined military-industrial expansion in Decatur, Illinois, during the Second World War.

World War II surpasses other eras in our nation's collective memory because of the fighting and because it united the nation as well as revived the economy. Before the war, the nation struggled with the relationship between the government and the economy. With the advent of the war, however, the government took on the role as controller of all manufactured goods, rather than leave this area to the will of the nation's consumers.

Besides allowing the government a great deal of control over its citizens' buying decisions, the process of soliciting production of munitions and other war goods allowed the government to reach into every community. Additionally, through subcontracting, all types and sizes of companies became involved in the war effort, since a complete product comprised a number of smaller items able to be built in this way.

The government actively sought to keep and extend contact with communities through the outreach of the Office of Production Management (OPM) and its successor, the War Production Board (WPB). Outreach programs instituted by these agencies and the military included financial assistance to companies, issuance of war contracts, the building of war plants, and the distribution of citations and awards. The outreach utilized by the U.S. government not only ensured the survival of the U.S. on the battleground and its growth as a nation. It also guaranteed the survival of middle and small-sized communities.

One can understand how the federal government sought to push comprehensive programs by analyzing how mobilization reached the local community level. This paper examines Decatur, an average sized city located in Macon County, in central Illinois. I selected to study Decatur because it exemplified the war experience that other U.S. cities encountered. With its location in the middle of the country and its heavy industrial base, Decatur became a prime choice for certain military contracts. Also, because of its size of under 100,000 people, Decatur confronted different war problems than cities such as Chicago. Through its relationship with federal and state officials, its application for contracts, and its conflicts over mobilization, the city of Decatur represented a model of industrial mobilization for the United States during World War II.

In 1940, national unemployment had fallen to 15 percent; within Decatur over two thousand metalworkers were out of work in the fall of 1941.¹ This number's significance comes into focus with the fact that "metalworking of one sort or another accounted for 50 percent of the city's industry and payroll."² These figures illustrate that the economy did not utilize a key resource prior to the war: labor. In 1940 and 1941, even with the manufacture of goods for Great Britain and France, areas of the country remained idle.

One area of outreach occurred in the financing of mobilization for war. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) aided businesses with the costs associated with the conversion of plants. Problems arose because some plants did not want to contract for work in certain areas, such as explosives or weapons. Although they were urgently needed by the government, these industries did not project much of a post-war future. The government utilized a number of incentives to lure companies into these areas. One such inducement consisted of the government buying these factories directly or paying for the full cost of conversion.³

Using this method, the Army and Navy contracted to build or open a number of defense plants and complexes. Arms plants within the area included the Illinois plant built in Sangamon County, the Caterpillar plant, and

1 Harold G. Venter, *The U.S. Economy in World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 3; Mary Waters, *Illinois in the Second World War*, vol. 2, *The Production Front* (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1951), 38.

2 John Zwicky, "A State at War: The Home Front in Illinois During the Second World War" (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University, Chicago, 1989), 95.

3 Gerald T. White, "Financing Industrial Expansion for War: The Origin of the Defense Plant Corporation Leases," *Journal of Economic History* 9 (November 1949): 156-7.

the Houdaille-Hershey plant. In the city of Illiopolis, the military built a large munitions complex consisting of two ordnance plants. Halfway between Springfield and Decatur, this development relied upon both cities for its 20,000 workers.⁴

Military engines comprised another component of the war effort built in Decatur. While headquarters for the company complexes were located in Peoria, Caterpillar opened a plant in Decatur "...for consultant services, procurement of equipment and inspection of installation of a manufacturing plant...."⁵ Under orders from the War Department, Caterpillar converted an empty warehouse for its uses.⁶ In order to utilize resources (labor and materials) and in order to extend its scope into the community, the government actively sought war work for Decatur. The placement of this Caterpillar plant illustrated this.

However, the government did not place these orders only to maintain community relations. It benefitted through the manufacture of needed goods. The Caterpillar plant "... built and shipped thousands of the tractor engines and power trains to the American Car and Foundry Co. in Berwick, PA, where the finished tractors were assembled."⁷ This subcontract fulfilled the demand for goods that the military forces held.

Another plant that fulfilled the military's needs built a subpart for the atomic bomb. With respect to the Garfield division of Houdaille-Hershey, "Construction of the plant was begun under the utmost secrecy in September of 1943; the start of production, in August of 1944, went unannounced."⁸ Ed Coleman, a supervisor at the plant, described the product as consisting of black aluminum tubes.⁹ His wife, Katherine, worked as an inspector. Laboring in a darkened room for her shift, she examined black sheets placed on light tables for holes.¹⁰ The components were then shipped to the Quarter Master in Tennessee.¹¹

Besides direct ownership of facilities, the government, under the Emergency Plant Facilities Contract, created a unique payment plan for the conver-

4 O.T. Banton, ed., *History of Macon County* (Decatur, Illinois: Macon County Historical Society, 1976), 398-9.
 5 "Caterpillar to Run New Defense Plant," *Decatur Herald*, 3 March 1942, p. 1.
 6 "Victory Plant Will Produce Tractor Engines," *Decatur Herald*, 16 November 1943, p. 3.
 7 "Caterpillar..." *Herald and Review*, 28 February 1986, p. 10.
 8 "Houdaille-Hershey Corp.," *Decatur Herald and Review*, 7 October 1945, p. 16.
 9 Ed Coleman, interview with author, 28 March 1995, Decatur, Illinois.
 10 Katherine Coleman, interview with author, 28 March 1995, Decatur, Illinois.
 11 Interview with Ed Coleman.

sion costs of companies. This contract allowed for government ownership of a plant during the war, with the government reimbursing the previous owners. After the end of the war, the company had the option to purchase the facilities and its conversions.¹² Further, the businesses were able to write off the purchase of the converted facilities 20 percent per year on their taxes.¹³ In addition to these ownership incentives, the government utilized loans to defense businesses. Authorizing and financing of V-loans occurred under the Maritime Commission, the Federal Reserve, and the RFC.¹⁴

Within Illinois, prior to U.S. involvement in the war, the state created its own offices and programs to protect its economy and internal defense. The Illinois War Council (IWC), which focused primarily on civil defense, consisted of a division on the Adjustment of Business to War Conditions.¹⁵ This division attempted to obtain war work for manufacturers and help industries that could not convert.¹⁶ The IWC managed to continue to look after the state's interests, although curtailment of its duties occurred with the creation of the WPB.¹⁷

In addition to the activities of the IWC, state officials actively sought procurement and aid for Illinois industry. Mary Watters, in her book, *Illinois in the Second World War*, states that Governor Green went to Washington in the fall of 1941 to secure defense contracts and to increase the industrial rating for the state.¹⁸ Deneen A. Watson, a Chicago attorney, remained in Washington to aid in contract procurement for Illinois industry.¹⁹ State officials continued to lobby federal organizations while the federal government lobbied state industries. This service that the state provided exemplified the role that other states undertook to aid their industries.

The federal government responded to this state pressure by implementing a number of outreach programs and incentives. One such outreach method that the OPM and the WPB used developed in the area of industrial surveys. Within the twelve different war districts maintained in the country, these agencies

12 Gerald T. White, 172
 13 Janeway, 163.
 14 Watters, 35.
 15 Governor Dwight H. Green, Chairman, Illinois War Council. (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1944), 49.
 16 *Ibid.*
 17 Watters, 8.
 18 *Ibid.*
 19 *Ibid.*

required plants to fill out extensive surveys of plant equipment and categorize their work.²⁰ Agencies then attempted to match needed government items with the plants, while ensuring that the procurement occurred at an equal pace across the country.²¹ By spreading the contract load equally, the government managed to reach every community. Nevertheless, a number of factors directed the issuance of these contracts.

The degree that local officials solicited war work became one determining factor. In Decatur, the Association of Commerce played an active role in securing defense work for plants. It mailed "blank forms, listing 110 items expected to be of use in proving Decatur's adaptability to producing defense orders," to manufacturers in order to fulfill a request made by the OPM.²² Additionally, the Association of Commerce took part in rallying state officials for aid and involving the myriad of manufacturing plants in defense work.

The issuance of contracts helped both government and business. A number of Decatur companies joined together to increase their chances of receiving defense work. In the summer of 1941, Decatur's Association of Commerce assisted in the formation of a contract and subcontracting application pool; it consisted of 14 metalworking plants. In October, the pool submitted a booklet to the Chicago Division of the OPM. This booklet contained information on the number of employees, the principal parts manufactured, defense work wanted, amount of space for retooling, any defense contracts already held, and a list of the company's plant equipment.²³ Most importantly, the application for government contracts helped to alleviate the problem of high unemployment of metalworkers within the city.²⁴

In addition to relieving local difficulties, the pool addressed state and federal pressures. It alleviated pressure applied by the Governor illustrative of his trip to Washington. Also, according to John Zwicky, this pool arose in response to a conference between Governor Green and a local businessman.²⁵ Through this submission, Decatur fulfilled the OPM's Group Resources Unit's

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 55.

²¹ Smith, 55.

²² "OPM Contract Office Seeks Shop Inventories," *Decatur Herald*, 22 December 1941, 3.

²³ Decatur Association of Commerce, 5-43.

²⁴ Waiters, 38.

²⁵ Zwicky, 95.

requirement of surveys.²⁶ Eventually, all of the companies included in the pool received war work.

Two companies that obtained war work through the pool application were Wagner and Mueller. While both metalworkers manufactured goods prior to the war, they had to apply for additional work in order to continue their production. Mueller, consisting of a number of plants within Decatur, produced "plumbing and gas fixtures" before it switched to "steel shells and projectiles."²⁷ Right after the start of the war, the president of Mueller alleviated some worker and local fears about his company's survival. "The manufacture ... of things for army bases, camps, and depots will keep us going for some time to come."²⁸ In fact, over 60 percent of this company's production came from defense work at the beginning of the war.²⁹ This number increased later.

The fears that the president of Mueller helped to settle arose from the proximity of the war to the Great Depression. Local industry still faced unemployment and reduced earnings. War work provided a safety net for these businesses through profits provided at 10 percent by the government.³⁰ Ed Coleman stated that both companies he worked for were not hurting for money; they were becoming rich because of war work.³¹

The Great Depression also lost its grip on Wagner during the war period. Not only did the government ensure the survival of Wagner. It made this company a vital component of the war effort through the issuance of contracts. This company turned out "...about 1,600,000 pounds of castings a month..." including "...a navy shell adapter for five-inch anti-aircraft guns, parachute bomb couplings, bodies for land mine projectiles, parts for army trucks and field kitchen hardware."³² Through the manufacture of war goods, Mueller and Wagner helped to increase Decatur's role as an essential part of the U.S. industrial defense operation.

²⁶ Charles F. Frye to Office of Production Management, Defense Contract Service, Seventh Federal Reserve District, 14 October 1941, in *Decatur Defense Industries* (Decatur: Decatur Association of Commerce, 1941), 4.

²⁷ Waiters, 30.

²⁸ "Factories Expect Increase in Jobs," *Decatur Herald*, 9 January 1942, 3.

²⁹ "General Gives Mueller Staff Military Award," *Decatur Herald*, 16 July 1942, 3.

³⁰ Interview with Ed Coleman.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Decatur Association of Commerce, 39; "Wagner Castings Used Widely in all Branches of Service," *Decatur Herald*, 19 April 1943, 3; and Banton, 400.

To achieve its goals, the federal government attempted to reach companies through other methods besides pooling. The OPM sent engineers to examine plants in Decatur to join manufacturers with needed items.³³ Also, the OPM and the WPB used defense caravans and trains which showcased needed defense items. These trucks and trains moved from city to city, allowing invited company officials to examine their interiors.³⁴

The government also issued distressed area citations which aided local communities that had excess unemployment or other hardships. At the start of the war, Decatur was declared an emergency defense area and also a distressed area. The emergency defense area citation allowed it to have both a priority rating in housing materials and loan financing under Title 6 of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Act.³⁵ The distressed area citation, following a visit by government engineers, gave Decatur a 15 percent advantage in the bidding for government contracts as compared to non-cited areas.³⁶

To further aid Decatur and to fulfill some of its defense needs, the WPB opened an office in the city in February of 1942.³⁷ Subsequently, this office facilitated a long-term relationship between government and industry, while it provided aid to small businesses. G.E. Hale actively sought plant involvement in the war as temporary acting manager of the Decatur WPB office. Hale stated, "It is our duty here to connect any manufacturer, no matter how small nor how large, with the needs of the war production board."³⁸ In fulfilling the needs of both government and business, the WPB office additionally acted as a facilitator for the relationship between national and local levels.

With the help of the WPB and the IWC, the government actively tried to resolve inequalities over the issuance of contracts to small business. Before and at the beginning of the war, the military favored large firms for its contracts. Problems arose because while "the military attitude was to get the job done, and this meant, in its view, reliance upon big business," small businesses were left scrambling for work and for survival.³⁹

33 "OPM Sending Two Engineers Here Today," *Decatur Herald*, 12 December 1941, 3.

34 "60 From Here See OPM Train," *Decatur Herald*, 12 December 1941, 3; and "WPB Caravan Exhibits War Products Here," *Decatur Herald*, 3 June 1942, 3.

35 "Defense Area Rating Sought," *Decatur Herald*, 12 March 1942, 3; and "Decatur Made Defense Area by President," *Decatur Herald*, 11 April, 1942, 3.

36 "OPM Sending Two Engineers Here Today," 3; and "Priority Rating Due Next Week," *Decatur Herald* 27 December 1941, 3.

37 "WPB Office Here Offers Aid to Smaller Manufacturers," *Decatur Herald*, 21 February 1942, 3.

38 "Mueller Brass Honored with Navy 'E,'" *Decatur Review*, 19 February 1942, 20.

39 Vauter, 59.

However, the military did not see the benefits that the use of small business provided. According to Zwicky, these small businesses converted to war work faster, provided better community involvement because housing and transportation were already in place, and managed to keep congestion under control.⁴⁰ Larger plants utilized economies of scale and thus produced goods more efficiently than smaller plants. Nevertheless, as discussed before, the military did not look at the overall picture of the economy; it concentrated on the benefits to its sphere, which created problems.

Pressure to include small business in war work came from Senator Truman, who headed Congressional hearings into this matter.⁴¹ As chairman of the Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, Truman examined the inequalities of procurement created by military control.⁴² Under his control, the Smaller War Plants Commission became a subdivision of the WPB.⁴³ Defense work spread to smaller firms as the WPB organized a Smaller War Plants division in order to provide counseling and financial assistance to these companies.⁴⁴ While they could not supply heavy or highly industrialized goods for defense purposes, small plants worked as subcontractors or supplied smaller parts to the military.⁴⁵

However, even though the government actively sought to protect small businesses, these companies needed to initiate their own search for government contracts. While the government instituted a number of outreach programs, it was up to businesses to participate in these programs. As G.E. Hale told 22 plants in Decatur, they should not "...look to the government to 'drop orders in your laps.'"⁴⁶ Throughout the war, government agencies attempted to provide opportunities for certain small businesses to survive.

As an incentive and in order to reward war plants for their work, the government issued the Army-Navy 'E' Award. This flag was given only to those defense plants that held a distinguished labor relationship, produced faster and better quality goods, and maintained an excellent safety record.⁴⁷ Mueller,

40 Zwicky, 90.

41 John Morton Blum, *Was For Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 124.

42 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*

44 "WPB to Aid Small Plants," *Decatur Herald*, 18 November 1942, 3.

45 Smith, 60.

46 "Small Plants Told They Must Go After Orders," *Decatur Herald*, 11 December 1943, 3.

47 "Mueller Workers Win Army Banner," *Decatur Herald*, 12 July 1942, 3.

Houdaille-Hershey, and the Sangamon plant received this award. The award was "...given for unusual service above and beyond the requirements of the production contracts agreed to between the companies and the Ordinance department."⁴⁸

The government sought to create and to maintain a relationship with local communities through outreach programs. Examples of government outreach programs in Decatur include RFC financing of plant conversions, direct purchase and direct building of arms plants (the Iliopolis plant in Sangamon County), formation of contract and subcontract pools, use of defense caravans and trains, and distressed area citations. These programs fulfilled the self-interests of both local leaders and the military. The government received its needed products and industry earned its profits. Additionally, the unemployment of the prior era shuttled into conversion of facilities and war work, allowing for the survival of these towns.

Although these outreach programs allowed for the survival and sometimes the growth of middle and small-sized communities, not all government programs accomplished positive results. Segments of small business, nonprioritized business, and labor conflicted with the comprehensive and cohesive goals that the government tried to set forth. Priorities dictated the closing of a number of long-run businesses. Also, some communities were unable to fulfill the demands of the government because of inherent problems attributed to their size. Decatur would eventually lose its preferential priority contract rating because of a critical labor shortage, allowing the government to shift defense contracts to other cities. Even with this setback, however, the government permitted Decatur to survive through continuing war work and aid, which sowed the seeds of Decatur's growth in the post-war world.

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"TEACHER, PRAY FOR ME--IF YOU CAN?"

Amy Firby

Amy Firby, a junior zoology/pre-med major, wrote this paper for a survey class on the Constitution in American history. It won second place in the competition for the Eastern Illinois University Social Science Writing Award.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."¹

This simple, fundamental yet contentious right guaranteed under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States is perpetually debated. Even the language of this "establishment clause" has been contested ever since James Madison first proposed it. Today, we see the disputation reflected in the debate over prayer in the public schools. Should students be allowed to pray to a supreme being, or even meditate on the child's wishes? Does the Constitution allow this? According to Samuel Ericson of *Christianity Today*, "The words appear so simple. Yet there is a growing concern—and abundant confusion—to just what those 16 words mean."²

During the period of the great migration to the New World, many Europeans fled their homelands seeking religious freedom. Eight states were colonized in part by people fleeing religious persecution. The earliest foundations and laws of these new colonies were based on the Bible and other religious practices, with the Church as their nucleus. Religious services were not the exclusive reason for congregation, for the church also served as the meetinghouse for town council, court trials, and school classes. However, not all professed the same faith, and as populations flourished, "the persecuted became the persecutors once they gained a dominant position within the colony."³ Those belonging to the most influential church also began to achieve puissance and authority in the local government. These men implemented laws making their religion the

1 Melvin Urofsky, ed., *Documents of American Constitutional and Legal History*, vol. II: *The Age of Industrialization to the Present* (New York: Virginia Commonwealth University, 1989), 107.

2 Samuel Ericson, "The Supreme Court's Changing Stance on Religious Freedom," *Christianity Today*, 19 April 1985, 38.

3 Ibid., 39.

influence on the fathers of the Constitution, Madison and Jefferson, once stated" "...magistrates had no authority to rule over souls, religion must depend on inward conviction not on external compulsion....personal religious faith must be treated with respect."⁸ Most agreed with Patrick Henry's view that "...no particular sect or society ought to be favored or established by law, in preference to others."⁹ In matters of religion, the government would remain neutral.

During the debates over the proposed Bill of Rights, James Madison noted that the true task set before the Congress: "Forming a Government capable of extending to its citizens all the blessings of civil and religious liberty—capable of making them happy at home."¹⁰ On June 8, 1789, Madison was the first to propose two amendments dealing with religion. The first stated:

The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief of worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner or on any pretext, infringed.

The second proposed that "no state shall violate the equal rights of conscience."¹¹ It was not until September 25, after a series of deliberations and votes, that the House and Senate sanctioned the amendment, as we read it today, into the Bill of Rights as the Third Amendment. Later, the first two amendments were rejected and the Third became the First. This amendment then circulated, as part of the Bill of Rights, to the states for ratification.

Even though the intent of the First Amendment seemed to suggest a complete separation of church and state, many state governments assumed that encouraging religion was still permitted. In keeping with the traditions of the early colonies, religion was taught as a daily practice and prayer was urged. Teaching these traditions seemed valuable because much of our early American culture was devoted to religion and religious practices. Even Congress hired a chaplain in 1789 to recite prayers each day before the House and Senate as they opened their sessions. Beginning with John Marshall, the Supreme Court officially

8 Mark A. Noll, ed., *Religion and Politics From Colonial Period to the 1980's* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 17.

9 Curry, *First Freedoms*, 197.

10 Winton U. Solberg, ed., *The Constitutional Convention and the Formation of the Union*, (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 169.

11 Curry, *First Freedoms*, 199.

12 Terry Eastland, ed., *Religious Liberty in the Supreme Court* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1993), 135.

official religion of their respective colonies, and they wrote personal prayers into the ordinances for oration at certain assemblages. At the time of the revolution against England, "there were established churches in at least eight of the thirteen former colonies and established religions in at least four of the other five."⁴ The conclusion of the revolution sparked an intense opposition to these religion-based laws. Many prominent men began to assert that this country originated from those seeking religious freedom, and thus they needed to effectuate religious tolerance to ensure further development of this young nation.

During the first meeting of the United States Congress in 1789, representatives from each state set forth to comprise the Bill of Rights, which would eventually be incorporated into the Constitution. Prior to this gathering, states held separate conventions to address the issues and concerns that the delegates would convey to Congress. Benjamin Franklin, at the Philadelphia Convention of June 1787, had expressed his convictions about prayer in government: "God governs in the affairs of men ... therefore I beg that the prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before business."⁵ With varying ideals and beliefs, the delegates unanimously embraced the need to establish certain inalienable rights in a document, but with respect to religious rights, the delegates were resolute:

Americans in 1789 largely believed that issues of Church and State had been satisfactorily settled by the individual states. They agreed that the federal government had no power in such matters, but some individuals and groups wanted that fact stated explicitly.⁶

Congress realized the need for an official separation of the powers between church and state. Hence the concept of the "wall of separation" emerged. This belief stated that in matters involving religion, the state should be excluded from and refrain from interest, just as a wall separates two areas of space. With this dogma affirmed, another question arose. Should the government encourage or discourage religion within the states? Many felt that discouraging religion would increase atheism or the religion of "Nothingarians."⁷ John Locke, a great

4 Robert S. Alley, *The Supreme Court on Church and State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 197.

5 Robert S. Alley, *School Prayer*, (New York: Prometheus Books, 1994), 29-30.

6 Thomas J. Curry, *The First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 194.

7 *Ibid.*, 203.

began its sessions with a crier saying, "God save the United States and this Honorable Court."¹³ Because the framers of the Constitution did not provide explicit guidance, the states had difficulty discerning the exact intent of this amendment. However,

The fact that Congress was not trying to resolve a concrete dispute, but merely strengthening safeguards against possible future adversity, helps explain at least some of the inattentiveness and absentmindedness attendant upon Americans' enactment of the First Amendment.¹⁴

Over time, the national government came to figure more prominently in enforcing civil liberties throughout the nation. With the addition of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868, ("No State shall...deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law..."¹⁵) all individuals were guaranteed that their rights were protected against any state legislation that would favor one population over another. Therefore, the Supreme Court had the responsibility to uphold or oppose any law suspected of this favoritism.

As the Supreme Court strengthened its hand, it became increasingly assertive in its intolerance of individual states abusing their authority. At times, states, knowingly or unknowingly, stepped on the toes of the established national government. These actions apparently violated the Due Process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court acted swiftly to enforce this clause to maintain the proper balance of power between state and national governments.

Prior to 1947, only two decisions by the United States Supreme Court could be interpreted as being concerned primarily with the meaning of the phrase "an establishment of religion." Over a century and a half after the clause was first added to the Constitution, the Supreme Court declared in 1947 that government could not participate in the establishment of a religion. This ruling came from the case of *Everson v. Board of Education* in which the Supreme Court reinforced the Fourteenth Amendment, requiring each state to observe the same freedoms guaranteed under the First Amendment without variation. The justices perceived that the government had absolutely no right to "aid in one religion exclusively or all religions equally."¹⁵ In 1962, the Supreme Court heard its first significant case exploring the issues of prayer in the public school system. The

¹³ Curry, *First Freedoms*, 194.

¹⁴ Urofsky, *Documents*, 110.

¹⁵ Curry, *First Freedoms*, 1.

case was *Engel v. Vitale*.

In New York, the Board of Regents, an agency established by its state constitution, composed a simple, nondenominational prayer. The Board distributed this prayer to all public schools and strongly encouraged its use before each school day. The prayer read "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country."¹⁶ Student participation was voluntary and upon parental consent, the child could be dismissed from the activity. Subsequently in New Hyde Park, New York, the Board of Education of Union Free School District No. 9 directed its principals to have the prayer recited daily. The parents of ten students were angered by this action, and sued the state for violating the First Amendment's establishment clause and the Fourteenth Amendment's prohibition of such action by a state.

New York officials deemed the prayer as an essential part of the student's moral and spiritual training, but the parents argued that the prayer was contrary to their and their children's private practices of religion. The parents argued about the unconstitutionality of the school district instituting and regulating daily prayer, for under the First and Fourteenth Amendments, the state could not make a law establishing religion. However, the school district insisted that no religion was being established, especially since participation was not coerced over parental wishes, and the prayer was nondenominational. Even though the parents felt that the teachers and principals were enforcing the prayer, the question before the courts was, was it constitutional to allow prayer in schools? The lower courts of New York were satisfied with the rebuttal from the state, and on appeal, the New York Court of Appeals upheld the use of the regents' prayer as long as participation was indeed voluntary. The parents were indignant and appealed the case to the Supreme Court.

Engel v. Vitale was decided on June 25, 1962. The vote was 7-1. Chief Justice Black delivered the opinion of the court agreeing with the parent's position. The issue of the students' voluntary participation had no bearing on this case. Justice Black stated that "what offended the First Amendment...was

¹⁶ Curry, *First Freedoms*, 1.

¹⁷ Eastland, *Religious Liberty*, 125.

the fact that government had engaged in a religious activity by writing a prayer.¹⁷ Under the establishment clause, it was unconstitutional for any form of government, federal, or state, to compose prayers and encourage the use of them. "It is a matter of history that this very practice of establishing governmentally composed prayers for religious services was one of the reasons which caused many of our early colonists to leave England and seek religious freedom in America."¹⁸ To the four justices of the majority side, the issue seemed indisputable. Since the Board of Regents authored the prayer, it directly violated the establishment clause, even though the Board's intent was neutral. Therefore, the regents' prayer was unconstitutional and was not allowed in public schools.

Justice Potter Stewart strongly dissented from the majority's opinion. He felt the students should be allowed to participate in the prayer as long as the school principals and teachers did not force, embarrass, or pressure them. Stewart did not comprehend how this prayer could be an establishment of any religion. He felt "...that to deny the wish of these school children to join in reciting this prayer is to deny them the opportunity of sharing in the spiritual heritage of our nation."¹⁹ Stewart interpreted the establishment clause as prohibiting a state church, not a voluntary school prayer. He also alluded to the prayer the Supreme Court begins with each day, the verses included in the "Star-Spangled Banner," the Pledge of Allegiance, and the motto "IN GOD WE TRUST," which is impressed on our coins. When one observes the references to God in these examples, he recognizes "...the deeply entrenched and highly cherished spiritual traditions of our Nation—traditions which come down to us from those who almost two hundred years ago avowed their 'firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence'...."²⁰

The Court's ruling in Engel v. Vitale elicited many negative responses. The New York Times stated that the Constitution was designed precisely to protect minorities and those who oppose school prayer were indeed a minority.²¹ Only a month after the verdict on July 26 and again August 2, 1962 the Senate held Judiciary Committee hearings discussing five proposals to amend the Constitu-

18 Alley, The Supreme Court, 196.

19 Eastland, Religious Liberty, 135.

20 Alley, The Supreme Court, 203.

21 Eastland, Religious Liberty, 137.

tion so as to allow prayer or Bible readings. Just as many in the eighteenth century had feared the establishment of "Nothingarians," many Americans now felt the Engel decision established atheism as the officially recognized religion of our country. Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina stated "the greatest threat to our political and religious freedom is posed by nations who deny the existence of God."²² Again, many argued that "the Regents' prayer was a symbol of the religious life and tradition of the nation."²³ By denying the children the opportunity to observe this tradition of religion, where would the Supreme Court draw the boundaries when the teachers would teach literature, music, or art? All three are very dependent on religion and religious symbols. The Wall Street Journal warned that "those who persist in such attempts had best take care lest, in the name of religious freedom, they do real damage to free institutions."²⁴

But American society in 1962 was so impassioned by its fear of "the potential transformation of the Establishment Clause from a guardian of religious liberty into a guarantor of public secularism"²⁵ that many failed to observe the true blessings that come from the First Amendment. As Stephen Carter observed, "Simply put, the metaphorical separation of church and state originated in an effort to protect religion from the state, not the state from religion."²⁶ Society is shielded from religious influences that would lead us in a direction undesirable to our own faith. For example, small children are impressionable and watching their teacher lead prayer may compel the child to pray. If the teacher is praying to a nondenominational God and the child is an atheist but desires to please the teacher and his peers, he may stay and participate in the prayer for the sake of acceptance. Claud D. Nelson expresses his concern about nondenominational prayers: "If the public schools are neutral in tone, as in regards to religion...children from religious homes are subjected to strain and confusion."²⁷ Many people perceive prayer as personal and believe it cannot be imposed upon anyone. As Carter states, "If this freedom [of religion] be abused, it is an offense against God, not against man."²⁸

22 Alley, School Prayer, 114.

23 Eastland, Religious Liberty, 141.

24 Ibid., 139.

25 Stephen Carter, The Culture of Disbelief (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 122-23.

26 Ibid.

27 Claud D. Nelson, Church and State (New York: Central Department of Publication and Distribution, 1953), 29-30.

28 See Carter, Culture of Disbelief.

As debates over the establishment clause, religion, and state legislation continued, the Supreme Court, in the Lemon decision devised a series of questions known as the "three-part test." This test incorporates three questions to help the justices determine the constitutionality of an action that apparently violated the establishment clause. The first question concerns whether a law or state action has a secular purpose. The second test asks if the primary effect of the law advances or prohibits religion. The final question addresses whether the law or action results in an increased entanglement between government and state. Of course, the answers to these questions are subject to the opinion of the justices. This three-part test was utilized in a more recent case dealing with prayer in public schools, Wallace v. Jaffree.

Since the verdict of Engel v. Vitale, polls had shown large majorities wanted to reintroduce formal prayer in the public school system. Many state legislatures had begun to enact laws to do something just short of that. Alabama realized that under Engel the state could not sponsor prayer in public schools. However, nothing was said about a moment of silence.

In 1978, Alabama enacted statute 16-1-20 which authorized a one-minute period of silence in all public schools "for meditation." Again in 1981, Alabama enacted statute 16-1-20.1 which authorized "a period of silence 'for meditation or voluntary prayer.'" Finally, in 1982, Alabama enacted statute 16-1-20.2 which authorized "teachers to lead 'willing students' in a prescribed prayer to 'Almighty God ... the Creator and Supreme Judge of the world'."²⁹ The case of Wallace v. Jaffree began in Mobile when Ishmael Jaffree, an agnostic, sued the school district because his three children were exposed to prayers and grace at lunch time.

The case was dismissed by U.S. District Court Judge Brevard Hand who insisted that the federal government did not have jurisdiction over the First Amendment. Rather the state government possessed this power. The judge stated that "Alabama decided for itself how to handle school prayer without dragging the federal court system into the debate."³⁰ With respect to the idea that states are bound by the establishment clause, Hand stated that the Supreme

Court had "erred in its reading of history."³¹

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit did not agree with Hand. It ruled statutes 16-1-20.1 and 16-1-20.2 unconstitutional and reaffirmed that Alabama was indeed bound by the religion clause as established by the Supreme Court. Jaffree won a small victory that would soon turn into a nationwide issue as the State of Alabama appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. This would be the first time the Supreme Court ruled on the issue of silent prayer.

Wallace v. Jaffree was decided in 1985 by a six-to-three vote in favor of Jaffree. The Supreme Court concurred with the Alabama appeals court, declaring statute 16-1-20.2 unconstitutional since it specifically stated that a moment of silence was time for willing children to be led in prayer. However, what stumped the Court was statute 16-1-20.1 which permitted "a moment of silence or prayer." The language of statutes 16-1-20 and 16-1-20.1 differed in that one spoke of "meditation" and the other "meditation or voluntary prayer." By adding the last three words, Alabama changed the entire connotation of the statute, and the Supreme Court needed to ascertain if these words violated the Constitution.

To decipher the correct constitutional answer, the three-part test was employed. The first question asked whether Alabama intended to endorse or disapprove religion. Did Alabama institute the moment of silence for the sole purpose of prayer, or was the government indifferent as to how the children would use the time? The second asked if the moment of silence would actually encourage prayer, and the third asked if tension between government and religion increased due to this action.

Justice John Paul Stevens delivered the opinion of the court affirming that the motivation behind the statute was indeed to encourage prayer. Upon questioning, the sponsor of the original bill, Senator Donald Holmes, confirmed the real intentions of the statute. When asked whether there was any other objective in this legislation, except to return voluntary prayer into the schools, he replied, "No, I did not have no [sic] other purpose in mind."³² The state could not produce any evidence of a secular purpose for the statute. Therefore, without proceeding any further with the three-part test, the Supreme Court concluded that: "(1) the statute was enacted to convey a message of State endorsement and

²⁹ Eastland, Religious Liberty, 333.

³⁰ Beth Spring, "Can States Allow Prayer in Public Schools When Some Citizens Believe It is Wrong?" Christianity Today 18 Jan. 1985, 56.

³¹ Eastland, Religious Liberty, 334.

³² Ibid., 338.

³³ Atley, Supreme Court, 236.

chose to do so. As long as the motives of the state did not "convey or attempt to convey the message that children should use the moment of silence," a statute creating a moment of silence was absolutely constitutional.³⁸

Public opinion after the Wallace v. Jaffree case showed an increase of support for school prayer since Engel v. Vitale. A majority of people believed that the correct decision was achieved even though the arguments for the verdict did not address the motive behind the case. As The Wall Street Journal stated,

A religious organization, activity or individual should be allowed to participate in and receive the benefits of general government programs and activities on the same terms and conditions as everyone else...such a doctrine of equal rights would mean that the public school students should be allowed to pray, silently or vocally, individually or in groups in any circumstance in which they are otherwise allowed to express themselves voluntarily.³⁹

Others argued the decision regarding the first question of the three-part test.

"...How can the court allow legislative chaplains to pray publicly and yet not permit a minute of silent prayer or meditation in the schools? What secular purpose supports legislative chaplains that does not apply equally to moments of silence?"⁴⁰ This ruling seemed to be discouraging for some states which, like Alabama, were trying to uncover a process that would reinstate prayer in the public schools.

The battle between the establishment clause of the First Amendment and prayer in the public school system will probably continue until our whole country can agree on the issues in question. Until that point is achieved, though, society needs to be educated on the benefits provided under the First Amendment. "The religion clauses of the First Amendment were crafted to permit maximum freedom to the religions."⁴¹ Through the sixteen words of the establishment clause, society has been provided with a shield and a sword. The shield protects us from those who attempt to influence our religious beliefs and practices. The sword allows us to confront those who challenge what we try to protect. The Wall of Separation was established so that we could fully utilize our rights. The Supreme Court does not inhibit our use of them. The Court

39 Eastland, Religious Liberty, 368.

40 *Ibid.*, 365.

41 See Carter, Culture of Disbelief.

promotion of prayer, or (2) the statute was enacted for no purpose. No one suggests that the statute was anything but a meaningless or irrational act."³³ Statute 16-1-20.1 was declared unconstitutional. However, all nine justices agreed that statute 16-1-20 was constitutionally permissible since it made no mention of prayer or religion.

Justice William H. Rehnquist dissented, giving reasons similar to those given by Justice Potter Stewart in Engel v. Vitale. Rehnquist examined the history of the First Amendment and then compared language originally used by Madison with the language that we see today. Rehnquist wanted to find the "true meaning" of the establishment clause, the meaning Madison intended. Originally, Madison included the word "national" before religion in "no religion shall be established by law." Huntington of Rhode Island objected to the word and Madison excluded it. Madison never defined the function of the word, but Rehnquist felt that Madison "intended to allow nonpreferential treatment of all religions and that he did not conform to the 'Wall of Separation'."³⁴

It seems indisputable from these glimpses of Madison's thinking...that he saw the amendment as designed to prohibit the establishment of a national religion, and perhaps to prevent discrimination among sects. He did not see it requiring neutrality on the part of government between religion and irreligion.³⁵

From his understanding of Madison's intent, Rehnquist concluded that "nothing in the establishment clause of the First Amendment, properly understood, prohibits any such generalized 'endorsement' of prayer."³⁶ Likewise, Justice Burger dissented, stating the ironies of incorporating a prayer at the beginning of a Supreme Court session or Congressional meeting, and denying children this privilege. In Burger's opinion, "Alabama did not endorse religion any more than the Supreme Court does each day."³⁷

Even though the decision dissolved Alabama's use of a moment of silence for prayer, one glimmer of hope surfaced. In Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's concurrence, she stated that a state could constitutionally set aside a moment of silence. The state could also allow students to pray silently, if they voluntarily

34 Alley, School Prayer, >>>>

35 Alley, Supreme Court, 247.

36 Eastland, Religious Liberty, 364.

37 *Ibid.*, 349.

38 Alley, Supreme Court, 240.

encourages us to use them in a different manner. Alabama failed to incorporate a moment of silence in its school day's activities because the motives were religious. Through Alabama's actions, other people were forced to use the shield and sword to protect their beliefs and confront those who wanted to challenge them. However, if a state would establish a moment of silence with no religious intentions, then the Supreme Court would allow the moment in which the children may choose to pray. Our nation has the blessing of a Constitution to keep government and our lives in balance and order. Within this Constitution, government has the responsibility to respect the religious practices of individuals. The Supreme Court has the challenge of interpreting and preserving the responsibilities that the Constitution originally established. The Constitution also grants the people of this nation with tools to protect and defend our rights. As Thomas Jefferson stated, "...religious liberty is the most inalienable and sacred of all human rights."⁴²

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“COMMUNITY IS WHERE COMMUNITY HAPPENS”: OPPOSING VIEWS OF COMMUNITY IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Amy Helmkamp

Amy Helmkamp was a historical administration student when she wrote this paper for a course in 19th century American social and cultural history. This study compares several different scholarly views of that elusive social history term, "community."

As the sense of community in America surrenders to increased geographical mobility and national culture, the study of community has become an integral part of interpreting American social history. Perhaps in an effort to re-create "ideal" communities of the past or simply as a way to learn more about social development, community studies have come to the forefront of the scholarly search for an understanding of the formation of America's social processes. Moreover, in the face of urban isolation and technological progress, Americans are searching for an identifiable and usable past. Historians, sociologists, anthropologists and geographers have used statistical data, demographics, and town and family records to reveal the development of community life and community relationships in 19th-century America.

Thomas Bender's discussion of community introduced the paradox of community as both an experience and as a place. He states that "as simply as possible, community is where community happens."¹ The essence of community, whether interpreted as a place or experience, though, is based on the notion of a social network marked by mutuality and emotional bonds.² The research examined in this essay supports these conclusions, especially those of John Faragher and Robert Dykstra. Both rely on local data combined with social and historical theory to create specific concepts of community.

1 Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 6.

2 *Ibid.*

of investigating open-country districts, explaining the system of relations that linked dispersed farming families to each other and to the larger society.¹⁵ This theory gives credence to the active nature of the frontier as a whole. It shifts the rural communities from their position as static settlements to a more dynamic status.

There are three essential concepts to which these articles and their authors' views will be associated: whether the American rural experience was communal; whether webs of relationships existed in rural settlements; and whether the authors subscribe to the central-place theory. From a historiographical angle, the era in which the article was written, the type of data sought and used, and the ultimate goal and intention of the authors are all relevant in interpreting their research within a broader historical context.

Frederick Jackson Turner's view of both open-country settlements and webs of relationships held that they were detrimental to the advancement of American civilization, character and the progress of democracy on the frontier. Turner searched for an ideal western frontier through the individual rather than through community. While he did acknowledge the presence of a communal existence, ultimately the frontier was representative of the progress of American civilization and the American character through the individualistic behavior of pioneers on the frontier. The influence of the ever-changing frontier environment on these pioneers built character, aiding in the development of an ideal America.

His emphasis on the individual over community set Turner apart from contemporary historians like Dykstra and Faragher. He made little reference to the family or communal unit in the westward movement and settlement of the frontier. In Turner's era of great geographic expansion and industrial progress, stressing the singular, powerful, and self-sufficient frontier settler was a way to boast about the strength and virility of the American character. It was as much patriotism as it was history. His use of data, which primarily drew upon others' views of westward expansion rather than primary sources, revealed his intention of portraying the frontier and its inhabitants as a paragon of American integrity and democratic zeal.

Turner's frontier was dynamic, ever-changing and of importance in the creation and sustenance of American civilization and character. His community

5 Faragher, 235.

Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, Dykstra's book *The Cattle Towns* and Faragher's article "Open-Country Community: Sugar Creek, Illinois, 1820-1850," offer differing theories of community in the context of the American frontier. The broader social framework of their research is the undeniable presence of community in frontier America. All three argue that community did exist, but their opinions vary concerning its relative importance in the development of social relations both in towns and in rural "open-country" settlements. Also at stake is the force of the frontier and community in the development of American civilization and the American character. Their theories extend from Turner's dismissal of community in favor of individualism to Faragher's acceptance of communal patterns. Dystra's work bridges the two, applying elements of both Turnerian individualism and the associationalism of social history to his research. All these authors attempt to define the process by which settlers on the frontier endured the hardships of pioneering and struggled to create a meaningful life for themselves that extended beyond mere survival.

Faragher poses a question that is relevant to the arguments made by Turner and Dykstra as well: "To what extent has the American rural experience been communal?"³ Community implies the interconnectedness and cooperation of like-minded people living in close proximity to each other and maintaining social, economic, religious and civic ties. Kenneth Lockridge describes these alliances as "webs of relationships," although his definition of the term related to village and town interactions and not the rural settlements that Faragher and other describe as open-country settlements.⁴ To Faragher, open-country communities also had webs of relationships that helped connect rural residents to each other.

The larger context of this theory, to which Faragher and Dykstra subscribe, is the study of rural settlements which revolve around a central place containing social, civic, and religious goods and services. Faragher wrote that the "central-place studies of rural sociologists suggest that even dispersed farm families developed certain 'webs'," and that "central-place theory offered the possibility

3 John Mack Faragher, "Open-Country Community: Sugar Creek, Illinois, 1820-1850," in *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalistic Transformation: Essays in the Social History of Rural America*, edited by Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 234.

4 *Ibid.*

was static, and, at its core, served only to handicap the pursuit of progress and civilization. Thus, the idea of the American rural experience being even remotely communal was the antithesis of his views. Furthermore, the central-place theories used by later historians have no merit in his research beyond merely helping to explain his idea of the rise and westward spread of democratic ideals across the United States.

In his 1968 book The Cattle Towns, Dykstra examined the rural farming communities that surrounded the cattle towns of Kansas as evidence of the intra-community relationship that connected the two settlements. In this way, he was addressing all three of the issues in question. The rural experience was indeed communal: entire towns were set up on the premise of acquiring great wealth and success from the sale of cattle on the Kansas frontier. The new and transient townspeople and the farmers already in place on the land became part of an extended web of relationships that involved interactions with each other on a regular and systematic basis. Each group had a central place that catered to their immediate needs, and each group could go outside their own center of community to procure goods and services from the other.

The farming settlements that surrounded the cattle towns in Kansas existed both before and after the zenith of the boom towns. While the towns were up and running, a give-and-take relationship existed between the grangers and the townspeople. The webs of relationships and cooperative attitude that existed in the outlying rural settlements were strong enough at times to tip the balance in town and country political elections as well as other civic decisions. Had these webs not been in place, the farmers would have lost a measure of their identity in the larger context of the economic and social structure of the cattle towns.

Dykstra's frontier and community, like John Mack Faragher's, were both dynamic. It was evident throughout Dykstra's analyses of the towns discussed that it wasn't just townspeople who had to adapt to changes in the environment, geography and larger social issues of the day. The surrounding farming communities had to adapt to changes in the towns and had to accommodate the fluctuating populations of both men and cattle. Their modes of production shifted as the needs of the towns changed.

In terms of these forced adjustments, Dykstra's research supported one of Turner's main points concerning community. The Turnerian individualism and anti-social attitudes of the cattlemen clashed with the communal and stable social patterns of the farmers. When the concepts of rural cooperation and the

"demands of settlement" are applied to Dykstra's Kansas cattle towns, the evidence suggests that the interaction between residents of the towns and the farmers was undeniably fragile and at times strained.⁶ This information further supports Turner's theory of the difficulty in maintaining an actual community or sense of community in such a rapidly changing economic environment.

What is important to remember, however, is that Dykstra did support the notion of communal existence on the frontier. Furthermore, his research exposed this notion through an examination of local social interactions and central-place studies. Using contemporary sources such as local newspapers and correspondence, Dykstra achieved a well-rounded and thorough picture of the Kansas cattle towns and surrounding farm land. The second appendix of the book dealt exclusively with his research methodology and goals. In it he addressed his intention to discuss the town in terms of social processes which he defined as "the interaction of impersonal factors and human factors," and the "emphasis on two related and interacting themes: leadership and politics." He continued by stating that in the context of these themes, "decision-making lies at the heart of all things that impel a community through time."⁷

In his article, Faragher looked at Sugar Creek, Illinois, as an example of an open-country settlement and also examined the community as an example of the larger social phenomena of individualism and communalism. Both the frontier and the community were interpreted as dynamic in Faragher's research. His argument was thorough because of his acknowledgment that both are susceptible to change and alteration.

Faragher's application of the webs of relationships theory to Sugar Creek showed that these webs were indeed present and an essential part of the longevity of this and many other similar settlements throughout rural America. He studied in-depth the daily and cyclical activities of Sugar Creek, Illinois, and his thesis was simple: "Open-county settlements ... demonstrated the communal patterns usually attributed to nucleated villages alone.... Despite the absence of a village, the patterns of everyday life in Sugar Creek acted as constituents of community."⁸

6 Faragher, 234.

7 Robert R. Dykstra, The Cattle Towns (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 380-381.

8 Faragher, 237.

Faragher's materials included data about the demography, geography and social development of the farming households that grew up along the banks of Sugar Creek. He used manuscripts from Sugar Creek residents as well as community studies written by sociologists and other historians. Like Dykstra, his research did not reveal an ideal settlement that emphasized its communal nature and strength. Rather, he discussed the positive and negative aspects of living within the community. Faragher identified both those residents for whom living in Sugar Creek was financially and socially successful and those residents who stayed a short while and moved on to search for success elsewhere. His final paragraph discussed this and made an important point about the conclusions that all the authors drew from their research:

In Sugar Creek, community did not work to the benefit of all; rather, it was the device that allowed some men and women to succeed and prevail while others, the majority, failed and pushed on. The relative stability of Sugar Creek for the persistent owners was accompanied by high levels of mobility and shiftlessness for those who lacked the means to buy land. Depending upon one's viewpoint, depending upon which group among the settlers one studies, one may find either the geographic mobility and loss of community that have become the hallmarks of modern America, or the communal order of a traditional society.⁹

It is this presentation of both sides of the "community studies" argument that made Faragher's research so complete. His research isolated an area of settlement and studied it specifically as it related to some of the broader social themes and movements discussed by Turner, Dykstra and other historians. "In important ways communal elements retained much strength in the settlement of Sugar Creek, even in the context of a typically Turnerian environment."¹⁰

In light of the views of each of the above authors, a reiteration of Faragher's initial question: "To what extent has the American rural experience been communal?" seems an appropriate way to conclude this analysis. A case can be made for the idea that both Dykstra and Faragher studied locations that were clearly communal in nature while Turner chose to tackle the entire western frontier as his subject matter. They applied theories of central-place studies, open-country community, and associationalism to what was already in existence. The data they needed to support their ideas was all around them. While Turner chose to use only minimal sources of local contemporary information to

9 Faragher, 252.
10 *Ibid.*, 251.

justify his theories, Dykstra and Faragher sought out as much local information as they could and interpreted it using a multi-disciplinary approach. Not only were broader historical themes and theories used as templates. So were sociological, economic and political themes. This method served to uncover as broad and accurate a version of these experiences as possible.

While Turner's research provided an overview of the progressive conquest and domestication of a poetic and ideal frontier, Dykstra and Faragher created in-depth and realistic analyses of specific places in American history. Their interpretations did not end at localism, though. By honing in on particular communities and examining intimate details of their existence, they interpreted a microcosm of social development that represents many of the broader social and economic themes of American history.

THE POLITICS OF EXECUTION: THE HANGING OF THE SIOUX

Mara Rutten

Mara Rutten is a graduate student at Southern Illinois University—Carbondale. This paper, looking at the political pressures surrounding the execution of Sioux Indians in 19th century Minnesota, was presented at the Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference in April, where it was judged the best graduate paper in American history.

November 26, 1862 was an unusually warm day in Minnesota, a day conducive to accumulating a crowd. For settlers of southern Minnesota, however, even a blizzard would not have kept the estimated 4,000 of them from travelling to Mankato to witness justice being served. After months of waiting and repeated delays, 38 Dakota Indians would hang for the deaths of over 700 of the Minnesotans' families, neighbors and friends.

Within the prison walls, the condemned sat in pairs, smoking their pipes in silence. The Reverend Father Ravoux spoke to them of courage to face the gallows, and more important, of courage to face their Creator. As he spoke, the prisoners began singing their death song, filling the room. The effect was "almost magical. Their whole manner changed after they had closed their singing, and an air of cheerful innocence marked all of them. It seemed as if during their passionate wailing, they had passed in spirit through the valley of the shadow of death, and already had their eyes fixed on their pleasant hunting grounds beyond."¹ They shook hands with all around them, and spoke of their condemnation as the end of a struggle—they were to go to the Great Spirit who would lead them home, and they would die happy.

The awaited hour finally came, and the Dakotas went willingly—one reporter believed a notice of reprieve could not have been more welcomed.² Once again the death wail started as the prisoners climbed the gallows, actually crowding on each other's heels. The nooses were placed around their necks, the

white caps placed over their heads, and still they continued their song, swaying back and forth rhythmically. In order to sustain each other, they called out the names of their comrades, as well as their own names, shouting, "I am here. I am here," while they reached for each other's hands. They were very close together, and many succeeded in finding comfort in their comrades, though one old man was unable to grasp a hand, and his struggles for camaraderie aroused the pity of several observers. Still, the song continued until the rope was cut, and 38 Dakota Indians dangled from the gallows.

This day marked one of the saddest occasions in American history, certainly one of the worst days in the history of United States-Indian relations. After four hundred years of stolen land, unequal bartering, and assaults to their pride and humanity, the Dakota Sioux Indians rose up against the Minnesota settlers in the largest Indian massacre in history, the "Great Sioux Uprising," or Sioux War. They razed the land, leaving little standing in their path. They killed men, women, and children indiscriminately, scalping and mutilating the bodies, setting fire to houses, and looting the provisions of towns and farmhouses throughout the land. Whole families disappeared, and within a week southern Minnesota was completely depopulated. Before it was over, 500 settlers and 200 soldiers were killed, and another 300 settlers were taken captive. When it was over, retribution was swift and severe. Thirty-eight Indians would be executed, hundreds more would die, and thousands would be forced from the state they called home.

President Abraham Lincoln would be praised in the years to come for his humanity during this incident, for though he ordered the largest mass execution in United States history, he commuted the sentences of 265 of the 303 Indians the Minnesotans had originally condemned. Minnesotans, too, would be praised for the self-control they exhibited toward the prisoners who remained in their custody for half a year. But the politics involved in the ordering of the executions and subsequent removal had little to do with humanity: the thirty-eight condemned were a peace offering to Minnesota citizens. In exchange for the remaining 265 lives, clearly innocent persons—the pardoned Sioux, the elderly, the women and children, as well as the completely guiltless Winnebago tribe—would be expelled from the state and their lands opened to settlement. More innocent lives would be lost in this move than were pardoned by Lincoln. The handling of this incident would also set a precedent for the next 30 years: The

¹ Mankato Record, January 3, 1863.
² *Ibid.*

conflict of rights on the Plains began with the Sioux Massacre of 1862; it would not end until the Massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890.

The news of the condemned had greatly disturbed President Lincoln. It seemed hardly plausible that with only 500 men imprisoned for the uprising—many of them men who had risked their lives in order to return the captives—there would be 303 actually involved in atrocities, especially when the Dakota leader Little Crow and many other admitted perpetrators were not captured at all. Throughout the entire episode, this was the one time Lincoln acted with haste: He immediately asked to see "the full and complete record of their convictions,"³ delaying the executions until his lawyers could review the cases. During this period, he received constant pressure from different parties nationwide. The most urgent pleas came from General John Pope, Colonel Henry Hastings Sibley, and Governor Alexander Ramsey, who all insisted that if the executions of all of the condemned did not take place—and take place instantly—Minnesotans would take matters into their own hands and "dispose of these wretches without law. These two peoples cannot live together."⁴

The men were not without concern. The journey to the prison at Camp Lincoln in Mankato had been perilous for the prisoners, who were attacked by the citizens as they were transported, causing the death of an infant. More concern, however, was directed toward an organized mob the officials were certain was forming. Most of the rhetoric was exaggerated, but the concern was not without warrant. On December 5, Camp Lincoln was assaulted by a mob of 200 men, who swore the intention of murdering the prisoners, but Colonel Miller, who commanded the guard, took them prisoner instead.⁵ Martial law was ordered, but the incident was unique. However, Pope was convinced that just because more incidents had not occurred did not mean they would not, especially if the citizens were provoked by the idea that justice would not be swiftly served. He warned Lincoln that although things were safe for the time being, it was only a matter of time before the situation would be impossible, as

3 Telegram from Lincoln to Pope, November 10, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

4 Wilkinson, Cyrus Aldrich and William Windom to Lincoln, Sioux Trial Transcripts, National Archives.

5 Sibley to Elliott, December 6, 1862, *Minnesota in the Indian and Civil Wars* (St. Paul: Pioneer Press Company, 1890).

"the cold weather [makes it] impracticable to protect so large a body of troops and Indians."⁶

Governor Ramsey had another concern and that was the image his new state was presenting to the rest of the country. His proclamation to the people of Minnesota following the Camp Lincoln incident stresses patience less they "disgrace themselves and the State." He sympathized openly with the "hardness of executive action," but reminded the people of their advanced state of civilization and the message they would send to other Indians and whites alike.⁷ Ramsey expressed these concerns in his pressure on Lincoln, as well. "It would be wrong," he wrote, "upon principle and policy to refuse this—private revenge would on all this border take the place of the official judgment on these Indians."⁸

The threat of mob violence went beyond military or political concerns, but involved concerns for the Indians—especially the innocent—as well. In his letter to Lincoln, Riggs asked that

no greater punishment should be inflicted upon them than is required by justice. But knowing this excited state of this part of the country—the indignation which is felt against the whole Indian people in consequence of these murders and outrages ... venting itself on the innocent as well as the guilty ... a great necessity is upon us to execute the great majority of them who have been condemned by the Military Commission. This is required as satisfaction to the demands of public justice. It is required also as a guaranty of safety to the women and children and few men who in this great uprising proved themselves loyal to our government and people.⁹

Pressure came from other private citizens as well, but their concerns were not with illegal distribution of justice, or the safety of the Indians, but with simple vengeance for the outrages they had endured. Again and again, these victims wrote Lincoln to detail the instances of rape and murder, and to stress the number of refugees, widows and orphans the Indians' actions had caused. They were murderers, the people wrote, and should suffer the consequences of any murderer. In fact, these Indians were worse than common murderers—they

6 Pope to Lincoln, November 24, 1862, *Minnesota in the Indian and Civil Wars*.

7 Ramsey's Proclamation to the People of Minnesota, December 6, 1862, Alexander Ramsey Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

8 Telegram from Ramsey to Lincoln, November 10, 1862, Alexander Ramsey Papers.

9 Riggs to Lincoln, November 17, 1862, Stephen Return Riggs Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

were treacherous because they had deceived the populace into believing they were friendly. The prisoners had been the "civilized" Indians with short hair, wearing white man's clothes and dwelling in brick houses built for them by the government.¹⁰ The crimes were not committed by wild Indians who did not know any better, but by those "who have had advantages, some of religious teachings ... which rendered them entirely competent to judge the criminality of the proceedings ... [they] do not deserve to be treated with the leniency with which entirely wild and ignorant savages might have a claim"¹¹ These Minnesotans further pressed Lincoln by stating that they who had been so loyal to the Union cause wondered about the nation they supported if "the lives of 1,000 loyal whites are of less consequence to the Government of the United States than is [sic] the lives of 300—or 300,000, for that matter—of treacherous savages."¹²

It was also the government's job to teach these "savages" and the "savages" of other tribes a lesson. Part of the reason the outbreak occurred, cried many, was that the last group to cause trouble on the frontier had not been punished by the Government. In 1857, Inkpaduta's band had killed 30–40 whites in Northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota in the Spirit Lake Massacre. Because of inclement weather, and because the band held several women prisoner, the military had decided not to pursue the Sioux in exchange for return of the prisoners. Many of the remaining settlers in 1862 were convinced that had the band received "just punishment ... we should doubtless have been spared this fearful visitation of savage wrath."¹³ It was a mistake that the citizens of Minnesota refused to make again.

The pressure Lincoln received was not one-sided; many people across the country asked for clemency for the condemned, and their reasons were as numerous as those of their adversaries. For some, it was the high number of condemned that attracted their attention. Three or four, or even 15 Indians may have escaped the notice of Indian reformers, but 303 was too high a number to be ignored. There was obviously a problem somewhere—and the problem was not the Indians, but the government.

10 Memorial from the citizens of St. Paul to Lincoln, Sioux Trial Transcripts.

11 Sibley to Whipple, December 7, 1862, Henry Benjamin Whipple Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

12 Fairbault Central Republican, November 26, 1862.

13 *Ibid.*

Henry Whipple was not alone in his diagnosis of the problem: that the war "has been the result of fundamental errors of policy of the Government"; many other contemporaries also criticized the government's Indian policy as leaving the Indians no choice but to fight.¹⁴ Alonzo P. Connolly noticed that there should hardly be any retribution for a crime in which the whites were mostly responsible. The broken treaties and dishonest dealings undermined the trust the natives should have held for the government and its people, and worse yet, it showed them the only proper way to behave: "the lesson taught by observation was that lying was no disgrace, adultery no sin, and theft no crime. This they learned from educated white men who had been sent to them as representatives of the government."¹⁵

It was possible, others suggested, that the handling of the Indians was illegal, as they were prisoners of war and not murderers in the traditional sense. Whipple's argument was most persuasive when he reminded government officials of the dealings with the Indians over the past 200 years. The government had a consistent policy of buying land and signing treaties with the Indians. Hence, the government had never rescinded the position that the Indians were members of an independent nation—therefore, the prisoners were prisoners of war. Unjustly or illegally punishing the prisoners could ignite a powder keg involving other Indian tribes. Though he admitted someone had to be punished, he reminded the government that at this time "we cannot afford by any wanton cruelty to purchase a long Indian war."¹⁶

Commissioner William P. Dole concurred. The Indians were members of a separate nation, and the prisoners had been taken at the end of an obvious war. What's more, those Indians who were condemned and had surrendered peacefully were given the impression that they would be safe. The character of the Sioux nation was that of a "wild, barbarous, and benighted race" which culturally prevented the rank-and-file Indians from having any choice but to follow the orders of their leaders. Therefore, it was the leaders who should be punished; those that were captured were not responsible.¹⁷

14 Whipple to Lincoln, September 1862, Henry Benjamin Whipple Papers.

15 Alonzo P. Connolly, *Sioux War and the Minnesota Massacre of 1862 and 1863* (Chicago: A.P. Connolly, 1896), 45.

16 Whipple to Rice, November 12, 1862, Henry Benjamin Whipple Papers.

17 Dole to Caleb Smith, November 10, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers.

Minnesotans had a different idea of responsibility. "The laws of war cannot be so far distorted as to reach this case in any respect," wrote Senator Henry Mower Rice, "when I reflect that without a moment's notice they struck upon unoffending men and women and children from many of whom they had received many kindnesses and butchered them."¹⁸ There had, after all, been no declaration of open war and no discrimination among its victims. "There is wide difference between the killing of men in open war, and brutal massacres in times of peace ... the latter must be condemned by every moral code entitled to the least consideration."¹⁹

Others called on Lincoln to retry the convicted because it was inevitable that those who had seen the atrocities and had lost family or property in the uprising would be filled with a desire for vengeance that precluded them from separating the guilty from the innocent. To execute such a large number of people would certainly look bad to the rest of the world—an important consideration when the Union was looking for foreign support against the Confederacy. Reverend Thomas Williamson clearly stated the national sentiment that "the honor of our Government and the welfare of the people of Minnesota as well as that the Indians requires a new trial before unprejudiced judges that the innocent may be liberated and the guilty punished."²⁰

Those closer to the problem saw the situation much differently and resented the interference of outsiders who they believed were "in bad taste" and were not acquainted with the facts.²¹ Nor were the people of Minnesota looking for reform, as they could not understand the Dakota's provocation. Henry Hastings Sibley, one of the most corrupt of all Indian traders in Minnesota, recognized that the Sioux had been unfairly dealt with in the past, but he did not feel they had any other recourse. If they were desperate, he believed, they should have gone through proper channels, and "Their grievances would have been, sooner or later, heard and righted."²²

18 Rice to Whipple, November 19, 1862, Henry Benjamin Whipple Papers.

19 Charles S. Bryant, *A History of the Great Massacre by the Sioux Indians in Minnesota: Including the Personal Narratives of Many Who Escaped* (Cincinnati: Rickey and Carroll, 1864), 4-58.

20 Williamson to Riggs, November 24, 1863, Stephen Return Riggs Papers.

21 Williamson, Aldrich and Windom to Lincoln, Sioux Trial Transcripts.

22 Sibley to Whipple, December 7, 1862, Henry Benjamin Whipple Papers.

For many of the state's citizens, it was not just a matter of whether the grievances were valid. It was that the Eastern states, who had long ago finished their Indian problems, were being so hypocritical. After all, one Minnesotan reminded his Eastern neighbors, earlier Indian troubles were settled without even the pretense of a court of law, and the punishments dealt out were much more severe. In 1637, he reminded them, the Pequot Indians of Connecticut were ambushed in their village, and 600 men, women and children were killed. The rest were sold into slavery in retaliation for the deaths of only two whites. Were Minnesotans more unfeeling than that display? "Indians are the same in all times," another wrote. "Two hundred years have wrought no change upon Indian character ... much of Indian barbarity has been forgotten by those who have been far removed from the direct contact of the two races."²³

The Minnesotans also threatened Lincoln politically. Many questions would determine the votes Lincoln would either capture or lose in other Union states, but in Minnesota it was a single issue. Minnesota's representatives reminded the President that

The people of Minnesota ... have stood firm by you and by your administration; they had given both you and it their cordial support; they have not violated the law; they have borne these sufferings with a patience such as but few people have ever exhibited under such extreme trial ... because they believed that their President would deal with them justly.²⁴

Others were not so subtle. The Fairbault Central Republican worried about the Government's "disregard for its friends." If Lincoln were to pardon the captives, "he will look in vain to Minnesota for friends or support in the future."²⁵ Ramsey, who did realize the importance the executions played in politics, was ready to capitalize on Lincoln's cold feet in order to secure his place in the Senate race. He asked the President to turn the decision over to him if he could not bring himself to do it.²⁶

Finally, in December, the debate ended. Taking into careful consideration the feelings of a staunch Republican state, the outcries of reformers throughout the nation, and a sense of justice, Lincoln made his decision. Anxious, as he

23 Isaac V.D. Heard, *History of the Sioux War* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1864), 271; Bryant, 462-463.

24 Wilkinson, Aldrich, and Windom to Lincoln, Sioux Trial Transcripts.

25 Fairbault Central Republican, November 26, 1862.

26 Ramsey to Lincoln, November 28, 1862, Alexander Ramsey Papers.

said, "to not act with so much clemency as to encourage another outbreak, on the one hand, nor with so much severity as to be real cruelty" he ordered the execution of 39 of the prisoners. After careful review he had decided first to order the execution of those who had violated females and to secondly condemn those who were proven to have participated in massacres rather than in battles.²⁷ He had compromised, to the benefit of the reformers. But the ordeal was not over: over 1,500 prisoners remained in custody. The scales weighing their fate would tip toward the Minnesotans.

The executions on December 26, 1862, did not end the episode that had begun that summer. For many, the worst was yet to come. Lincoln had acted generously in the commuting of the 265 sentences—if one believes they were deserving of execution. Yet he could only afford to be generous for so long. The issue was not settled as over 1,500 Dakota remained imprisoned and two other tribes, the Chippewa and the Winnebago, remained free within the state while the remaining population of Minnesota clamored for their extinction. The Minnesotans simply refused to live side by side with the Indians. Many threatened the depopulation of the country by white settlers if the Indians were not purged; many more reminded the government that it had been patient long enough: If the U.S. Government would not expel the Indians, the citizens of Minnesota would.²⁸ The Fairbault Central Republican wrote "we trust and pray that this may be a war of extermination ... let us wipe out the treacherous, accursed vipers or drive them far beyond our borders, that peace and security may once more reign."²⁹

In the game of politics, compromises are the key to success. In 1862 Lincoln made a compromise with the people of Minnesota that would affect not only the condemned prisoners, but all the tribes living within the borders and would color the relations between the two races for the next century. For the immediate salvation of 200 men, thousands would suffer. Those contained would not be released, and as soon as feasible would be expelled forever from the state. In addition, the federal government agreed to paying the cost of the Sioux War, compensating civilian damages, and supplying the state with the key political appointment of John Usher as Secretary of the Interior.

²⁷ Lincoln's message to the Senate, December 11, 1862, *Sioux Trial Transcripts*.

²⁸ Baker to Ramsey, March 16, 1863, *Alexander Ramsey Papers*.

²⁹ *Fairbault Central Republican*, August 27, 1862.

With the removal of the Dakota and Winnebago tribes from Minnesota, the episode in which the lives of over 5,000 people—white, red, civilian and warrior—were disrupted was effectively over, but the debate about what to do about the red man was far from completed. The Sioux War and the events which followed it were clearly a sign of structural problems. From across the nation for nearly a century, interested parties would cry for Indian reform. The treatment of the Indians as dependents instead of separate nations would be one of the first changes. The bureaucracy of the Indian system would also be changed forever, and the benefits or detractions of this change can be argued indefinitely. The impact of these reforms is still being heard in the courts today.

The Sioux Uprising of 1862 was the largest Indian massacre in United States history and final proof for contemporaries that the two peoples could not live together. Because of this belief, hundreds of people died over the next few years of hanging, exposure, disease and starvation. The whites may have felt in the spring of 1863 that they could never live peacefully with the Indians; the action of the whites following the uprising forever convinced the Indians that they would never live peacefully with the whites. One witness to the sufferings of the Dakota was a Hunkpapa Sioux Indian who swore that he would never concede his people to the white man and suffer the fate of his kin. He would hold on as long as he could. That man was Sitting Bull.

THE NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE ON USING BLACK TROOPS IN THE CIVIL WAR

Demea Richards

Demea Richards is a freshman pre-nursing major. She wrote this assignment using primary documents for an American history survey class. As part of a role-playing exercise, Demea takes the position of opposing the use of black troops in the Union Army.

A few words about the assignment:

This is just one essay based on the assignment given, which was meant to be in debate form. The basis for the papers was our readings about the Civil War and the controversy that surrounded the argument that blacks should be allowed to fight in both the Union and Confederate armies. The class was divided into four groups, each of which had a different aspect of the issue to argue. Some students were to argue in support of allowing blacks to fight in the North or the South; and there were those who were assigned to argue against allowing blacks to fight in either army. The essay below opposes using black troops in the North.

Ladies and gentlemen, much has been made of the discussions about whether or not to arm Negroes, whether or not to accept them into and allow them to fight for the Union Army. Despite all of the confusion surrounding this issue, I am here tonight to settle this issue, to erase any lingering doubt that there cannot be any other position except an unequivocal and resounding "No" to that question.

The most compelling reason why Negroes should not be recruited and armed comes from the delicate state of the Union itself. Currently, Southern states have elected, because of their dedication to slavery and allegiance to themselves rather than the greater good of the Union, to secede. All but four Southern states have chosen this option. Are we to arm Negroes to gain the support of Europeans who sit from afar and judge our conflict and never lift a hand in our defense, still alienating ourselves from the few states who hold the idea of treason and betrayal as unfathomable as we ourselves do? Is this our reward for their bravery and commitment?

We must understand that this conflict cannot and should not become about slavery, for this would be a direct and unjustified affront to those states who did not choose secession. We do not wish to enrage and possibly propel them to the other side, which would welcome them with open arms.

Although this argument is the most compelling and definitely one deserving much consideration, it is not the only argument to consider. Once we have included and accepted their conscription, we must also arm, feed, and clothe them. Although this may seem simple enough, supplies and equipment are not always available to our white troops, who should undoubtedly come first. Also, we must consider that arming slaves in rebellious territories exposes us to the danger that the ammunition will end up in the hands of Confederate soldiers. Union armies must not only face the danger of battle, but must also concern themselves with whether or not they are being attacked with weapons that should have been meant for them.

Genetic differences must also be figured into the equation. Negroes are a race that has been exposed to centuries of servitude, and it is possible that they are incapable of any type of military or civil service due to this exposure. Slavery is an injustice, but to give blacks an opportunity of volunteering to fight for the Union cause on equal footing with whites would perhaps be more independence and quality than most whites in the North and those in the border states could imagine. If former slaves are allowed to take up arms for the sake of the Union, then we are offering to them the argument that they are indeed equal to white soldiers who have done the same.

We must also consider the numbers of troops already trained and in action that we may lose due to the drafting and recruiting of Negroes. Many could refuse to fight with Negro troops and may resign if forced to do so. The result is that the Union army would gain many more bodies to sacrifice, but would have less of the leadership and experience to prevent unnecessary deaths.

Although the idea of arming Negroes seems, at first glance, to be one that would solve our immediate needs for more manpower, the questions and problems that would arise as a result of such actions definitely outweigh the consequences. We would be inviting the world to focus on the racial issues inherent in our struggle when it is perhaps our outrage at the treason of our Southern states that is most central to our resolve. We would likewise be inviting problems in the ranks of our brave and valiant militia—problems they ill need in these delicate and dangerous times. This challenge is monumental, and we must avoid unnecessary complications. We must say no to the idea of arming Negro troops for our Union army.

THE DECISION FOR EMPIRE

Katie Kopania

Katie Kopania is a junior history major. This essay, written for a course in modern British history, was assigned to explore the motivation behind Britain's drive to build an empire. The sources used are from the texts for that class.

Take up the white man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait on heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child!

When first considering the issue of Britain's late 19th-century empire, sentiments such as the one displayed in this Kipling passage would seem to make the argument against empire easy. The implication of the Anglo-Saxon race feeling that a native population was savage as a means to justify political gain is atrocious by modern-day standards. But exploitation and racial superiority were not the major drive of Britons in the late 1800s. Several factors made imperialism a reality for Britain. Empire was a necessity for Britain in this era because of the struggle for power that emerging countries in Europe faced. Arguments for empire will prove that any other alternative was unrealistic for the time period examined.

Britain's first taste of imperialism did not begin in the late 1890s. Empire was seen as far back as 1783 and on through most of the Victorian years, 1801–1870. Public opinion supported independence of the colonies in the past because interest was geared more toward trade rather than the acquisition of territory.¹ Interest was transferred in the latter 1800s with a new expansionist

1 Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" in Walter Arnstein, ed., *The Past Speaks*. (Lexington, MA: DC Heath and Company, 1993), 280.

2 Walter Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today, 1830 to the Present* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 169.

government including Salisbury for the Conservatives and Roseberry for the Liberals. The transition was partially due to economic concerns such as markets, raw materials and potential investment outlets.³ Free trade was disintegrating as several countries began to impose their protective tariffs. The United States enacted the Morrill tariff of 1861, and Germany and France soon followed. "It came to be argued that Britain should occupy territories whose current commercial value was small or those territories might otherwise become part of the protective tariff of another sphere of power."⁴ The pressure of Britain to compete with countries for economic power was a major factor in the rise of empire.

Economic issues became a topic for heated debate for Britons, and William Greg shed some light on the discussion in relation to empire. Greg examined Sir W. Molesworth's statistics that alleged the colonies were economically unjustified. Sir Molesworth contended that the colonial empire cost England about 4,000,000 pounds a year, and that money could have been used to relieve England of its extreme taxes.⁵ When Greg looked into Molesworth's estimates, he revealed that his proposed 2.5 million pounds spent on military expenditures was actually only a little over one-and-a-quarter million pounds. Greg went on to show that the number might have been less because some military was used to protect the colonies, but other resources were used to protect Britain's overseas trade. In other words, the money would have been spent regardless of Britain's colonial settlements.

William Greg did venture even further into the economic question. He explained that there have been economic consequences without the advantage of the colonies. For starters, Britain would have had to face the protective tariffs, as previously explained. With England having been one of the chief manufacturers in the world, duties could have been as high as 30 to 50 percent to the United States alone.⁶ Britain would have inevitably lost profit in the long run as well as their influence in colonial rule.

In regard to the colonies, independence would not have necessarily guaranteed freedom from England. Granting independence would have left the

3 *Ibid.*, 171.

4 *Ibid.*

5 William Greg, "Shall We Retain Our Colonies?" in *The Past Speaks*, 280.

6 Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 171.

colonies vulnerable to attack and in need of assistance. From past experience, the colonies would have looked straight to England for their defense. Greg stated that "We should have to bear the expense of defending them from attack without having any control over their conduct in incurring it."⁷ In other words, Britain was tied to her dependents regardless, and if so, should have a say in their affairs as a compensation.

Outside of economic issues, there were other reasons for the years of empire. Power seemed to be a major factor in the rise of imperialism. Europe was rising, and several countries challenged England's dominance. For example, Germany became a leading military and political power after the Franco-Prussian War. That made it virtually impossible for Britain not to compete so as to hold strong in the balance of power. After exhausting all avenues within Britain herself, she had to expand to build up her weakening power.

An article titled "The Maintenance of Empire" by Benjamin Disraeli defended colonial rule. Disraeli was the leader of the Conservative party and examined the issue of imperialism. In his defense of empire, he made some effective points. He discussed how hard the Liberals fought to abandon the empire but explained that they did not propose adequate solutions to independence.⁸ He felt that self-rule was not out of the question if correctly implemented, but at the time was unrealistic. He also chastised the Liberals for only considering the financial ramifications, without giving due respect for England's political obligations. Disraeli ended his speech with an appeal to the nationalistic spirits of Britons. He left them to evaluate an England of comfortable and humble means as compared to one that would demand respect of the world.

Nationalistic prose was used to sway Englishers in support of the existing empire. The thought of a Britain so powerful that countries such as Germany and Russia posed no threat was appealing to many. Alfred Lord Tennyson followed such a call in his verse regarding the opening of the colonial exhibition. For

example:

... That old strength and constancy
which has made your fathers great
In our ancient island State,
And whenever her flag fly
Glorying between sea and sky,
Make the might of Britain known;
Britain, hold your own!⁹

Poems such as this raged with pride and rallied the masses to defend the honor of their grand nation.

With an English audience willing to support her nation, empire was inevitable. The time was conducive to colonial settlement and was supported. Critics of empire had one issue that remains to be discussed. The morality of rule over native populations was problematic. Many said that the treatment of Africans, and the violent force used to subdue them, was vile and extreme. Actually, there was certain evidence examined which raised doubts on the subject. Arnstein shows that it was actually the British who had a hand in the abolition of the slave trade. Beginning with west Africa in the 1850s and ending with the reluctant east Africa in 1895, the slave trade was finished. During the exhibition in the "Scramble for Africa," it appeared as though there were missionaries who were concerned with making religious converts. It would be foolish to assume that all Britons were peaceful and just, but it seemed as though their interests were not solely in exploitation, but rather in the advancement of the empire as a whole.

There has been evidence of force used upon Africans as well as the British perception that Africans were savage and primitive. The idea of a native population so diverse from the Anglo was something new. It seems plausible that ignorance and fear of Britain's own repression caused the English to act against the natives. During a time when the quest for power was at hand, England could show no vulnerability, for it, too, would have lost the power it held so dear.

7 Ibid., 270.

8 Benjamin Disraeli, "The Maintenance of Empire," in *The Past Speaks*, 276-278.

9 Alfred Tennyson, "Opening of the Indian and Cultural Exhibition by the Queen," in *The Past Speaks*, 279.

Joseph Chamberlain gave a speech on the "True Conception of Empire" in which he outlined three periods of colonial history. The first he described as a time when the colonies were established as a direct source of profit.¹⁰ He went on to the second stage to show the animosity against empire because free trade was successful following independence. The third stage pertained to the sense of obligation towards empire. He spoke of a national mission that could only have been justified if it enhanced the involved nations. He maintained that Britain did just that and introduced a peace and prosperity that the colonies had never seen before.¹¹ He did not say that British rule was perfect, but contended that it helped civilizations advance to heights never seen before. He spoke of the great British race which provided for the prosperity of all its inhabitants, as well as secured safety from potential danger.

William Greg added to Chamberlain's arguments favoring prosperity for the colonies. He argued that Britain's obligation was to protect the natives from slavery. He expanded on his point when he explained that if Britain abandoned the people of Jamaica that the United States would have converted them into slaves. His obligation was protection from potential harm and defense of the British empire.¹²

After analyzing the pros and cons of Britain's empire in the late 19th century, the position is clear. The British had no choice in the decision concerning colonialism, because if the colonies were not their acquisition, they would have been someone else's. The reality of the situation is apparent. Morally, cultures should not be subdued for political purposes, but for the time period, there was ignorance which lent the situation its fate. Britain was struggling for power during a time when it was up for grabs, and imperialism was a part of the package.

¹⁰ Joseph Chamberlain, "The True Conception of Empire," in *The Past Speaks*, 276.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹² William Greg, "Shall We Retain Our Colonies?" in *Ibid.*, 269.

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¹⁰ Joseph Chamberlain, "The True Conception of Empire," in *The Past Speaks*, 276.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹² William Greg, "Shall We Retain Our Colonies?," in *Ibid.*, 269.

PROPAGANDA AND THE RISE OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

Steven D. Rosson

Propaganda is the practice of spreading ideas, information or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring a cause. Today the term propaganda is seemingly distasteful to the population, this despite the fact that the origin of the word was most holy. Used by Pope Gregory XV, when he founded the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in 1622, the term meant a vehicle for religious faith. The term today is more closely associated with the National Socialist party than the Catholic church, closer with Joseph Goebbels than with Pope Gregory XV.

It is the purpose of this paper to study the employment of propaganda in the National Socialist rise to power 1923-1933. There are two misconceptions commonly associated with propaganda. First, it is widely believed that propaganda implies nothing less than the art of persuasion which is designed to alter the current attitudes and ideas of those it is directed against. In fact propaganda is more concerned with reinforcing existing beliefs rather than persuading those non-believers. The second misconception is that propaganda has only a negative connotation and consists only of lies and falsehoods.

National Socialist propaganda was directed toward the German people in a variety of campaigns with several, often conflicting themes. It is often believed that National Socialist propaganda appealed largely to the irrational side of its audience. Although this statement is true, in order for any propaganda to be successful it must also appeal to the more rational side of humans. In the course of this study I will examine two highly successful campaigns that appealed to the "rational" German people, for it was with these campaigns that the National Socialist gained most of its increase support from 1930 to 1933. It seems that many historians would have one believe that millions of Germans, mesmerized by propaganda, supported the National Socialists even though they knew it not to be in their best interest. This also is a falsehood. Although many may have been caught up in the moment and adored the pageantry of the National Socialist movement, the majority cast their votes for them because they did believe that it

was in their best interest and that this party had solutions when other political organizations would not even address the issues.

Adolf Hitler viewed propaganda so importantly that he devoted two chapters to it in *Mein Kampf*. He also viewed the First World War as the starting point of modern propaganda and rightfully so. However, by 1917 Hitler was already a neophyte in the world of propaganda. Upon arriving in Vienna in 1907 young Hitler observed and studied, with great interest, the political power struggles between Karl Lueger and Georg von Schonerer. Lueger, the anti-Semitic mayor of Vienna, strongly influenced Hitler in his early years. As the co-founder and leader of the Catholic-dominated Christian Socialist party Lueger became an immensely popular political figure in Vienna. Extremely effective in his use of propaganda, he would exploit prevailing anti-Semitic sentiment for his own demagogic purposes. It is often believed that not only did Hitler model his future propaganda ideology after Lueger but that he also adopted many of his anti-Semitic views as well. Aligned in political thought with Schonerer, the Prussian loyalist, Hitler believed him to be a better and more profound thinker in questions of principles. But if Schonerer recognized the problems in their innermost essence, he erred when it came to men.¹ Hitler compared the styles of both men.

Dr. Lueger's strength was a rare knowledge of men and in particular he took good care not to consider people better than they are. Consequently, he reckoned more with the real possibilities of life while Schonerer had but little understanding for them. Theoretically speaking, all the Pan-Germans' thoughts were correct, but since he lacked the force and astuteness to transmit his theoretical knowledge to the masses - that is, to put it in a form suited to the receptivity of the broad masses, which is and remains exceedingly limited - all his knowledge was visionary wisdom, and could never become practical reality.²

This political power struggle between Lueger and Schonerer left a lasting impression on Hitler. He would later say of the Austrian Socialist-Marxist organizations "and I soon learned that the correct use of propaganda is a true art which has remained practically unknown to the bourgeois parties.³ With this Hitler was determined in the second rise of the National Socialist German Workers Party to fully implement the lessons he had learned in Vienna.

It was in Vienna that Hitler not only learned propaganda but learned to hate

1 A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, (Boston, 1971), p.99.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 176.

as well. Again influenced by the writings of Lueger, Hitler developed many of his feelings toward Jews, Marxists, and democracy that he would later incorporate into the National Socialist ideology. Leaving Vienna for Munich in 1913 Hitler had dreams of a great and glorious revival of Germany which would one day overtake the ever declining Hapsburg Monarchy. He began to consider himself German and rejected all that was Austrian. Arrested in 1914 and returned to Austria for conscription into military service, Hitler was found to be "too weak and unfit to bear arms."⁴

When the war broke out in August 1914 Hitler enlisted into the 16th Bavarian Infantry. His service was gallant during the four years he participated in forty-seven battles while being wounded twice. It was while recovering from his last wound, inflicted by an enemy gas attack that Hitler began to develop another prevalent theme, one which would become the cornerstone of his hatred for democracy and the Weimar government, the conspiracy theory. Hitler described recovering in a Pasewalk hospital under the terror of blindness while trying to understand the great events of the hour. He recounted that the more he tried to understand the greater the shame burned. "I knew that everything was lost. Only fools, liars or criminals could hope for mercy from the enemy. In these nights my hatred grew against the men who had brought about this crime. I, however, decided to go into politics."⁵

While recovering Hitler had time to examine the propaganda techniques developed during the war. All belligerent countries had begun propaganda campaigns, which would be the first modern example of mass psychological warfare. Germany lagged behind the allies in these efforts. Focused mainly on the home front German propagandists erred in judgment more often than not. They chose to depict the enemy as a weak and inferior force which greatly demoralized young German troops when they first encountered a capable and well-trained enemy on the battlefield. Efforts by the German press to gain or maintain support for the war effort were equally devastating to the cause. Hitler believed the total miscarriage of the German Enlightenment service "stared every soldier in the face, and this spurred me to take up the question of propaganda even more deeply than before."⁶

4 K. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power* (Boston: Houghton & Mifflin Co., 1994), p. 74.

5 Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 206.

The British in the meantime not only developed, under the direction of press barons Beaverbrook and Northcliffe, successful campaigns for the morale of their own fighting men, but waged an extremely successful international campaign against the enemy. Able to read public opinion and gauge reactions to possible campaigns, the British Propaganda Ministry could reinforce a public sentiment that was steadfastly against what it was convinced to be the German aggression and wartime atrocities.

At the conclusion of the war Hitler returned to Munich. Angered by the Communist attempts at revolution and the failure of the Weimar Republic, he began to develop techniques and a propaganda ideology which would serve his political rise to power. He believed that propaganda was a means and must therefore be judged with regard to its end.

"To whom should propaganda be addressed? To the scientifically trained intelligentsia or to the less educated masses? It must be addressed always and exclusively to the masses."⁷ Hitler believed that the purpose of propaganda was to bring into the field of vision of the political uneducated issues which he had as of yet not seen.

Hitler made no attempt to hide his contempt for the masses; they were "malleable and corrupt by nature, they were overwhelmingly feminine by nature and attitude and as such their sentiment was not complicated but very simple and consistent."⁸ In *Mein Kampf*, where Hitler outlined his beliefs on propaganda, he described:

The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan.⁹

In the view of Hitler, unlike the Marxists in Russia, there was no distinction between propaganda and agitation. In Russia agitation was the influencing of the masses while propaganda was solely the education of the party elite. Hitler believed that propaganda would be as effective with party members as it would with the uneducated masses.

Hitler's politics was to work against the Treaty of Versailles and the new

6 *Ibid.*, p. 176.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 179.

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Ibid.*, p. 180.

German democracy. Still working for his old regiment and sent to infiltrate radical political parties operating in the area, Hitler gained his first contact with the National Socialist German Workers Party in 1919. Joining the party as number 55 and executive committee member number 7 Hitler was now an aspiring politician with a party. The party adopted its twenty-five point platform on February 24, 1920. Hitler then began applying his personal ideology- anti-Semitism, extreme nationalism, contempt for liberal democracy, the concept of Aryan racial supremacy, and the principle of leadership-to the political aims of the National Socialist Party. He was able to shape the platform of the party to appeal to everyone with a grievance of some kind, despite the fact that many of the National Socialist principles, as interpreted by Hitler, were contradictory. With the failure of the Beer Hall Putsch and his subsequent imprisonment Hitler would ponder his mistakes and when released set off on a course for a legal revolution which would rely heavily on propaganda to gain the needed popular support.

With the resurgence of the National Socialist party it was time to refine the propaganda techniques to be used to gain power. Hitler understood that the masses would be "more receptive to an emotional appeal rather than a rational argument."¹⁰ In Hitler's view there would be no place for gray, the themes had to be black and white with no chance for the masses to misinterpret the desired meaning, and campaigns should rely heavily upon the use of slogans, flags, banners and marches. Thus were born the two themes that would appear in almost all National Socialist propaganda efforts in the future, *Volksgemeinschaft* and the *Führer Cult*.

Volksgemeinschaft is defined as a national community, with harmony among the classes, which is racially pure and *Gemeinnutz geht vor Eigennutz* (all citizens working for the common good of the state). The National Socialists seeing the fragmentation of German society due to economic distress, set forth a platform to restore Germany to greatness by creating a community where there would be no division. The old caste system would be abolished as everyone had a well-respected role in building the greater German Reich. As the National Socialists propagated this idea it was closely linked with the anti-Semitic

10 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

beliefs that there would only be room in this community for the superior Aryan race. The National Socialists would never achieve a *Volksgemeinschaft*, and many who study German history believe that they in fact brought about a social revolution and created a modern society or *Gesellschaft*. The Fuhrer cult, or as called by Ian Kershaw, the "Fuhrer Myth",¹¹ is the widespread belief that Germany was destined to be led by one great and powerful leader. This belief found its origins in the nineteenth century with the mythical visions of German leadership and the pagan pan-German symbolism used in conjunction with religious ceremonies. The Fuhrer cult was not invented by the National Socialists, in fact, it paralleled the rise of Hitler, and it was not until after Hitler became chancellor that the two paths began to join.

The term Fuhrer has often been described as "the savior", having its original meaning in religious vernacular. Others have defined it as "the healer" or simply as "The Leader". Regardless of which definition is used, within the National Socialist party there were many that sought to help build Hitler into the Fuhrer. Such unlikely candidates as the later disposed Gregor Strasser wrote in 1927 on the relationship between the party members and Hitler:

An utter devotion to the idea of National Socialism, a glowing faith in the victorious strength of the doctrine of liberation and deliverance, is combined with a deep love of the person of our leader who is the shining hero of the new freedom fighters... Duke and vassal! In this ancient German, both aristocratic and democratic, relationship of leader and follower, fully comprehensible only to the German mentality and spirit, lies the essence of the structure of the NSDAP... Friends raise your right arm and cry out with me proudly, eager for the struggle, and loyal unto death, "Heil Hitler!"¹²

Among those also shaping the Hitler image from an early date was Rudolf Hess, who in a private letter written in 1927 wrote that it was above all necessary

...that the Fuhrer must be absolute in his propaganda speeches. He must not weigh up the pros and cons like an academic, he must never leave his listeners the freedom to think something else is right... The great popular leader is similar to the great founder of a religion he must communicate to his listeners an apodictic faith. Only then can the mass of followers be led where they should be lead. They will then also follow the leader if setbacks are encountered; but only then, if they have communicated to them unconditional belief in the absolute rightness of their own people.¹³

¹¹ I. Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, (Oxford, 1987), p. 3.

¹² J. Noakes, Pridham, G., *Documents on Nazism*, (London, 1974), pp 84-5

¹³ Kershaw, p. 27.

By far the most influential person in creating the fuhrer cult' and combining it together with the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft* was Paul Joseph Goebbels. *Volksgemeinschaft* was Paul Joseph Goebbels. Goebbels, the son of a manual worker from the Rhineland, was raised in a strict Catholic family. Considered to be the brightest of all National Socialist leaders he was educated in various universities and earned a doctoral degree in literature. Goebbels joined the party in 1922 and later began work as the editor of the *National Socialist Briefe*, the publication of Gregor and Otto Strasser. Goebbels was soon in the middle of the controversy between the Strassers and Hitler on the extent that socialism should play in the party platform. Prior to 1926 Goebbels sided with the Strassers. Then he changed sides and became a staunch and even fanatical supporter of Hitler. Goebbels wrote Hitler, A true leader, he declared, was not subject to the whims of the masses, was not a parliamentarian but a liberator of the masses. With obvious pseudo-religious connotations, he spoke of the Fuhrer as "the fulfillment of a mysterious longing", and of a man "who showed them in their deepest despair the way to a faith and like a meteor before our astonished eyes" had "worked a miracle of enlightenment and belief in a world of skepticism and despair."¹⁴

Such words drew Hitler's favorable attention and in 1926 Goebbels was made Gauleiter of Berlin-Brandenburg. From 1927-1935 he edited his own weekly newspaper, *Der Angriff* (The Assault). In this paper and through his public speaking in Berlin he was able to spread the National Socialist philosophy to the nation's capital city. When Goebbels spoke it was obvious that he was a well-educated man and a truly gifted speaker. Hitler, once again impressed by the achievements in the area of propaganda, in 1929 appointed Goebbels as the *Reichspropagandaleiter der NSDAP* (Reich propaganda leader of the National Socialist party).

A master of modern propaganda, Goebbels applied many modern advertising and promotional techniques he learned from the American newspaper industry. But the true skill of Goebbels was in the establishment of a party propaganda apparatus. The main function of the early party organization was the transmittal of directives from higher to lower party headquarters. By 1930

¹⁴ L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*, (New York, 1989), p. 119.

Goebbels constructed a central organization employing more than 14,000 people. This he divided into specialized sections that could look after every aspect of propaganda.

The active propaganda section (Amt 1) formed the core of the propaganda organization. It was to deal with the execution of Political agitation, from the largest mass meetings (excluding the party day rallies in Nuremberg which were coordinated by an independent organization working directly for Goebbels), to the smallest meeting in the countryside. This directive also published *Unser Wille und Weg* (Will and Way), its own monthly magazine, founded in 1931, in which it would pass down to the *Gaue* instructions for upcoming campaigns.

From its origins, the meetings of the National Socialist were strictly controlled. Access was limited to supporters or those as of yet undecided. Political opponents were forbidden from attending, and if they were able to gain access and speak out with their dissenting view, they were dealt with harshly, either by verbal ridicule or more often than not physical abuse. Questions from the audience were not allowed and members of the *Sturmabteilung* (SA) roamed the room to quell opposing outburst. Party meetings would begin late because it was felt that people were more receptive to radical ideas as fatigue and alcohol affected their system. Later these meetings took on an almost pageant-like quality as the choreography became more sophisticated.

A sub-section of the "active propaganda" department was one concerned with *Rednerwesen*, the directive for public speaking. By far the most effective weapon of the National Socialist Campaign, it was in full swing by 1930 while political opponents were still struggling with establishment of their organizations. A May 1930 memorandum of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior indicates the degree to which the National Socialist propaganda machine was functioning.

Hardly a day passes on which there are not several meetings even in narrowly restricted local areas. Carefully organized propaganda headquarters in the individual *Gaue* ensure that the speaker and subject are adapted to the local and economic circumstances. The Reichstag and Landtag deputies of the Party and many other Party speakers travel about every day to undertake and build up this agitation. Through systematic training courses, through correspondence courses and recently through a school for NSDAP speakers established on 1 July 1929, such agitators are trained for this task over a period of months, even years. If they prove themselves, they receive official recognition from the Party and were put under contract to give at least thirty speeches over a period of eight months and receive as an incentive a fee of 20 Reichsmarks or more per evening in addition to their expenses. Rhetorical skill combined with subjects carefully chosen to suit the particular audience, which in the countryside and in the small towns is mainly interested in economic matters, ensure, according to our observations, halls which are almost invariably overcrowded with enthusiastic listeners. Meetings with an audience of between

1000 and 5000 people are a daily occurrence in the bigger towns. Frequently a second or several parallel meetings have to be held because the halls provided cannot hold the numbers who attend... on such occasions the network of local branches is extended as far as possible or at all events contact men are recruited who are intended to prepare the ground through intensive propaganda by word of mouth for the spread of the movement which can be observed everywhere. Frequently such propaganda squads stay in a certain place for several days and try to win the local population for the movement through the most varied sorts of entertainment such as concerts, sports days, tattoos in suitable places and even church parades. In other places an outside propaganda speaker is stationed for a certain time with a car at his disposal; he travels systematically through the surrounding districts. National Socialist theater groups traveling from place to place serve the same purpose.¹⁵

By 1925 Hitler had perfected those qualities which set him apart from all other speakers of the era. He was not an impromptu speaker, preparing in advance and for hours practicing gestures in front of mirrors until achieving the desired effect. Hitler's power as a speaker lay mainly in that he would establish a rapport between himself and the audience. Beginning a speech Hitler would start slowly, his body stiff, almost feeling his way along. Gradually the pace would quicken and the words delivered with more force. Soon the body would loosen and what followed would be a torrent of facial and body gestures. The climax of his topic would be delivered with a high pitched passionate appeal and end abruptly. He would begin his next topic the same as the first, working himself into a feverish state. The onslaught to the audience was draining. They would leave the meeting physically and mentally exhausted and with the feeling that they had shared a great experience with the speaker.

The *Reichspropagandaleiter der NSDAP* had also established a department to control the written word; although largely limited to only National Socialist publications, efforts were coordinated to maximize the desired message. The National Socialist party's first newspaper was the *Völkischer Beobachter* (Racial Observer). Purchased in 1920 by Major General Franz Xaver Ritter von Epp

for 60,000 marks, it became the official party paper. It was published weekly until February 1923 when Hitler, with financial assistance from Ernst Franz Sedgwick Hanfstaengel, began to publish the larger formatted daily edition. The chief editor was the National Socialist racial philosopher, Alfred Rosenberg, who filled its pages with popular racial doctrines. He reproduced the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and other anti-Semitic materials. In 1923 25,000 Bavarian editions were published daily. After the failed Putsch the paper was banned until on February 26, 1925, with the headlines a "New Beginning" and a subscription of 10,000. By 1929 the numbers would rise to 26,700 per day. In 1930 the *Völkischer Beobachter* declared itself as a national newspaper with 84,500 editions published daily in Munich and Berlin.

Along with the *Völkischer Beobachter* the National Socialist party had the before mentioned *Der Angriff* published by Goebbels and *Der Stürmer* (The Stormer) owned and published by Julius Streicher, National Socialist party militant in Franconia. Streicher's hatred of Jews was legendary and *Der Stürmer* was journalism at its worst, filled with filth and endless attacks on Jews. The papers circulation was relatively small but engendered a constant state of Jewish hysteria among its readers.

If speaking was the strength of National Socialist propaganda, then the written press was the weakness. Because the party was unable to attract skillful journalists and writers, the written propaganda suffered. Goebbels stated, "only a few flames are burning in Germany. The others only reflect their light. With the newspapers it is worst; we have the best speakers in the world but we lack nimble and skillful pens."¹⁶ The National Socialist party lacked support from the legitimate press, that is until 1927, when Alfred Hugenberg, press baron and leader of the National Peoples Party (DNVP), began to cover with favorable press the National Socialist movement.

The informal union with Hugenberg seemed to give legitimacy to the party in the years just prior to its rise to power. Hugenberg, viewed as Germany's Lord of Film and Press, owned nearly two-thirds of the nearly 4,700 newspapers nationwide, in addition to various publishing houses and the majority of the German film and newsreel industry. For his support of Hitler for Chancellor and his favorable treatment in the press of the National Socialists, Hugenberg

16 L. Lochner, *The Goebbels Diaries*, (London, 1948), p. 29.

was awarded with an appointment as Minister of Agriculture in Hitler's first cabinet.

Goebbels had a firm control on the activities of all of the propaganda departments; however, the one area in which he lacked control concerned the role that violence played in National Socialist propaganda. Seemingly by design Hitler would spread control and authority to his various subordinates. Often the areas of responsibility would overlap and create confusion among those vying for power and allow Hitler to maintain a controlling interest in all activities. For Goebbels the area in which he lacked control over was that of the *Sturmabteilung* (SA). Established early on as the private army of the National Socialist party, it would serve to protect the mass meetings and oppose rival political parties. Formed in 1921, largely from members of the *Freikorps* and consisting of veterans, the SA was described as the "fist of the propaganda arm." The SA was a motley bunch of street brawlers, thugs, and hoodlums who would roam the streets terrorizing political opponents and indifferent citizens alike. Many that may have been sympathetic to the plight of the National Socialist were repulsed by such open violence. During the ten days preceding the July 1932 Reichstag elections, while political activity was at a new height, the Prussian Interior Minister recorded 317 "political excesses" on Prussian territory in which 24 people lost their lives.¹⁷ It is possible that these acts of violence and those that followed the election were reasons for the loss of votes for the NSDAP in November 1932. The Gau chief of propaganda in East Prussia stated: "The acts of terror, which were executed systematically in the entire province, have...repelled the population from us."¹⁸ There is also evidence that Nazi violence generated support for the movement in some circles. Ian Kershaw has noted that the violent campaigns against the left in 1933, particularly those against Communists, helped bring popularity to the new regime and its leaders.¹⁹

It is difficult to study and analyze the propaganda efforts throughout Germany. As already pointed out, the National Socialists were extremely skillful in the development and implementation of campaigns directed against certain segments of the population in select regions of the country. I have selected two campaigns waged by the National Socialists, all in the state of

17 R. Bessel, "Violence as Propaganda", in T. Childers, *The Formation of the Nazi Constituency 1919-1933*, (New Jersey, 1986), p. 133.

18 *Ibid.*, p.137.

19 Kershaw, pp. 48-9.

Bavaria, the first being the economic campaign of 1930-31 and the second the rural campaign of 1930. These two campaigns are excellent examples of how the National Socialists adapted their programs to fit the needs of their audience. As the Weimar government struggled with the economic crisis of 1930, the National Socialist party was attempting to capitalize on it. As fragile as the German economy was, any shift in the world market would cause it to collapse. With the onset of the depression in the United States economic hardships were quickly felt in Germany. The number of unemployed increased at an alarming rate. 1,320,000 in September 1929, 3,000,000 in 1930, 4,350,000 in 1931 and finally 6,000,000 by early 1932. These numbers represented only a fraction of the total unemployed and were only those who registered at the labor exchanges; the numbers were actually dramatically higher.

There is without a doubt a parallel between the rise of unemployment and the rise of popular support for the National Socialists. However, unemployment alone did not cause people to vote for the National Socialists. Traditionally, Bavaria had high rates of unemployment and low percentages supporting National Socialism in the rural areas. During the depression years the principal electoral gains for the National Socialists were made in the rural areas and small towns as opposed to the more depressed urban areas. This can be explained because of the highly successful rural campaign which began in 1928 to increase National Socialist support in rural areas.

Why did the National Socialists manage to appeal to the rural voters more effectively than the less radical parties to the left? The main reason is because the National Socialists were quick to move, with a propaganda organization already in place. The Communists focused their efforts on the urban workers and chose not to compete with the National Socialists for the rural voters.

The second main reason for National Socialist support was that, as the economic depression worsened, the people's contempt for the Weimar government increased. The National Socialist platform was never for a modification of the current democratic system but rather a complete overthrow of that system.

In order to fully understand the appeal of National Socialism to rural Bavarians we must look at the way in which National Socialist propaganda exploited the depression. Geoffrey Pridham outlined five reasons in his 1973

work looking at the rise of the National Socialism in Bavaria in 1923-1933.

1. The need for a strong government to solve the crisis.²⁰

As previously mentioned Hitler and the National Socialist never envisioned a compromise with its political enemy, the Weimar Republic. The National Socialists felt that it would take a dictatorial government with strong leadership to restore the greatness that was Germany. The theme of strong leadership was always a focal point of the National Socialists. Attacks on the "weak" or "traitorous" leaders of the Weimar government were never ending.

2. The claim that the government was ignoring the interests of the German people.²¹

This simply assumed that not only were the leaders of the Weimar government weak, but that they deliberately sought to turn away from the people and their plight. The National Socialists told the people that these officials of the "system of the November criminals" were taking advantage of their positions for personal gain and cheating the German people. An example of this approach was Gauleiter Wahl's speech to an audience in January 1930:

For a few years the Reich has followed a false economic policy and has treated the agricultural population abominably. Hilferding (Social Democratic Reich Finance minister), is taking up the post of director of a firm with a yearly income of 60,000 marks and does not shy at pocketing his ministerial pension of 24,000 marks as well, instead of giving it to the Reich for assistance. These are the gentlemen who enslaved the people for a generation through the Treaty of Versailles. Two Bavarian ministers would each have got 50,000 marks of state subsidy for furnishing a flat, but this was not sufficient. One of them claimed and received 53,000 marks, and the other a further 58,000 marks; in contrast, the poor victim of the inflation must beg for his monthly assistance of 25 marks. Just look at the work which these gentlemen do! All they do is to make promise before the elections, so they can safeguard their little post and their little sums.²²

3. The claim that National Socialism had more in common with German traditions than did Weimar democracy.²³

The National Socialists used various speakers to attempt to show the people that they had a lineage and heritage to the German past. Prince August Wilhelm, son of the last Kaiser, appeared on several occasions for the National Socialists. Although not a National Socialist, he was sympathetic to the

20 Ibid

21 Ibid., p. 230.

22 Ibid.

23 G. Pridham, p. 221.

nationalist cause for which they stood. To increase propaganda value, the Prince would always be paired to speak with a blue collar worker; the Hohenzollern Prince and the common man was often the theme. The effect that August Wilhelm had was insignificant at best. He was a poor public speaker and had a very thick northern German dialect that people found difficult to understand.

4. The fear of Communism.²⁴

The National Socialists always preached that Bolshevism was just around the corner and that if they were not placed into power it was only a matter of time before Germany would be under Marxist rule. With that rule would be the destruction of the middle class as well as the deprivation of individual rights.

5. The promise of salvation.²⁵

The only path for Germany to take and save itself was that of National Socialism. This belief would be coupled with wild promises made by the party. Julius Streicher told an audience at Eschenau near Nuremberg that Hitler had received a pledge from leading personalities, in England and Italy, who would bring an end to Germany's tribute payments (under the Young plan) once he came to power. Other claims included that a National Socialist state would free the citizens from all debt acquired during the depression.²⁶

The Reichstag election of 1930 was unique in that the Bavarian Peasants and Middle Class League (BPMB) and the Nationalist Party (DNVP) in the rural districts of Southern Bavaria lost a large percentage of popular support. This could be attributed to the disillusionment of the peasants over the failing economic system.

The increase in support for the National Socialist party between the 1930 and 1932 elections can be attributed to the increase in first time voters and the increase in rural support. This support did not come as easily as one might expect. The peasants were less concerned with political theory than they were with immediate relief of their current economic crisis.

On 21 August 1930, Walther Darre, head of the new special department at party headquarters called the Agrarian Political Office, began his system of party agricultural specialists. These agricultural specialists would be located at the Gau and district level and would be subordinate to the political leadership in

²⁵ Ibid.
²⁶ Ibid.

their respective areas. Their mission was to create a favorable attitude among the agricultural population to National Socialism:

Every specialist must consider himself a herald of National Socialism, to whom the very special and honorable task has been allotted of making the agricultural population conversant with the spirit of National Socialism in his area of political work, to saturate them so much with this spirit that through their voluntary submission to National Socialism they become the most trustworthy nucleus of troops among the followers of Adolf Hitler. For it is the peasant, the farmer, and the agricultural worker who have always determined the decisive hours of history.²⁷

The role of the agriculture specialist was a new one for National Socialism, to educate rural people rather than engage in straight political agitation.

Although the agricultural specialist role seemed clear enough, it often was the source of many conflicts. The specialist at the Gau level had no direct control over the specialist at district level. The mission of the specialist also conflicted with the local propaganda officials who felt that they no longer had the freedom to direct their own campaigns. Darre also explained that the urban mentality of leaders affected the specialists:

This difficulty derives from the fact that the party grew up originally in the cities, and correspondingly its speakers were selected from urban points of view.... These speakers either do not feel at home in the field of rural propaganda, or they do not even attempt it because they prefer to fight in the field of action to which they are accustomed, in which they are trained and the techniques of which they have mastered, than to trouble themselves with very critical attitudes of the peasant. Moreover, it is more easy to get thunderous applause at meetings in the cities.²⁸

Many long-time propagandists had difficulties adapting to the rural campaign. The peasants demanded a campaign which was more that a condemnation of Weimar and hatred of the Jews. The campaign had to be positive and outline the benefits for the peasants under National Socialism. No longer was the mass meeting with all of its ceremony possible; the individual approach would become the norm. Goebbels's propaganda headquarters issued these instructions in July 1931 in *Wille und Weg*.

The first meeting in a village must be prepared in such a way that it is well-attended. The prerequisite is that the speaker is fairly well-informed about specifically rural questions. Then, it is most advisable to go to a neighboring village some time after but to advertise the meeting in the first village there as well, then many people will certainly come across. After this, one holds a big German Evening in a central hall for a number of villages with the cooperation of the SA

²⁷ Ibid., p. 225.
²⁸ Ibid. p. 227.

and the SA band The German Evening, provided it is skillfully and grandiosely geared to producing a big public impact, primarily has the task of making the audience enthusiastic for our cause, and secondly to raise the money necessary for the further build-up of propaganda. The preparation of the village meetings should best be carried out in the following way: most effectively through written personal invitations to every farmer or inhabitant. In the bigger villages by a circular, which is carried from farm to farm by party comrades. For the meeting itself, the money question has to be considered. We are such a poor movement that every picnicking counts. Therefore, it is necessary to hold collections during all discussion evenings as well as in the large mass meetings, if permitted by the police - either in the interval or at the end, even when an entrance fee had been taken at the beginning of the meeting. In this way, surprising amounts can sometimes be got out of a meeting, especially when plates and not caps are used, in which trouser buttons and small coins can disappear unseen.²⁹

The successes that the National Socialists gained with the rural peasants were not uniform by any means. The young agricultural workers seemed to accept and support the National Socialists, while the older peasants still supported the Landbund. The National Socialists still had a difficult time breaking into the largely Catholic areas, mainly due to a poorly conceived and executed campaign to win the Catholic vote. The innovation and dedication of the Agrarian Political office can not be understated. The National Socialists won the support of the rural population because they were quick to understand the needs of the people and efficient in organizing a campaign to fit those needs.

It is difficult to gauge the true success of the National Socialist propaganda effort from 1923-1933. For at the time there were no exit polls as the voters departed the polling places and record keeping on voting results varied from region to region and town to town. One can now only look at oral histories or broadly interpretive statistics that can be twisted. For me the numbers are simple; one must only look to the election results to see the successes.

Compare the number of popular votes cast to the size of the National Socialist party. It is understandable that members of the NSDAP would support their own party, but why did so many others? The only answer is that they truly believed that the National Socialists had the solutions for the many problems plaguing the Weimar government. The propaganda machine convinced in 1933 44% of all Germans voting that National Socialism was the answer. From 1933-1945, as all governmental systems fell under National Socialist control, the propaganda control was tighter and the techniques became more efficient until it ensured that the German people would support, albeit passively, the dictatorship for another 12 years.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-30.

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PRELUDE TO THE HOLOCAUST: PRE-NAZI GERMAN ANTISEMITISM

Chris Sundheim

Chris Sundheim, a graduate student, wrote this paper on German antisemitism for a course on Nazi Germany. This study attempts to trace the intellectual history of antisemitism in Germany through the writings of 18th and 19th century philosophers, among others. Also discussed are several major historiographical schools of thought.

There is general agreement among European history scholars that Nazi Germany was a society saturated with rabid antisemitism. In the debate over the German Sonderweg or "separate path," a central question asks whether Hitler's Third Reich regime came to power as the result of a departure from the "natural" or "typical" road of Western European historical evolution.¹

This query takes on special significance when applied to study of the Holocaust. The antisemitism² of Hitler's Germany is well known as the most obvious prelude to the Holocaust, which slaughtered six million Jews and roughly five million others between 1938-1945. What started as furious invective against Jews in German beer halls grew into codified prejudice, forced "relocation to the East" and, eventually, the murder of two-thirds of European Jewry.

But is the antisemitism that immediately preceded the Holocaust linked to previous episodes or figures elsewhere in German history? Or, more precisely,

¹ For a concise discussion of the *Sonderweg* question, see Jorgen Kocka's essay "German History Before Hitler: The Debate About the German 'Sonderweg'" in the *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23 (1988): 3-16. For wider discussions, see Peter Baldwin, ed., *Reworking the Past: Hitler, the Holocaust and the Historian's Debat* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990); Charles S. Maier's *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

² The term anti-Semitism was coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr, an anti-Jewish activist in Germany, as a seemingly milder substitute for *Judenhaass*, Jew-hatred. Application of the term exclusively to Jews is misplaced, of course, since the word "Semites" includes an entire family of Afro-Asiatic peoples and languages such as Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic and Ethiopic. Some historians and Jewish writers have eliminated the hyphen to dispel the idea that there exists an object "Semitism" that "anti-Semitism" opposes or counters. (Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin, *Why the Jews?*, 199). This study will use the single-word "antisemitism."

does a thread of antisemitism run consistently through the German past, especially in the 19th century, when the first elements of Nazi ideology were emerging? This study aims to explore these questions.

Antisemitism has a history stretching back before Hellenistic times, but the treatment here will be limited primarily to 19th-century Germany. First, however, it is important to understand the roots of German antisemitism as they took shape in the early modern era, in large part with the teachings of Martin Luther. Then our focus will turn to the writings of major 19th-century German philosophers who promoted Enlightenment-era antisemitism and others who influenced the Romantic and Nationalist movements. Finally, we will examine the rise of racialist Jew-hatred near the end of the 1800s.

This paper seeks to argue that the German tradition of antisemitism, though it did not lead inexorably to the Holocaust, helped create the ideal intellectual atmosphere for the Nazi regime's racial precepts to form and flourish.

I. PRE-MODERN ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism stands alone as perhaps the world's oldest form of ethnic prejudice. The oldest reference to Jews in a non-Jewish source, the Mernephta stela, written by an Egyptian king about 1220 B.C., speaks of attempts to destroy them.³ Although group hatred of "the other" has existed since time immemorial, no other form of hatred as been "as universal, as deep, or as permanent as antisemitism."⁴ Jews have been expelled, at various times, from almost every nation where they have lived, from the Roman Empire in the first century to the modern Islamic states comprising most of the Middle East. Nearly every one of the world's greatest powers with a substantial Jewish population has regarded this minority as a pernicious enemy.

Christian hostility toward Jews grew (and indeed persists) out of a complex set of social and theological traditions. Jews, by their refusal to accept the Savior, represented an imminent threat to Christendom. Jews were said to have been principally responsible for killing Christ; they were the worst kind of heretics, seemingly unrepentant creatures who fed off the very blood of honest, faithful Christians. A corollary to these beliefs that gained gradual acceptance

3 Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin, *Why the Jews?* (New York: Simon and Schuster), 18.

4 *Ibid.*, 17.

held that Christ could not return in the Second Coming until Jews accepted the Christian Church's self-evident truths.

Germany has been no exception to the historical development of antisemitism. Martin Luther emerged as the first German theological figure to write at length about the Jews and their perilous relationship with Christians. In his early writings, Luther adopted a somewhat benevolent attitude toward Judaism, saying, in effect, that Jews needed the help of pious Christians to reform their ungodly ways. They were not inherently evil beings, he held. They were just slow to warm to fundamental Christian truths. They deserved charity for conversion.⁵

But by the mid-16th century, Luther had given up his initial hope that the Jews might be brought into the Christian community. Jews, he said, in league with the papacy, were abridging the Germans' Christian and political "freedoms." In 1543, Luther wrote that the Jews, having murdered Christ, were now determined to crucify the German people. They were extorting money from the German people through their greedy usury and denigrating German culture by their sheer presence and conspicuous "Jewishness."⁶ Luther's hysterical essay "Against the Jews and Their Lies" accused the Jews of seeking to destroy not just Christianity, but specifically the German people. This vitriolic polemic foreshadowed the paranoia that would accompany later German antisemitism:

...the Jews are lords of the world and all the gentiles flock to them ... giving the noble princes and lords of Israel all they have, while the Jews curse, spit on and malign the Germans. ... They say that God is to kill and exterminate all of us Germans through their messiah, so they can lay their hands on the land, the goods and the government of the whole world. ...

We are at fault in not avenging all this innocent blood of our Lord and Churches and ... the blood of the children which they have shed since then, and which still shines forth from their Jewish eyes and skin. We are at fault in not slaying them.⁷

Luther spelled out how he thought Germany should go about eliminating the Jewish threat: "burn the houses and synagogues of the Jews; ban their rabbis under pain of death; withdraw safe-conduct rights for Jews on the highway;

5 P.L. Rose, *German Question/Jewish Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 4-6.

6 *Ibid.*

7 Cited in Rose, 6-7.

8 *Ibid.*

confiscate their wealth and expel them from Germany." Luther compares the Jews to "mad dogs." They "have been and still are our plague, our pestilence, our misfortune!"⁹

Thus, according to P.L. Rose⁹, Luther began to forge aspects of a specifically German antisemitism. The traditional Christian stereotype of Jews as parasites and Satanic accomplices was melded with German sentiments of self-pity, victimization and xenophobia. Luther then gives shape to the first suggestions that Germany's prosperity is tied to her expulsion of the Jews. Rose, though he casts serious doubt on the "Luther to Hitler" school of German historical thought, recognizes in the two leaders uniquely German traits, despite the obvious distance in time and religious conviction. They were both nationalist charasmatics who staged revolutions that positioned "Germanness" and "Jewishness" as naturally opposing forces. Never could the two co-exist.

This concept of a Germany held hostage by the Jews seems to have received some of its earliest airings through Luther in the 16th century. But the idea resurfaced often, and it became an integral part of German Jew-hatred. The myth of Ahaversus, the Wandering Jew, was a popular vehicle to teach the evils of Jewish character. The Wandering Jew is a late medieval tale that reportedly demonstrates Jewish wickedness and proves that followers of Judaism are cursed by God Himself. A Lutheran cleric in 1542 attached the proper name Ahaversus to the myth after he met an aged, bearded Jew with the name in Hamburg. The Wandering Jew, according to the church's teachings, had jeered at Christ on his way to crucifixion at Golgotha. For his sins, God cursed the Jew to wander the world in a joyless existence until he might finally be redeemed at the Last Judgement.¹⁰

When the tale was published in 1602 as the Brief Description and Account of a Jew Named Ahaversus, it gave pause for reflection across Europe and ran through nearly 50 editions within a few years. The Wandering Jew myth in the

9 Rose's exhaustive German Question/Jewish Question, revised in 1992, is a useful but combative study of German antisemitism from Luther's time to the closing years of the 19th century. Rose's book is primarily an intellectual history of German antisemitism. He argues, in essence, that an unbroken chain of "revolutionary" antisemitic thoughts connect traditional and modern antisemitism. This thesis, not surprisingly, has provoked several strong retorts in the academic community, most notably Karl Menges: "A nother Concept in the Sonderweg Debate?" in German Studies Review 18 (1995) 2: 290-314
10 Ibid., 23-25.
11 Ibid., 23-43.

18th and 19th centuries took many different shapes at the hands of German writers, poets and artists, but always kept its distinctly anti-Jewish themes.¹¹ It was, of course, only one of many such popular myths of the period that portrayed the Jews in such a negative light.

Ahaversus was not merely one wayward Jew who had heckled Christ. He represented the collective guilt of the entire Jewish nation, a sinfulness for which all Jews were expected to seek redemption. The Wandering Jew explained to many puzzled Christians the wandering, homeless Jewish nation. And its dramatic conclusion (that the Jew could be redeemed only through death) conjured violent solutions to the perceived problem. The tale also served as justification: The Jews were rightfully punished by the Creator by being allowed to live only in pain and oppression. Good Christians then would help enforce God's punitive measure by treating Jews with contempt.¹²

The Ahaversus myth in the late 18th and early 19th century acquired new aspects again to include Verjudung¹³ and Entjudung, or "Jewification" and "de-Jewification." If the Wandering Jew represented the alien presence of Jews within German society, the Verjudung was the contamination of German culture with Jewish culture. This reverse assimilation alarmed Germans. They feared being the unwitting victims of a Jewish cultural attack that aimed to destroy the Germanic way of life. The most urgent imperative then was to expel the corrupting Jewish influences in waves of antisemitism.

One also should add to this matrix of ethnic and religious components the perennial questions of German national identity. Rose suggests that the search for German "authenticity" preoccupied many Germans; exactly what is German? they asked. The crude answer they received: "whatever is not Jewish." Thus, the German Question was inextricably linked to the Jewish Question. And the only answer to the latter was through drastic means that would purge Germany of its Jewish cancer. Luther had helped lay the groundwork for this

12 Ibid., 40-43.
13 Coined by Wagner in 1850, but the idea is at least as old as Luther's writings.
14 Ibid., 42-43.

outlook that Germany was in danger of destruction by a Jewish-Papist-Satanic conspiracy. As Rose writes, "This mythological universe, this state of mind, did not make Hitlerism inevitable—but it made it possible."¹⁴ The 19th century would see German philosophers revisit these aspects of antisemitism and add to them new facets of race and secularism.

II. ANTISEMITISM IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The ideals of the Enlightenment in 18th-century Europe embraced secular philosophy and cast doubt on old lines of religious separation. The Enlightened Philosophes considered Christianity a superstitious relic and an obstacle to advancement of the critical mind. This change in mindset improved the status of Jews throughout Europe to varying degrees. Until the 19th century, Jews lived in Germany only with the consent of kings, lords, princes and other nobles. German-Jewish communities were subject to myriad restrictions and exploitations. Pogroms, extraordinary taxes, limits on land ownership and bans on intermarriage with Gentiles were just a few of the most common prejudicial laws that applied to Jews.

With the end of the Napoleon Era in Central Europe, and the full spread of Enlightenment ideals, Jews were granted new freedoms in Germany. Western European leaders experimented with religious tolerance for a time. Jews in France, Holland, Austria and Prussia were granted basic citizenship rights, although not without opposition, as early as the 1830s and 1840s. By the Revolution of 1848, Jewish franchise was supported by many Christians. Jewish rights were codified by 1869 and included in the German Constitution of 1871.¹⁵

Much of the German antisemitism in the 19th century had as a chief component this question of Jewish emancipation and civil rights. In some corners of European society, Jews and Gentiles enjoyed exceptionally good relations free of the animosity and division that characterized previous social contact. Still, public opinion was fluid, and governmental tolerance waxed and waned throughout this part of the century.

Antisemitic Christian dogma was still in abundant supply, but it was

¹⁵ Sarah Gordon, *Hitler, Germans and the Jewish Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 7–8.

gradually being undermined by German thinkers, who, according to Joseph Katz, staged an "ideological counterattack," which sought to prevent Enlightenment-minded leaders from granting Jews full rights and privileges. They attacked Jews not for their religion alone but for their social strangeness.

This revision represents an increasingly secular brand of antisemitism. Enlightenment antisemitism moved away from the stereotypes of the Church, although many Christian ideas persisted in popular thought and continued to color perceptions of Jews.¹⁶

Many writers wrestled with the question of how Jews, who had lived for generations in relative isolation from the rest of society, could ever be part of a vision for an authentic, homogeneous Germany. Most authors who addressed this issue based their arguments on conversion of Jews to Christianity as the primary prerequisite for assimilation, if assimilation could ever be fully achieved. Central to these discussions then was whether the negative, anti-Christian characteristics of Jews were an innate and immutable trait or something that could conceivably change over time with teaching. This appeal to convert, however, did not stem from doctrinal conviction. It was to represent the Jews' sincerity in joining the rest of the German community.

Immanuel Kant and his friend Johann Gottlieb Herder were late 18th-early 19th century philosophers who condemned the Jews with an admixture of Enlightenment ideas and traditional prejudice. Their writings leave behind a puzzling record that at once embraces the idea of a universalist society welcoming all groups and yet condemns the Jews. Rose classifies Kant and Herder as "moralist" German thinkers. Their particular brand of antisemitism portrayed Jews as amoral beings, almost without feeling or emotion. Jews, they insisted, had no love, no honesty, no remorse and were incapable of appreciating the arts or engaging in useful work.

A notable aspect of their writings is the apparent guise of objectivity. Both men are decidedly hostile toward Jews, but their Jew-hatred is cloaked in a historical rationalism that seeks to explain the evils of Jewry with almost scholarly detachment. Kant, in his 1798 work *Anthropology*, writes:

Certainly it seems strange to conceive of a nation of cheats, but it is just as

¹⁶ Joseph Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 51–57.

strange to conceive of a nation of traders, most of whom — tied by an ancient superstition — seek no civil honor from the state where they live, but rather to restore their loss at the expense of those who grant them protection as well as from one another. ... Instead of vain plans to make this people moral, I prefer to give my opinion on the origin of this peculiar constitution of a nation of traders. ... [Kant argues that ancient Israel lay on the crossroads of commerce and that after their exile the Jews carried their trading habits across the globe.] ... The religious and linguistic unity of this people was not a curse but a blessing. ... The wealth of this people, calculated per capita, exceeds probably the wealth of every other people of equal numbers.¹⁷

Another antisemitic writer whose philosophy was to help shape German Jew-hatred was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Hegel's writings on the Jewish Question were rooted in his philosophy of history and law, not so much in his well-known philosophy of religion. His outlook, however, is replete with apparent contradictions between a seemingly "liberal" philosophy of Jews as full citizens and Jews as social outcasts who should be rejected by their contemporaries.

Hegel thought Jews had outlived their historical purpose in ancient times. They were now ghosts of Ahaversus, a useless entity wandering without land or any earthly reason for being. Jews, having been outmoded by successive religions, belong to history. They are, he said, a "fossil-nation." This was yet another example of Jewish "stubbornness," the refusal to leave the world stage and pass into history.

All the conditions of the Jewish people, including the wretched, abjectly poor, and squalid state they are still in today, are nothing more than the consequences and developments of their original destiny — an infinite power that they desperately sought to surmount — a destiny that has maltreated them and will not cease to do so until this people conciliates it by the spirit of beauty, abolishing it as a result of this conciliation.¹⁸

Hegel also subscribed to the Kantian ideas that Jews, by refusing to accept the love of Christ, had become parasites on the Christian community. Without taking the Savior into their hearts, they are loveless and unloved. The only escape from this "animal existence" is a rapid, total emancipation, which, though it is not explained specifically, would seem not to differ much from conversion to Christianity.¹⁹

17 Cited in Rose, 94.

18 Cited in Rose, 111.

19 Rose, 109–116.

Hegel, however, supported civil rights for Jews. His liberal legal philosophy suggested that the state, as a power of reason and rationality, view all its inhabitants as relative equals. Rose attributes this apparent contradiction to a deeper respect for law, order and love of justice. It is not, he insists, indicative of any genuine sympathy toward the Jews.

Hegel often is described as more tolerant than most of his contemporaries in his rejection of antisemitism. Some historians who support this contention point to his liberal reasoning on civil rights and his condemnation of pogroms. But they overlook his fundamentally antisemitic social philosophy. Hegel may have indeed been more tolerant of Jewish participation in public affairs, but he still possessed a decidedly anti-Jewish view of European society.

Hegel, in his later writings, developed some level of "respect" for Judaism. His Jewish students, using Hegel's dialectic of history, told him the Jews persisted in the modern world because of their unique "life cycle." Judaism represents the purest form of monotheism, they said, and it is their special faith that has permitted Jews to survive without a state. This and other character re-evaluations even led Hegel to write that perhaps perceived Jewish "stubbornness" was actually an "admirable firmness."²⁰

Still, it would be a mistake to assume that Hegel shed his anti-Jewish persona in his mature writing. Hegel did not subscribe to the sharpest forms of antisemitism; he sought to understand Judaism, not just to destroy it. His most important contributions to the German antisemitic tradition may have occurred later, when other philosophers expanded on many Hegelian ideas regarding the Jews.

Hegel's influence was enduring. His teachings acquired a following among several other notable 19th-century German writers, who called themselves Young Hegelians. Their numbers included names such as Karl Gutzkow, Heinrich Laube and the political tracts of Moses Hess and Karl Marx. Young Hegelians did what their role model had avoided doing, except perhaps in his very early writings: to link the Jewish stereotype of egoism and domination with Jewish economic selfishness and financial parasitism. This was a

20 Rose, 112–113.

21 Ibid., 116, 252–278.

seemingly natural extension of Hegel's original thoughts, although whether he is truly responsible for it is open to question.²¹

Herder held to similar anti-Jewish lines of reasoning, although, as Rose and Katz argue, he also is frequently misinterpreted to be sympathetic to the Jews. He subscribed to the now-familiar stereotypes of Jewish rootlessness and honorlessness. The problem, he said, in political terms, rests with how many Jews Germany may tolerate:

The Jewish race is and remains in Europe an Asiatic people alien to our region. . . . Whether [Jewish] law and the manners of thinking and living which spring from it belong in our states is no longer a dispute of religion where meanings and beliefs are under discussion, but a single-sided question of state: How many of this alien race, existing under such an alien national constitution, accustomed to such particular manners of thinking and living, pursuing certain business and no others — how many may be dispensed with, how many are useful or detrimental to this [italics Herder's] and not to any other state — that is the problem.²²

Herder speaks eloquently about a Europe where "one will no longer ask who be Jew and who be Christian."²³ But implicit in this vision of a tolerant society is the requirement that Jews shed their Jewish identity. Only by ceasing to be Jews may they become part of the larger human community.²⁴

The influential nationalist Johann Gottlieb Fichte represented an extreme view, that Jews could never truly overcome their Jewishness. The heretical characteristics of Jews were so fundamental to their being as to be beyond modification. Fichte's overall question was this: "Can the Jew break through 'the mighty obstacle before him — which looks insurmountable — in order to achieve love of justice, love of man and love of truth?' Fichte's own answer held that such a Jew would be a "hero and a saint." He could scarcely believe that such a Jew existed anywhere. Fichte believed that, because of their closely held ideas, Jews should be given only basic human rights²⁵ and "the only way to

²² Cited in Rose, 103.

²³ *Ibid.*, 99.

²⁴ See also Katz, 65–70.

²⁵ Although Fichte held to distinctly antisemitic beliefs about Jewish character, he supported human rights for Jews. He was clear, however, in his opposition to civil rights. A fuller discussion of Fichte's beliefs regarding Jewish rights, particularly while he was rector at the University of Berlin, can be found in Paul Sweet's essay "Fichte and the Jews: A Case of Tension Between Civil Rights and Human Rights," in *German Studies Review* 16 (1993) No. 1: 37–48.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

give them citizenship would be to cut off their heads on the same night in order to replace them with those containing no Jewish ideas."²⁶

Kant and Herder, and Fichte to a lesser extent, built on old prejudices to put together a largely secularized form of antisemitism. Their anti-Jewish ideas reinforced old stereotypes, giving them new potency in the Age of Enlightenment. Although Christian doctrine still underpinned many of their themes, history and secular philosophy, not purely religious teachings, provided a generous amount of "evidence" as well. This gradual change in antisemitic rhetoric was critical as Jew-hatred moved from the circles of religious and social discussion to the political arena, where it would take on more importance for conservatives beginning in the mid- and late 19th century:

III. ANTISEMITISM IN THE NATIONALIST AND NEO-ROMANTIC MOVEMENTS

Before antisemitism became a political tool, however, it was to play a distinct role in the Nationalist and Neo-Romantic ideals that permeated German thought throughout the post-Napoleon era. Unlike the 18th century's first-generation Romantics, post-Enlightenment Romantics struck back at the movement's reason and rationalism and especially its anti-religious ideology. Devotion to the Christian faith was a necessary part of Nationalist Romanticism. It was, in fact, such an integral part of "Germanness," that many Romantic Nationalists considered Christian truth to be acquired quite naturally by any full-blooded German. Jakob Fries held that Christian ethics were so thoroughly absorbed into the German national culture that they were a subtle, yet indispensable, part of a "secular" national spirit. This gave new significance to the Jews' refusal to convert.²⁷

Many writers such as Saul Ascher, Jakob Fries and Friedrich Ruhs, began to promote the ideas of the Volk, or German folk community. They looked back to the Middle Ages, Nordic heritage and even to Roman times in a search for national and ethnic identity. Their publications still demanded that Jews accept Christianity, but the Romantics who attacked Jews had more in mind than just religious conversion.

²⁷ Katz, 76–77; Rose, 117–132. See also Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 31–34.

The Neo-Romantics stressed a life guided by feeling, by the "inner man" and his indomitable German spirit. Modernity, industrialization and materialism marked the "dead-end" of a genuine culture. The emphasis was a retreat into full, unrestrained emotions and traditional rural values.

George Mosse has argued that antisemitism was not merely a sidelight to the larger volk movement. It was a principal ingredient. The Jew represented, in no small measure, the antithesis to these ideals. Jews were unfeeling and spiritless. They stood for what Germans most feared and despised: materialism, urban living and the strict rationalism that could not appreciate beauty or truth.

German Neo-Romantics believed that authentic cultures possessed, at their core, a collective human soul, the volk. Jews, by their unscrupulous character and their irreligious ways, could not join in this cultural unity. They were forever outsiders and imminent threats. Here again we see German society and Jewish culture positioned as colliding forces. This clashing of values also reinforced the idea that Jews aimed to destroy Germany. Their stark differences undermined the precious folk community.²⁸

The movement toward German liberalism in the 1830s-1850s, deserves some attention as it regards antisemitism. At first blush, the very word "liberalism" would seem to suggest an endorsement of Enlightenment principles of tolerance, rationality and a social world free of religious division. But a brief closer look at German liberals clearly calls this concept into question. Even individuals with otherwise tolerant views of European culture and society cast a jaundiced eye toward the Jews.

The standard liberal opinion at this time held that the only realistic answer to the Jewish Question lay in the Jews' acceptance of traditional German mores, laws and customs — in other words, conversion to Christianity. Liberal critics of Judaism avoided condemning the Jews on religious grounds. Instead they judged Jews as destructive in the economic, social and political realms.

Many liberal writers, too, shrouded their Jew-hatred in supposedly scholarly "social science" works that claimed to explain the alien traits of Jews and their incapacity to become part of the larger European community. Liberal writers decried Jews as eternal outsiders but had different ideas about any movement to franchise Jews or grant them other civil rights. Many liberals, like Fichte, just

28 Mosse, *Germans and Jews*, 34-76, *passim*.

wanted to grant Jews only human rights. But others would grant them full citizenship rights as a means of integrating them in a practical way with the rest of German society. Alexander Lips wrote that the Jews could never achieve the standard of human perfectibility because their customs were stuck in the ancient past. J.B. Graser, a Bavarian liberal like Lips, wrote about Jews' inability to change and their strange dedication to earning through trade, rather than more labor-intensive work.²⁹

IV. RACIALIST ANTISEMITISM

A critical chapter in the development of modern German antisemitism came in the mid- to late-19th century in the form of "racialism." Though racialist anti-Jewish arguments would receive their fullest endorsement from Hitler's Nazi Party, they first appeared in the prejudice-charged atmosphere of pre-Imperial Germany. Arthur de Gobineau's essay on the superiority of the Nordic-Aryan race appeared in 1848, and its basic tenets were to resurface in the works of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Alfred Rosenberg and a host of others.

Wilhelm Marr, who is widely believed to have created the misnomer term "anti-Semitism," breathed new life into racialist theories in 1867 with his book *Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum*³⁰ which went through 12 editions in six years. He was a journalist who, after losing his newspaper job, apparently blamed his dismissal on the Jewish monopoly of the press. Marr's rhetoric proposed to change antisemitism from a religious-philosophical matter to a question of race and ethnic purity. The time was ripe. Many Germans were increasingly indifferent to religious issues, and pseudo-scientific social Darwinism also was gaining favor. Marr, in his own time, was never particularly active in antisemitic politics, but he laid the framework for racialist arguments to gain a wider following.³¹

The arguments advanced by racialist antisemites are familiar to most students of the Nazi Era and the Holocaust. The Aryan races are superior in moral conduct and genetic composition to Semitic peoples, especially Jews.

29 Katz, 147-155.

30 "The Victory of Judaism Over Germanism, Regarded from the Nondenominational Point of View."

31 Pulzer, 47-50.

The Aryan is honest, pious and hard-working; the Jew is an unfeeling, back-stabbing scoundrel who makes his living at the expense of Gentiles.

German racialism was most often associated with nationalism and closely linked to the notion of the German folk. In a sense, racialism was where the concept of the folk became fused with allegedly scientific theories of nature and ethnic makeup. Racialism was built not on religion, but on mythological ideas of race, the folk community, blood and natural law. Racial thinkers saw all cultures and peoples as being governed by these unchanging "laws." Ethnic groups could be organized and ranked according to these laws, each with its own role in human affairs. Individuals could only hope to live and achieve as nature dictated. Antisemitic racialists treated this theory as scientific fact, a guiding principle for the preservation of European, and especially German, civilization.³²

With these lines of racial division drawn so clearly, a chief concern for racial antisemities was preventing "blood pollution" or the contamination of one race with the traits of another, lesser group. The Jews, with their reported plans to swallow and "Jewify" German culture, were seen as the largest threat. Elimination of this Jewish threat was also the key to national survival and success. Hermann Ahlwardt wrote in 1890: "The people which first and most thoroughly rid itself of its Jews and thus opens the door to its innate cultural developments is predestined to become the bearer of culture and consequently the ruler of the world." Racial antisemitism, then, with its psychological and political rationale, could be manipulated for an aggressive ideology of nationalism and even imperialism.³³ Hitler simply recast this concept in his own language in *Mein Kampf*: "A state which in the days of race poisoning endeavors to cultivate its best racial elements is bound to become some day the master of the world."³⁴

V. A NOTE ON THE HISTIOGRAPHY OF GERMAN ANTISEMITISM

The academy has produced an abundance of literature on antisemitism in Germany and throughout Europe in the centuries before the Holocaust. The fact that antisemitism colored European attitudes toward Jews is not in dispute, but historians debate the extent to which this prejudice penetrated all levels of

32 *Massing, Rehearsal for Destruction* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 82-83.

33 *Ibid.*, 83-84.

34 *Ibid.*

society. And they search for the defining trait or traits of German antisemitism that seem to have been a main component of the Holocaust.

One of the most controversial themes on this topic is found in Paul Rose's book *German Question/Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner*. Rose's ideas have been liberally mentioned in this paper, so it is only fitting to examine briefly criticism of his thesis. Rose's argument is built upon the notion of "revolutionary" German antisemitism that stretches from Luther's writings of the early modern era to prominent late 19th and early 20th century figures.

"Revolutionary" antisemitism, as Rose defines it, should be understood not to mean only antisemitism that is associated with political revolutionaries but has "the broader meaning of an antisemitism that stems from visions of a new world and a new man and from intellectual as well as political revolution."³⁵ It is this new world view, coupled with a distinctly German self-image, that creates revolutionary Jew-hatred and, as the subtitle suggests, links Kant to Wagner. Rose brings the Holocaust into this matrix by submitting that Jewish "emancipation" by assimilation was analogous to eliminating Jewish identity. This evaporation of Jewish religion and culture, he contends, was an obvious invitation to genocide.

The main problem with the book, says Karl Menges, is Rose's reductionist thinking that seeks to find a direct connection between the German Question, Nazi ideology and the Holocaust. The apparent unifying element, Rose argues, is German "revolutionary" antisemitism. Menges responds with several valuable case studies of Rose's analysis showing what Menges considers "methodological inconsistencies" and "grotesque distortions" of historical facts.³⁶

Writes Menges, "To satisfy his [Rose's] need for explanations, he invents continuities that don't exist. Worse, he accuses some of the best minds in German intellectual history of having paved the way for the Holocaust."³⁷

It is difficult not to see some validity in Menges' critique, but he appears perhaps to have misread the Rose thesis slightly. Rose is not suggesting a direct, inescapable link between Kant and Auschwitz. He only argues that a peculiarly

35 In Rose, 16-17, footnote 18.

36 Menges, "Another Concept in the 'Sonderweg' Debate," in *German Studies Review* 18, No. 2 (May 1995), 301.

37 *Ibid.*, 309.

German strain of antisemitism existed through the 19th century and helped precipitate the nation's surrender to National Socialism. Rose is careful not to suggest support for what he calls the "Luther-to-Hitler" school of German intellectual history. Certainly the antisemitism of early modern times and the Nazi period shared key characteristics, but even Rose, with his vaguely defined "revolutionary" yardstick, avoids tracing a pathological connection between two radically different men living in and leading Germans of two exceptionally different periods.

As for the criticism that Rose has needlessly maligned the contributions of great 19th-century German philosophers, one need only re-examine Rose's excerpts of their essays. For all their humanist ideals, these were clearly men who clung to many traditional conceptions of Jews. While antisemitic remarks may constitute only a relatively small fraction of their writings, it still testifies to a pervasive bigotry, especially among well-educated Germans. If these deeply intellectual writers and their elite contemporaries thought nothing of expressing such an animus, we may cautiously postulate that much of the German populace might hold to similar notions. Full treatment of these questions cannot be addressed here, but the social backgrounds and lack of advanced education may have rendered many common Germans in the 18th and 19th centuries more susceptible to age-old hatreds. Their bigotry might have been less tempered with Enlightenment teachings.

Many historians besides Rose and Menges have endeavored to trace the intellectual heritage of German antisemitism. Indeed, German history offers a unique case study of group hatred, its many forms and impacts. Many writers, however, do not offer an opposing view of important German thinkers who did not exhibit conspicuous Jew-hatred. Sarah Gordon in her Hitler, Germans and the Jewish Question³⁸ suggests that antisemitic volkish authors were not the only intellectuals in Germany. Many prominent thinkers did not share the antisemitic outlook of their countrymen, including names such as G.E. Lessing, Friedrich von Schelling, Wilhelm von Humboldt and others.³⁹

Another bold new argument connected to this question is Daniel J. Goldhagen's Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust

³⁸ Gordon, 26-29.

³⁹ See Daniel J. Goldhagen, Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996. Pp. x., 622.

just published earlier this year.³⁹ Goldhagen is chiefly concerned with the behavior of common Germans during the war, but his elaborate analytical framework explains many of their actions with the proliferation of "eliminationist" antisemitism, which, he says, was alive in all corners of Germany and at every social level in the 18th and 19th centuries. Goldhagen writes that antisemitism was a "culturally shared cognitive model" throughout the pre-war period that created in the collective German mind the image that all Jews deserved to die.

He also makes a strong argument that the burden of proof in the study of German antisemitism should rest with scholars who insist that Jew-hatred was only a fleeting sentiment that appealed only to a limited slice of the population. For years, this task has fallen to writers who believe the prejudice was widespread. They have had to piece together "proof" of antisemitism, when, Goldhagen insists, traditional methods do not yield the full picture.

Antisemitism was so culturally ubiquitous that its presence leaves little documented evidence. Germans, for the most part, did not take time to record or discuss that which was so generally accepted as to be beyond special mention. Much of that evidence, Goldhagen argues, usually stems from times of national or social crisis, when Germans were more likely to castigate Jews. No one has adequately demonstrated that feelings of tolerance toward Jews came close to equalling, let alone eclipsing, the well-known prejudice against Jews.

Goldhagen spends less than 100 pages discussing pre-Nazi antisemitism, but his book makes one additional point that deserves consideration, particularly in light of Rose's thesis. Goldhagen, like Rose, writes that the antisemitic remarks of comparatively liberal Germans suggest that almost no part of the German populace was without a certain amount of Jew-hatred. Although this use of the term "liberal" as a labeling device opens a host of other questions, Goldhagen's essential statement is that even those intellectuals who were typically tolerant of Jews, "friends of the Jews," still subscribed to the core of antisemitic beliefs and attitudes.⁴⁰ If the most broad-minded, most progressive Germans displayed these antisemitic values, what reason (what evidence?) exists to provide an ideological balance?

German antisemitism was not monolithic. Many Germans accepted it, and

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, see especially pp. 56-61.

a few, no doubt, did not. But it is difficult to argue that these countervailing forces had any lasting effects, especially against the overwhelming chorus of anti-Jewish voices. Why did not more of these tolerance-minded intellectuals protest actions taken against Jews? Why do we not see more writers attempt to sway public opinion the other way, to dispel antisemitic and racist notions? Complete answers must be left to another study, but, until then, it seems safe to assume that antisemitism, whether "revolutionary" or "eliminationist" or another derivative, pervaded 19th-century German society.

* * *

We have seen how antisemitism began in ancient times and became interwoven with the German religious outlook in the early modern era. Martin Luther's Christian antisemitism condemned Judaism as a refutation of Christian truths. Jews, furthermore, were godless destroyers of German culture. Almost 300 years later, the Age of Reason celebrated secularism. Its intellectual forces slowly changed German antisemitism from a doctrinal judgement to a rationally structured group prejudice. The Nationalist and Neo-Romantic movements in 19th-century Germany reacted against Enlightenment values and, at once, renewed parts of Protestant antisemitism while continuing to purvey socioeconomic Jew-hatred. Near the turn of the century, racist antisemitism emerged under mythological theories of ethnicity and "natural law." Jewish blood threatened to corrupt the pure "Aryan."

Adolf Hitler and his fellow Nazis left few clues regarding who among 19th-century intellectuals influenced them most. We may make educated guesses, but the historical record offers few specific names and titles. Even if we knew Hitler's reading list, we could not safely suggest that a certain 19th century author is, on a philosophical level, directly responsible for the Nazi persecution of Jews. The ideological factors that led to the Holocaust are entirely too many and too complex for such a theory.

Study of the Holocaust is, even to the best scholars, a frustrating attempt to explain the inexplicable. And yet we are obliged to look for some reasons. The six million Jews murdered by the Nazis did not die from sudden, unexpected or unseen forces. They were killed at the climax of a reign of terror that needed public support or at least acquiescence. Although the Holocaust was unprecedented, it was not without precursors. The German tradition of antisemitism

was doubtless one of those preludes. Lucy Dawidowicz succinctly recognizes this relationship:

The Final Solution would not have been possible without the pervasive presence and the uninterrupted tradition of antisemitism in Germany. The exposure of the German people for generations to conventional antisemitism in its manifold forms—political, nationalist, racial, cultural, doctrinal, economic—evenually rendered them insensitive to Hitler's radical and deadly brand of antisemitism.⁴¹

A popular and unbroken legacy of antisemitism in pre-Nazi Germany created the ideal climate for Hitler's virulent Jew-hatred to prosper. Attempts to link Hitler's antisemitic invective directly with 19th-century writers are typically oversimplified. The reductionist "Luther-to-Hitler" school of German intellectual history creates connections where no formal relationships exist. Pre-Nazi antisemitism did not make the Holocaust inevitable, but it did lay the prejudicial groundwork to make genocide possible.

41 Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, p. 24.

THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION: PRELUDE TO THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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The American Revolution is often portrayed by historians as the culmination of a movement toward democracy. The Americans battle as enlightened revolutionaries, ahead of their time in their fight to change society from an entrenched oligarchical aristocracy into a more equitable society, where "all men are created equal" and have "certain inalienable rights," to quote the Declaration of Independence.

The intent of this paper is to challenge that view. The years preceding the Revolution, especially the decade after 1763, will be shown to be an era of conservative political activity in Great Britain's American colonies. The leaders of the pre-revolutionary buildup professed and practiced the politics of conservatism; that is, they were attempting to maintain the status quo, not to change it. In the decade preceding the battles at Lexington and Concord, the conservatives in the colonies never changed their mind about what they were trying to accomplish. They only changed the focus of their attempts to preserve their status and station in society.

Conservatism, as defined by Leonard Woods Labaree, is "an attitude of resistance to change, shown in varying degrees by a variety of people with reference to any issue of the day."¹ The elites that ran each colony up through the 1760s opposed any change, political, economic, religious, or social, that would tend to lessen their importance as the ruling class.

The conservatism discussed in this paper only partially resembles American conservatism as it exists in the last decade of the twentieth century. In their

resistance to change 20th and 18th-century strains of conservatism resemble each other. But the 18th century was also the age of Edmund Burke. His brand of conservatism called for an ideal hierarchy, not equality, and had little use for the Lockean natural rights theories expressed by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence.²

The form of government and the organization of society in America during the 18th century tended to be conservative. Most of the American colonies were royal colonies. The government consisted of a governor, appointed by the King of England, a council, usually of 12 men, also appointed by the crown, and an assembly, elected by the voters in each colony. Until the 1760s, the council was, if not ahead in the struggle for power, at least on an even par with the governor and the assembly. Just what was this council, what power did it have, and why did the men tend toward conservatism?

The council in each colony consisted of the men of prominence, such as great planters, merchants, and lawyers. Members generally served for life. Although little or no pay was involved, the prominent men of the society viewed service on the council as a civic duty, a position of prestige, and a chance to promote their own economic and social interests. Behavior that today could cause a scandalous conflict of interest, such as the council granting western lands to its own members, was commonplace and accepted at that time. Nominations to open positions on the council were made (not exclusively, but in many cases) by the councillors themselves. This practice tended to promote an ongoing control of the council by a small number of wealthy families in each colony.³ Participation in government, either by voting or by office-holding, was limited not by property qualifications, although these existed. It was limited to those who had the time, money, ability to travel, and the interest to participate.

The functions of the council, although ill-defined at first, evolved over time to give the councillors influence in executive, legislative and judicial matters. The council could serve as a check on the powers of the governor, or as a support to his activities. The council's executive power rested in its role as an advisory board to the governor, exerting great influence on appointments to lesser administrative positions, for example. As a legislative branch, it acted as

² Allen Guttman, *The Conservative Tradition in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 8-10.

³ Leonard Woods Labaree, *Royal Government in America* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1930, republished 1958; second printing 1964), 154.

¹ Leonard Woods Labaree, *Conservatism in Early America* (New York: New York University Press, 1948), xii.

the upper house of the legislature, effectively giving it two chances to kill any bill emerging from the assembly—once as the upper house, and once as the governor's advisory board. In the judiciary, the council was the highest court of appeals in a colony. By way of example, Benjamin Larabee, in his History of Colonial Massachusetts, summarizes the elite that controlled that colony.

With a large share of the colony's lawyers and merchants, the leadership of the Court-party [that political faction which supported the governor] towns became increasingly elitist by mid-century... They sought to control the House of Representatives by electing the Speaker and dominating the major committees. But their primary fulcrum of power lay in the governor's council.⁴

By the 1760s, however, the council was past its peak of influence, having been supplanted by the assembly, the lower house of the colonial legislature. Though by no means made up of dirt farmers or laborers, the assemblymen tended to be of a slightly lower socioeconomic class and social standing than members of the council. In his History of the Legislature of the Province of Virginia, Eimer Miller comments on the rise in power of the assembly at the expense of the council:

Appointment and administration, as exercised by the assembly ... show the general tendency of the assembly to take all authority which was not expressly denied to it, and sometimes even to trench on what was denied. ... In fact, the power to do anything outside the regular routine was sure to be claimed by the assembly.⁵

Also contributing to the decline of the council was the aggressive exercise of the power of the royal governors. In the various colonial charters, governors were already equipped with much independent authority, but before the 1760s that power was rarely exercised. As royal power, embodied in the governor, expanded, and the assemblies stepped forward to contest that increased power, "the council ... became in fact less significant as time went on."⁶

This was the situation, then, faced by the traditional economic and social elites, as embodied in the colonial councils. Beginning in the 1760s, the councils and the conservatives fought to maintain the constitutional, social and economic conditions that they considered their birthright. Initially, the conservatives responded by opposing the more radical elements in the colonies that were stirring for more democracy and independence for America. By the 1770s,

4 Benjamin Woods Larabee, Colonial Massachusetts: A History. (Milwood, New York: KTO Press, 1979), 144.

5 Eimer Miller, The Legislature of the Province of Virginia—Its Internal Development. (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1907), 166.

6 L. Labaree, Royal Government, 170.

however, the conservatives came to see the out-of-control Parliament and the socially out-of-place royal appointees as the greater threat to their way of life.

The remainder of this paper is divided into two sections. The first will attempt to describe the political, social, religious and economic conditions that prevailed in the colonies prior to 1763, as a basis for considering what it was that the conservatives were trying to conserve. The second part will detail the conservative response to the series of crises that occurred in the colonies from 1763–1775, with the goal of demonstrating that the Revolution was the logical consequence of the actions of the conservative elites responding to Parliamentary provocations.

Although America had no formal peerage, a social aristocracy prevailed in the colonies, with definite divisions and responsibilities. Politically, this meant supporting the king and the government as constituted. This was considered a moral absolute by the ruling classes. A college student in 1766, writing to win a prize on the subject of the reciprocal advantages of a perpetual union between Great Britain and her American colonies, wrote, "The cause of liberty, civil and religious, is the cause of Britain herself."⁷ By this, the writer implied that there was no need to go outside the union to seek freedom of religion or political liberty. Another writer, in that same essay contest, wrote of the interdependence of Great Britain and the colonies. "Their dependence is mutual, and if either of them be affected, the others sooner or later will feel it in a very sensible manner."⁸ A British Member of Parliament wrote in 1774 of the conservatism and economic loyalty of the colonies up to that time. He pointed out that, during the tumultuous politics of England during the previous century, that Americans "have been strangers even to the name Whig and Tory. In all changes, in all revolutions, they have quietly followed the fortunes and submitted to the government of England."⁹ William Henry Drayton, a South Carolina planter and self-described conservative, attacked in turn American radicals and then the British government, "when I thought either advanced beyond the line of constitutional propriety."¹⁰ In 1775, William Smith, a Philadelphia minister, published

7 Four Dissertations on the Reciprocal Advantages of a Perpetual Union between Great Britain and her American Colonies. (Philadelphia: W. and T. Bradford, 1766), 10.

8 Four Dissertations, 52.

9 Jonathan Shipley, A Speech Intended to Have Been Spoken on the Bill For Altering the Charters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay (London: Printed for T. Cadell, 1774), 8.

10 J. Russell Snapp, "William Henry Drayton: The Making of a Conservative Revolutionary," Journal of Southern History, 57 (November 1991): 638.

a sermon which justified rebellion against Great Britain on conservative constitutional grounds. Citing the example of the Glorious Revolution, Smith stated:

Did they not magnanimously set their foot upon the line of the constitution, and tell majesty to its face that they could not betray the public liberty' and that the Monarch's only safety consisted in governing according to the laws? Did not their example, and consequent sufferings, kindle a flame that illuminated the land, and introduced the noble system of public and personal liberty, secured by the Revolution?¹¹

The ruling elites in the colonies wanted democracy only to the extent that they could use it to maintain the existing social and political structure. It was never the intention of the ruling class that broad-based democracy take hold, or when a new government was eventually created for the colonies, that it would be a representative republic. The terms "republican" and "democratical" were used interchangeably by conservatives as terms of reproach, much as "leveling" was used in a social context in England, or as the terms "red" and "communist" were used by Americans during the Cold War.¹² Even while protesting such onerous laws as the Stamp Act and the Townshend duties, conservative American political leaders and the upper crust of society supported the government as constituted. Snapp, writing about William Henry Drayton, states that "during the 1760s he feared challenges from the popular guarantor of individual rights to liberty and property." L. W. Labaree asserts that planters and merchants faced a twofold threat during the pre-revolutionary period. One threat was from British policies that concentrated power in royally controlled bureaucratic hands at the expense of the local colonial governments. The other threat was that the underprivileged classes might use the example of resistance set by conservatives to resist the entrenched privilege of the conservatives.¹³

Colonial society, based as it was on the society of the mother country, contained sharp class distinctions, and people were expected to behave in a deferential manner toward their social superiors. Government was to be left to the "gentlemen," this term having the specific meaning of one well-born to a good family not engaged in manual labor. The lower socioeconomic classes were to pay due respect to their betters, and the ruling class was expected to

11 William Smith, *A Sermon on the Present Situation of American Affairs* (Philadelphia: J. Humphreys, Jr., 1775), 21.

12 L. Labaree, *Conservatism*, 140.

13 *Ibid.*, 56.

provide due allegiance to the mother country and its government. This class system tended to be self-perpetuating. The working classes were too busy making a living to worry to a great extent about government. Anything more than rudimentary education was available only to those who could afford it.

Thus the next generation of educated leaders came from the same families as the previous generation. Religion, too, promoted the class system, and urged deference to betters. An excellent example of the mixing of religion and social class is found in William Smith's 1775 sermon:

Without order and just subordination, there can be no union in public bodies. However much you may be equals on other occasions, yet all this must cease in a united and associated capacity; and every individual is bound to keep the place and duty assigned him, by ties far more powerful over a man of virtue and honor, than all the other ties that human policy can contrive... lastly, by every method in your power, and in every possible case, support the laws of your country.¹⁴

William Tennent, Anglican minister in Charleston, South Carolina, assumed without question the existence of class distinctions. In writing of sins, he states that these sins in former times "were confined chiefly to the middle and lower classes of people" but now "our common and country people seem to vie with the first classes mankind in vices, which were formerly peculiar to them alone."¹⁵

In the area of education as well, conservatism reigned. Cadwallader Colden attempted to secure a royal charter for King's College (later Columbia University) because it would, in part, "prevent the farther growth of republican principles, which already too much prevail in the colonies."¹⁶ The system of higher education in the colonies was based on the English system, which was not much changed from that five centuries previous. It emphasized the ancient trivium of Latin grammar, rhetoric, and logic and was not open to new ideas of democracy or republicanism.

Religion tended to support the status quo, and that was especially true of the established churches, Anglican in the south and Puritan in the north, that enjoyed special privileges from the colonial governments. The churches and their leaders, not wanting to lose their privileged station, used the pulpit to

14 Smith, *Present Situation*, 29.

15 William Tennent, *An Address, Occasioned by the Late Invasion of the Liberties of the American Colonies by the British Parliament* (Philadelphia: William and Thomas Bradford, 1774), 16.

16 L. Labaree, *Conservatism*, 100.

support the status quo. Writing in 1775, William Smith spoke of

maintaining ... the most unshaken fidelity to our common Sovereign, as the great center of our union, and guardian of our mutual rights ... we thought it our duty to build up in America, altars, or constitutions, as nearly as we could on the great British system.

We considered ourselves entitled to the privileges of our Father's house — to enjoy peace, liberty, and safety, to be governed, like our brethren, by our own laws ... and that no power on earth has a right to come in between us and a gracious Sovereign, to measure our loyalty, or to grant our property, without our consent.

These are the principles we inherited from Britons themselves. Could we depart from them we should be deemed bastards and not sons, aliens and not brethren.¹⁷

Beginning with the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763, the British government took a greater interest in the colonies. With the acquisition of French America, Britain not only obtained land but the responsibility of running it, settling it and pacifying the Indians on it. To control this land and raise the revenue necessary to administer it, a series of measures were passed by the British Parliament and Crown, including the Proclamation Line of 1763, the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts. These acts hit directly at the power base of conservatives in the colonies, and the initial resistance to the British government came not from the mobs but from the gentlemen.

The Proclamation Line of 1763 stated that no settlement was to take place west of the Appalachian Mountains. This had the twofold effect of hitting the elite in the pocketbook by directly affecting their opportunities to obtain western land and of reducing further the power and influence of the colonial councils, who had formerly granted land and appointed officials to survey and oversee it; those privileges now lay with the king.

The Stamp Act of 1765 sought to raise revenue from the colonies to pay for the British army that was now being kept in the colonies. The troops, originally sent to fight the French and Indian War, remained after its conclusion, ostensibly to protect the American colonies from the hostile Indians. The cost of maintaining these troops, as well as the bureaucracy that was created to deal with the Indians and to collect the revenue, was to be passed on to the Americans.

The colonial conservatives, again slated to be hit in the pocketbook, called for the repeal of the Stamp Act, but did so in a calm, orderly manner. Massachusetts invited the other colonies to send representatives to a meeting, which

¹⁷ Smith, *Present Situation*, 13-14.

became the Stamp Act Congress, to seek redress from the crown. The elite of Boston began this movement. The Stamp Act Congress adopted a strong set of resolves; even tough talk with no overt action was too much for some of the conservatives at the Congress. Timothy Ruggles, the head of the Congress, refused to sign the resolves, and, like many conservatives, joined the loyalist side when the Revolution finally arrived. When the stamp agents were appointed, mobs of people attacked them, burned their property and, through violence or threat of violence, forced most of them to resign. The stamps in most cases remained unissued. But these mobs of people did not just spontaneously develop. They were supported and encouraged by the local elites and the governor's councilors. In a letter to the government in England, Governor Bernard of Massachusetts detailed the involvement of council members and upper-class citizens in a riot aimed at intimidating the local stamp agent.

At break of day was discovered hanging upon a tree in a street of the town an effigy ... to represent Mr. Oliver, the ... stamp distributor. Many gentlemen, especially some of the council, treated it as a boyish sport, that did not deserve the notice of the governor and council.¹⁸

Writing after a second riot, Thomas Hutchinson also credited the better sorts with responsibility for stirring up the mob. "The encouragers of the first mob never intended matters should go to this length."¹⁹

Jared Ingersoll, appointed stamp-agent in the colony of Maryland, commented that "only four of the council supported the governor regarding the Stamp Act, and they now face political death."²⁰ Ingersoll, in letters to a friend back in England, described the reaction of the American ruling class to the Stamp Act.

We on this side of the water agree we should contribute, we only differ in the means ... our people don't yet believe that the British Parliament really means to impose internal taxes on us without our consent ... any tax not imposed by the legislative bodies here will go down with people like chopt hay.²¹

Much other evidence suggests the involvement of upper-class conserva

¹⁸ Governor Bernard, "The Boston Riot of August 14, 1765" in *Prologue to Revolution: Sources and Documents on the Stamp Act Crisis, 1764-1766*, Edmund S. Morgan, ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 107.

¹⁹ Thomas Hutchinson, "The Boston Riot of August 26, 1765" in *ibid.*, 109.

²⁰ Jared Ingersoll, [Mr. Ingersoll's letters relating to the Stamp Act], *title page wanting* (New Haven: Samuel Green, 1766), 40.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

tives behind the scenes in these protests. Henry Laurens, later to become President of the Continental Congress, was suspected by the Sons of Liberty of having custody of some stamped paper. He surprised the common-looking mob that visited him at night in search of the stamped paper, by calling nine of them, acquaintances of his, by name.²² In several other colonies, the gentlemen participating in intimidating behavior did not even bother to hide their identities, as in the group of 50 gentlemen of Wilmington, North Carolina, who signed their names to an open letter to British customs officials, and when that failed to get any results, they formed an association and led the crowd.²³

With the almost universal loathing in the colonies for the Stamp Act, the offending legislation was repealed. With this repeal, the conservative forces in the colonies had won a great victory and celebrated while reaffirming their commitment to the government of England. Samuel Stillman, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, delivered a sermon in celebration of the repeal of the Stamp Act, in which he conveyed the message that in spite of the protestations of the colonies regarding the Act, they remained loyal subjects of Great Britain and were attempting to preserve, not to destroy, the constitutional system then in place.

Let us entertain the most dutiful and loyal sentiments with respect to the King ... the prosperity of this kingdom is a great part of our happiness ... may the British Parliament receive that deference from us that they deserve; and be convinced by our future conduct, that we aim not to Independence, nor wish to destroy distinctions, where distinctions are necessary.

May the whole issue of unanimity and peace; the firmest connection and mutual prosperity of Great Britain and her colonies. May we go on to rejoice in the continuance of our privileges, and glorify God in the abundance of His mercy.²⁴

In spite of the success of the colonies in persuading Britain to repeal the Stamp Act, there were those who not only saw continued union with the mother country as desirable, but thought of American independence as impossible. An essayist wrote,

Unconnected and divided as they are at present, both in situation and interest (owing to the difference of settlement, of charters, of religion, and commerce, which

22 Edmund S. Morgan and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 181.

23 *Ibid.*, 182.

24 Samuel Stillman, *Good News From a Far Country. A Sermon Preached at Boston, May 17, 1766. Upon the Arrival of the Important News of the Repeal of the Stamp-Act* (Boston: Kneeland and Adams, for Philip Freeman, 1766), 33-34.

are often clashing) how difficult, and next to impossible would it be, to rescue them from a state of anarchy; and form a constitution, for which ... there can no precedent be found.²⁵

Another essayist on the same subject wrote:

The preservation of our laws, commerce, and every other blessing of domestic peace, by the wise policy of the mother country, can only be made the basis of a close and firm connection between her and them.²⁶

Relief at the repeal of the Stamp Act was felt in many quarters in America. Not only was the onerous tax lifted, but the constitution and form of government was preserved. The spirit of kinship with the mother country is noted in the following excerpt, which again reflects the deference common in colonial society.

The rights we claim are the full and free enjoyment of constitutional liberty, protection from foreign invasion, and encouragement in every commercial interest, which does not directly interfere with that of the mother country.

The duties we owe are obedience under constitutional and legal restrictions, and an exclusive preference to the mother country in every article of commerce and trade.²⁷

In 1767, the British government, still looking for a way to raise revenue from the colonies, passed the Townshend Acts, which placed duties in the colonies on many commonly used items imported from England, such as lead, glass and tea. The colonies again acted in a predictable manner, protesting the taxation. Non-importation agreements were put into place in the various colonies, in an effort to force British merchants, hurt by the embargoes, to pressure Parliament for repeal of the duties. The reaction was again, for the most part, through channels, although there was some intimidation of merchants who did not cooperate with the embargoes. James Otis, future revolutionary, is quoted as saying "The Tax! The Tax! is the matter of grievance; redress is to be fought for in a legal and constitutional way."²⁸

The people of Boston, in their town meeting in December 1767, gave instructions to their representatives in the Massachusetts assembly. Several of these instructions demonstrate the conservative influence still prevalent at that time, as opposed to six years later, when radicals would be dumping tea into the

25 *Four Dissertations*, 100.

26 *Ibid.*, 101.

27 *Ibid.*, 85.

28 David Hawke, *The Colonial Experience* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1966), 542.

harbor. The representatives of Boston were instructed:

1. As we have nothing more at heart, than to maintain a perpetual union with the people of Great Britain, who are our fellow subjects ... readily join in any measures tending to cultivate and establish it ... and frustrate the designs of those who would create jealousies and formen divisions between us.
2. Inspect such acts of Parliament as are or shall be passed to be binding on these colonies.
3. [since] we are not and cannot be represented in the Parliament that passeth such laws ... we enjoin upon you, to use your influence, that the nature and tendency of the late act of Parliament ... may be the subject of enquiry in the House of Representatives.²⁹

The Bostonians then listed their objections to the specific acts. They objected to the revenue aspect, pointing out that, while regulating trade had always been the power and duty of the British government, the raising of revenue had traditionally been the province of the colonial legislatures. They also objected to the purpose the money was being raised for, specifically, the payment of royal officials in the colonies. Up to this time the colonies had raised the money and paid the royal officials, such as governors and judges, and by practicing the "power of the purse" had effectively controlled these appointments, even though the Crown technically still appointed them. The instructions continued:

the appropriation of the monies raised ... is justly a matter of grievance to us, inasmuch as we are deprived of that honor ... of testifying our alacrity in supporting his majesty's officers .. as well as taking into consideration our own ability, and the merit of their services.³⁰

The colonists also pointed out that they were already indirectly providing revenue to the coffers of Great Britain, in the form of higher prices they paid due to the exclusive nature of their trade with the mother country. The higher profits thus provided to British companies were then taxed.

Every argument offered by the colonists, however, seemed to return to the theme that revenue taxation was wrong and not to be tolerated. The conservatives in the colonial legislatures did not want any power to be ceded to the Crown or Parliament. They fought against these taxes because of the loss of

²⁹ Boston Chronicle, 21–28 December 1767, 15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

power and influence that would ensue should the royal bureaucracy succeed in its takeover of local colonial administration. It was not just money; it was a way of life that was at stake. John Dickinson, writing anonymously as "A Farmer in Pennsylvania," deftly made that argument:

Even the Stamp Act might have been eluded. Why then was it universally detested by them as Slavery itself? Because it presented to these devoted provinces nothing but a fear of calamities, each of which was unworthy of free men to bear ... it is calculated for the same purpose that the other was, that is, to raise money upon us without our consent.³¹

To enforce the Townshend Acts, new methods were tried, along with the expanded use of existing enforcement mechanisms. New customs officers were dispatched, to replace the lax, absentee customs officers previously in place. Vice-Admiralty courts were given expanded jurisdiction, and new Vice-Admiralty courts were created to assist with increased enforcement. Writs of assistance, a form of generalized search warrant, were provided for. These duties and their enforcement had the greatest effect on shipowners, traders merchants and the moneyed class — in other words, the conservative elements of society. In 1768, at the height of the protest of the Townshend duties, the Boston town meeting again sent instructions to their representatives. A list of 12 grievances was prepared, of which several showed the influence of the conservative element.

3. A number of new officers, unknown in the Charter of this Province, have been appointed to superintend this revenue, whereas by our Charter, the great and general Court [council] or assembly of this province has the sole right of appointing all civil officers.

4. Each of these petty officers so made in entrusted with power more absolute and arbitrary than ought to be lodged in the hands of any man or body of men. Thus our houses ... are exposed to be ransacked ... by Wretches, whom no prudent man would venture to employ even as menial servants.

7. We find ourselves greatly oppressed by Instructions sent to our Governor from the Court of Great Britain ... In consequence of instructions, the Governor has called and adjourned our General Assemblies to a place highly inconvenient to the

³¹ John Dickinson, *Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania To the Inhabitants of the British Colonies* (originally published in Philadelphia in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser*; beginning the week of 30 November – 3 December, 1767 and for 11 weeks thereafter; immediately after its newspaper appearance it was published in book form in nine editions in six different cities.) Reprinted and with an introduction by R.T.H. Halsey (New York: The Outlook Company, 1903), 21–22.

Members and greatly disadvantageous to the interests of the province ... in consequence of instructions, the Assembly has been prorogued from time to time, when the important concerns of the Province required their meeting ... [here the suspension of the New York Assembly in 1768 is described also] ... By an instruction, the honorable his Majesty's Council are forbid to meet and transact matters of public concern as a council of advice to the Governor, unless called by the Governor.

11. We cannot see without concern the various attempts which have been made, and are now making, to establish an American Episcopate ... no power on Earth can justly give either temporal or spiritual jurisdiction within this province, except the Great and General Court.³³

The appointment power for officers, once a chief source of power for conservative members of the councils, was being usurped by Parliament and the Crown. The fourth grievance was especially galling to conservatives, because these officers not only were granted inordinate power, but they achieved it outside the normal channels of the hierarchical, class-conscious society. The conservative element honestly believed that they were best serving society by restoring society to its traditional state, by trying to get these interloping royal officials out of the way of the normal societal order. The seventh grievance directly affected the council in the performance of its duties, and in the exercise of its influence. And the opposition to an American Episcopate, expressed in the 11th grievance, was based on a fear of the loss of even more power and influence. The bishops in England were politically powerful, and the conservatives had more opposition to their rule already than they could handle.

Parliament, realizing its goals were not being achieved by the Townshend duties, repealed all except the tax on tea in 1770. This was good enough for the conservatives. The radicals continued the protests of the tea tax, resulting in the Boston Tea Party, and the British responded with the Intolerable Acts. The tea party marked the point where the radical revolutionary movement broke off from the conservative protest movement. Many of the merchants of Boston had opposed the tea party and offered to help pay for the tea. The offer was refused by the Governor, who insisted that the restitution had to be made by the colonial government. The governor, Thomas Gage, also reported on a Boston Town

³² *The Votes and Proceedings of the People of Boston, in Town Meeting Assembled* (Boston: Edes and Gill and T. and J. Fleet, 1772), 15-27

meeting in June 1774, where he noted that the upper-class people attended and proposed that the tea be paid for and the Committee of Correspondence, backbone of the radical element, be abolished. But they were outvoted by the lower classes.³³ Thomas Chandler, in a tract titled [A Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans](#) made the case for cooler heads to prevail. Written in 1774, it drew the distinction between allowable protest and illegal revolt.

If the supreme power of any kingdom or state ... should adopt measures that are wrong or oppressive, the subjects may complain or remonstrate against them in a respectful manner, but they are bound, by the laws of heaven and earth, not to behave insolently or rebelliously. The ill consequences of open disrespect to the government are so great, that no misconduct of the administration can justify or excuse it ... Christians are required ... to be subject to the higher power, of whatever character, for consciences' sake.³⁴

The writer went on to demonstrate that specific non-importation agreements, such as those employed during the Stamp Act and Townshend Act crises, were moderate and measured responses and achieved the desired effect. But a general non-importation act aimed at Britain, now that those particular acts were repealed, would do more harm to the colonies than to Great Britain and so should not be employed.³⁵

Even some in England sided with the American conservatives. Also writing in 1774, Jonathan Shipley commented on Parliamentary relations with the American colonies.

Let me add further, that to make any changes in their government, without their consent, would be to transgress the wisest rules of policy, and to wound our most important interests.³⁶

We never gained so much by North America as when we let them govern themselves and were content to trade with them and protect them.³⁷

After the repeal of the Townshend duties, the radicals such as Sam Adams of Boston came to the forefront of the revolutionary movement, and there was

³³ Peter D.G. Thomas, *Tea Party to Independence: The Third Phase of the American Revolution, 1773-1776* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 120-121.

³⁴ Thomas Bradbury Chandler, [A Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans](#) (New York: J. Livingston, 1774), 5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁶ Shipley, *Speech Intended*, 28.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

no unanimity among conservatives as to the course to be taken. Most continued, by long tradition and custom, to support the government as constituted. Some, however, using the same reasoning of allegiance to the constitution, justified a further break with Great Britain.

Samuel Seabury, in his tract *An Alarm to the Legislature of New York*, published early in 1775, attacked the nature, election and authority of the First Continental Congress. He expounded,

the people have a right to share in the legislature. This right they exercise by choosing representatives; and thereby constituting one branch of the legislative authority. But when they have chosen their representatives, that right, which was before diffused through the whole people, centers in their representatives alone; and can legally be exercised by none but them ... But in the present dispute with Great Britain, the representatives of the people have not only been utterly disregarded, but their dignity has been trampled upon, and their authority contravened.

A committee, chosen in a tumultuous, illegal manner, usurped the most despotic authority over the province. They entered into contracts, without any power from the legislature of the province ... They had the insolence to direct the manner in which the delegates should be chosen in counties; and the greater insolence, to count all the friends to order and good government, — those namely, who did not choose to obey their seditious mandate, — as being of their party, and as acquiescing in the New York choice.³⁸

In the *Sermon on the Present Situation*, published in 1775, before the battles at Lexington and Concord, the author made the case that resistance to Parliament is justified, because it is Parliament itself that is acting in an unconstitutional manner.

But it is said that we have of late departed from your former line of duty, and refused our homage at the great altar of British Empire and to this it has been replied, that the very refusal is the strongest evidence of our veneration for the altar itself.³⁹

The Revolutionary War did not suddenly spring out of peaceful, happy colonies; it was the culmination of a series of events following the end of the French and Indian War. From the British point of view, it seemed that the colonies needed to be reminded of their proper place, and Parliament took what it considered to be measured, reasonable steps to accomplish its goal of raising

³⁸ Samuel Seabury, *An Alarm to the Legislature of the Province of New York*. Occasioned by the Present Political Disturbances in North America. Addressed to the Honorable Representatives in General Assembly Convened (New York: James Rivington, 1775), 4–5.

³⁹ Smith, *Present Situation*, 16.

revenue, while re-establishing royal authority in the colonies, which it had neglected due to other concerns of the empire. But from the American perspective, and particularly from the conservative perspective of the ruling elites in the colonies, the series of Parliamentary acts in 1763 and following were an unwarranted intrusion and interruption of the status quo. The colonial elite started the political and economic battles of the 1760s and the early 1770s, not to change anything, not to advance the ideals of democracy or republicanism, but simply to restore things to the way they ought to be. William Henry Drayton, a typical member of the landed, moneyed, ruling upper class, wrote in 1775 of his reasons for becoming a revolutionary:

I endeavored at one time to oppose the exuberances of popular liberty, and at another, the stretches of the government party, when I thought either advances beyond the line of constitutional propriety. Tenacious and jealous in my liberty, I do not change ground, because I in turn face opposite quarters making the attack. ... I opposed succeeding violations of my rights, then, by a temporary democracy, now by an established monarchy.⁴⁰

Drayton, though a typical member of the ruling elite, was far from a typical conservative. Although he expressed the conservative sentiments of preserving the status quo, he did it in the opposite manner from most conservatives. The typical conservative of the time was in the forefront of protestations and petitions, advocated embargoes, and, with a wink and a nod, acquiesced to the ruder forms of mob violence, such as the tarring and feathering of stamp agents. But when actual fighting began, many conservatives shrank from that final, irretrievable step, and backed the Loyalist cause.

The division of opinion within the conservative movement is exemplified by the following quotations from sermons. Keep in mind that churches tended to promote conservative values, and the contrast between the two positions is striking. In 1774 William Tennent, Anglican minister in Charleston, South Carolina, proclaimed:

The question is of no less magnitude than whether we shall continue to enjoy the privileges of men and Britons, or whether we shall be reduced to a state of the most abject slavery.⁴¹

In 1775, William Smith, although he provided a moral justification for revol-

⁴⁰ Shepp, Drayton, 638.

⁴¹ Tennent, *Invasion*, 6.

tion should the majority deem it unavoidable, asserted that no revolt was necessary, as independence was inevitable, with or without a war.

Heaven has great and gracious purposes towards this continent iliberal or mistaken plans of policy may distress us for a while ... [but] the genius of America will rise triumphant ... this country will be free.⁴²

Historian L. W. Labaree has identified eight characteristics of Loyalists during the American Revolution. They were essentially conservative and resisted innovation; they believed resistance to constituted authority was morally wrong; they made their decision to be Loyalists slowly and with much difficulty; they were usually forced into a decision by Patriots who did not allow them to sit on the fence; they had a sentimental attachment to Great Britain and her constitution; they generally believed that independence was inevitable but need not occur at that time or with that amount of violence; they were uncertain of the future, and felt that if they sided with the Patriots, there was no guarantee that things would not get worse; and they were pessimistic about the government should the Americans win. They believed this would lead to the ignorant and disorderly coming to power in the government.⁴³ Labaree's analysis of Loyalism coincides almost exactly with the characteristics of the ruling class described earlier in this paper.

Historian John Franklin Jameson provides an excellent analysis of how the change from the conservatism of 1763-1775 to the Lockean liberalism of the Declaration could happen. Revolutions, asserts Jameson, "as they... tend to fall into the hands of men holding more and more advanced and extreme views, less and less restrained by traditional attachment to the old order of things." The English Civil War, the American Revolution and the French Revolution, fit this description, according to Jameson.⁴⁴ The same qualities that made conservatives object to the Stamp Act, the dissolution of assemblies and councils, and the Townshend duties, also made them think long and hard before supporting armed rebellion. Historian Clinton Rossiter, in the conclusion to his comprehensive work on American Revolution-era political thought, Seedtime of the Republic,

42 Smith, Present Situation, 28.
43 L. Labaree, Royal Government, 274.
44 John Franklin Jameson, The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement (Boston: Beacon Press, 1926), 12.

characterizes that thought as "deep-seated conservatism." "The Americans of 1776," states Rossiter, "were among the first men in modern history to defend rather than seek an open society and constitutional liberty."⁴⁵ What Rossiter labels "chical, ordered liberty"⁴⁶ is an accurate statement of the goals of pre-revolutionary and Revolution-era conservatives. In a more recent work, Theodore Draper argues in A Struggle for Power: The American Revolution that the Americans struck for independence only after the British government rejected their claim to entitlement to power as they believed the British constitution defined and limited it. The struggle for power described by Draper is essentially the struggle of conservatives in America to hold on to the power they had accumulated, constitutionally and traditionally, for over a century.⁴⁷

Although many American conservatives stopped short of armed revolt or open disloyalty to Great Britain, they can be credited with igniting the fires that flared into the American Revolution. The republican society that conservatives feared in fact was begun by them in their vehement protestations of imperial policy in the 1760s. The more radical elements, used at first by conservatives for limited ends, adopted the rhetoric and tactics of the elite, and carried these ideas to their logical conclusion. The decade preceding Lexington and Concord and the beginning of the "American Revolution" might accurately be called the "American Conservation," as the colonies, with their own society and constitutional ideas, formed over a century of virtually autonomous development, fought to maintain the status quo as they perceived it.

45 Clinton Rossiter, Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the American Tradition of Political Liberty (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1953), 440.
46 Rossiter, Seedtime, 449.
47 Edmund S. Morgan, review of A Struggle for Power: The American Revolution by Theodore Draper, in New York Review of Books 43 (March 21, 1996): 17-20.

AN ORGANIZED INCIDENT: THE BOSTON MASSACRE RE-EXAMINED

Amanda Standerfer

Amanda Standerfer completed her B.A. in history in 1995 and is currently working on her M.A. in American history. This study was originally written for an undergraduate independent study and subsequently won the Eastern Illinois University Social Science Writing Award for 1995-96. The author argues that Sam Adams's role in the Boston Massacre was perhaps larger than has been understood by historians.

On the evening of March 5, 1770, the people of Boston were called out of their homes by church bells ringing throughout town. There was no fire, nor church service. Tensions had been mounting for several months between the British soldiers stationed in Boston and the citizens. As people gathered in the streets on March 5, 1770, a group of citizens carrying clubs claimed that some soldiers attacked them. There were also several parties of soldiers in the streets looking for trouble. Two large groups gathered: one in front of the Customs House where they pelted the Main Guard with snowballs filled with rocks, and the other gathered at Dock Square where a "mysterious gentleman in a red cloak and white wig harangued" the people to go towards the Main Guard.¹ Finally, after being insulted and pelted enough, a soldier who was knocked down regained his footing and fired into the crowd at the Custom House. The other soldiers present followed his example, killing five and wounding several others. Propagandists quickly turned the event into the "Bloody Work in King's Street" or "The Boston Massacre," and that evening would go down in history as one of the key events in the coming of the American Revolution.

Hiller Zobel, the leading historian on the event, has described the situation surrounding the Boston Massacre as well as the night itself. Zobel emphasized the general context and the long-standing grievances that sparked the event. Zobel's book is so thorough that there has been little recent work on the subject.²

1 John C. Miller, *Sam Adams: Pioneer in Propaganda* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1936), 179.

2 Hiller B. Zobel, *The Boston Massacre* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970), 180-105.

John Miller, in his book on Sam Adams, has described the same events on the night of March 5, 1770, but added his suspicions about Sam Adams's motivation behind the event.³ Certainly, Sam Adams was the most radical of the Patriots. As early as 1768, Adams had advocated separation from Great Britain.⁴ This was only several years after the formation of the Sons of Liberty. Did Sam Adams have a significant role in instigating the Boston Massacre? By looking into Adams's past, his political ideas and his view of the army, as well as his role the night of the massacre and at the trial of the soldiers involved, this paper will argue that Sam Adams had a significant part in planning the event, more significant than has been argued before. By looking at transcripts and legal papers surrounding the trial, Sam Adams's writings, Boston newspapers, and several secondary sources the role of Adams in instigating the massacre becomes evident.

Sam Adams felt strongly about liberty and freedom in the colonies. In his eyes, the British were posing the ultimate threat to his ideals by imposing measures on the colonies and maintaining a permanent army after 1763. Adams had been interested in politics since his days at Harvard. His father had been involved in politics in Boston, and also owned a brewery, which he wished his son to take over. After his father's death, Sam Adams was free to pursue his political career. He became a tax collector in Boston, but he was unreliable and constantly in financial trouble. Still, he never missed an opportunity to talk about his views on liberty and freedom. Adams had a close connection with a group in Boston called the Loyal Nine, who would later, with Adams as their leader, become the guiding force of the Boston Sons of Liberty. In 1766, Adams was elected clerk of the House of Representatives in Boston, a post which he would hold for the next ten years.⁵

With the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765, Adams stepped up his political propaganda by writing for the *Boston Gazette* under a pseudonym calling for the repeal of the Act. Because of the Stamp Act, there were many riots in Boston, and the mob was, for the most part, controlled by Sam Adams. The Stamp Act was repealed in 1766, but it was replaced by the Declaratory Act, in 1766, and the Townsend Duty Act, in 1767. The Townsend Duty Act generated

3 Miller, 166-192.

4 Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 39.

5 Miller, 22-130.

great opposition in the colonies. Sam Adams wrote a series of letters to the King that were adopted by the Massachusetts legislature in opposition to the new act. The Boston Sons of Liberty, led by Adams, advocated using violence against the British.⁶ Boston had not yet erupted in violence when the British Cabinet decided to move troops there. They would not yet know about the Cabinet's decision when they would resort to violence. By July of 1768, the mobs had virtually taken over the town.

The British army in North America had been an increasing problem since the decision to leave 10,000 permanent troops for the first time in 1763. After the French and Indian War, Great Britain was faced with the problem of how to defend the vast territory gained in North America, including the area west of the Alleghenies to the Mississippi River, most of Canada, and Florida.

There were several reasons why the British decided, for the first time, to maintain a permanent standing army in North America. First, there was the Proclamation Line of 1763, an effort by the British government to prevent further westward settlement. The British suggested that by using the army to enforce the line, it would confine the colonists to the seaboard, and thus, make it easier to control those "unruly Americans."⁷ Another reason given to justify a military presence in North America was Pontiac's rebellion, and other minor Indian rebellions. The British gave the excuse that they needed to police the area west of the mountains to the Mississippi River. The third major reason for the occupation of this new territory was the presence of the French and Spanish. The St. Lawrence River Valley in Canada as well as areas around the Great Lakes and New Orleans had substantial French settlements, plus Florida had a small Spanish population.

Of course, there also was the fear that the French and Spanish would form an alliance to restore their empire in North America. Another suggestion on the stationing of permanent forces in North America was outlined in an anonymous "Plan" included in a report on postwar policy. This "Plan" included the possibility of the "use of regulars to control the Americans."⁸ It was this possibility which caused the American colonists, including Sam Adams, to be suspicious of

6 John C. Miller, *Origins of the American Revolution* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1943), 236.

7 John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 53.

8 *Ibid.*, 87-88.

the true motives for permanently stationing troops in North America.

There was no major opposition to this new policy until the British wanted the Americans to help pay for the maintenance of the troops through the Stamp Act. The money collected by the Stamp Act was to go "towards further defraying the necessary expenses of defending, protecting, and securing" the colonies.⁹ The British thought that the Americans would not oppose a tax, the revenue from which would stay in the colonies. However, the Americans saw no need for the army to be there at all, and would not give any money to support them.

Physical pressure was put on the tax collectors by the Sons of Liberty, who ransacked their houses and threatened them. In opposition to the Stamp Act there was "serious rioting in Boston," which was quickly becoming the hotbed for revolutionary activities under the direction of Sam Adams.¹⁰ As a result of the violence, Prime Minister Grenville suggested using force to subdue the colonists. Even though the Stamp Act had been repealed, there was a general feeling of mistrust between the colonists and the British.

The Townsend Duty Acts were also passed to help pay for the maintenance of the army in North America. As with the Stamp Act, there was widespread opposition to this measure, with Boston being the first of many to stop importing British goods. By early 1768, when the mobs had taken over Boston, General Gage, the British commander in North America, received a letter telling him to move at least one regiment into Boston, or more if he saw fit, for the "preservation of public peace."¹¹ By mid-1768, the mobs became so unruly that the British decided to send two more regiments from Ireland into Boston.¹²

In late September and early November, the troops arrived quietly in Boston along with several ships to patrol Boston Harbor. At first the mobs settled down, perhaps because they were unsure of what to expect from the troops, but it was clear that the troops were there to "maintain law and order, entirely by threat of physical force," and it was this threat that would cause friction with the citizens

9 Edmund S. Morgan, *Prologue to Revolution: Sources and Documents on the Stamp Act Crisis, 1764-1766* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 41.

10 Davidson, 69.

11 Peter D. Thomas, *The Townshend Duty Crisis: The Second Phase of the American Revolution, 1767-1773* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 82.

12 *Ibid.*, 87-88.

of Boston.¹³ The town remained tranquil for several months after the arrival of the troops despite the daily annoyance of the troops exercising on public land. Sam Adams, of course, found the troops to be the ultimate threat to liberty and used every minor incident as evidence that the troops were abusing their authority over the people of Boston. Adams published the *Journal of the Times*, with the help of the publishers of the *Boston Gazette*, describing the harsh treatment of the citizens by the soldiers.

Adams had a "conspiracy" theory that the British officials did not want the troops in Boston to maintain law and order, but rather they "secretly intended to introduce a general massacre" to teach the citizens a lesson.¹⁴ This "theory" shaped Adams's overall plan of revolution, which he constantly stirred up in the newspapers. He never failed to remind the citizens of the evil of having troops quartered in the town.

There were increased incidents between troops and citizens after a night at the local tavern. The troops took advantage of the chap rum in Boston, but then often got into fights with other soldiers, sailors, or citizens. Some even attributed the rise in petty theft to the alcohol habit of the soldiers. The conflict between the troops and the citizens began emerging in the summer of 1769 after it was decided to remove two regiments from the town. The citizens, now thinking that all troops would be withdrawn, put more pressure on the remaining regiments hoping to speed up their departure, but the situation rapidly deteriorated when the citizens realized that the remaining troops were not leaving. Several major incidents of violence occurred, and the troops could no longer preserve "law and order." Instead they were reduced to attempting military rule. This attempt failed, and Boston, united behind Sam Adams, was completely out of their control.

With the escalation in tension and increasing violence, the shooting on the night of March 5, 1770, seemed like the confrontation for which everyone had been waiting. However, after close examination of the trial of the British soldiers accused of firing at the citizens, there seemed to be an element of organization in the event. Sam Adams's role in the Boston Sons of Liberty, as well as his writings and newspaper, demonstrated his devotion to the revolution

ary cause. This would make him a clear suspect if one were attempting to prove that the Boston Massacre had been planned. There was also the unidentified man in the red cloak at Dock Square the night of the massacre, and the unusual pair of John Adams and Josiah Quincy as the lawyers who defended the soldiers. By looking into these circumstances, Sam Adams's role in instigating the Boston Massacre becomes clear.

British officials in Boston postponed the trial of the British soldiers until late November and early December of 1770. They hoped that the citizens would not be as agitated, and that the soldiers could receive a fair trial. Sam Adams did his best to keep the massacre in the newspapers, but the situation in Boston was somewhat relaxed by the removal of the troops.

John Adams and Josiah Quincy were the lawyers defending the soldiers, which seemed odd since they were both involved in revolutionary activities in Boston. However, John Adams was none other than Sam Adams's cousin, and Sam had impressed the idea of defending the troops onto John. The lawyers interviewed over a hundred people, but there were seven who were of particular interest when trying to establish the identity of the man in the red cloak. On the night of March 5, 1770, these men were at the home of William Hunter, who had a balcony that overlooked Dock Square where the man was spotted. The men were in the house when David Mitchelson came in and asked why everyone was inside when there was such a disturbance in the street. Everyone went to the balcony to see what all the excitement was about, and they found a large gathering in the street.

At the trial, the seven men gave mostly the same story, but five of them saw something unusual. Archibald Wilson was the first of the group to be called to the stand by the defense. He made no mention of a man in a red cloak stirring up the crowd. William Hunter, when called to the stand by Josiah Quincy, brought up the gentleman in the red cloak. Hunter said that the people "gathered round him, and he stood in the middle of them, and they were all very quiet; he spoke to them a little while and then he went off, and they took off their hats and gave three cheers for the Main Guard."¹⁵

¹⁵ *The Trial of the British Soldiers of the 29th Regiment of Foot, for the Murder of Crispus Attacks, Samuel Gray, Samuel Mervett, James Caldwell, and Patrick Carr, on Monday Evening, March 5, 1770, before the Honorable Benjamin Lynde, John Cushing, Peter Oliver, and Edmund Trowbridge, Esquires, Justices of the Superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize, and General Goal Delivery, Held at Boston, by Adjournment, November 27, 1770* (Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing, 1969), 47.

¹³ Zobel, 94.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

After Hunter volunteered this information, Josiah Quincy asked if the man was short or tall, and about how he was dressed. Hunter said that he was "pretty tall," and that he had on a "white wig and red cloak, and after his talking a few minutes to them, they made huzzas for the Main Guard."¹⁶ This was the end of his testimony, and David Mitchelson took the witness stand next. After Mitchelson explained the events in the street that he saw from Hunter's balcony, Josiah Quincy asked Mitchelson if he saw a man in a red cloak and white wig. Mitchelson said that he did, and "he made a considerable figure there."¹⁷ Quincy asked if the people were paying attention to what the man said. Mitchelson said yes, but that he could not hear what the man said however "after he had harangued them about three minutes, they huzzad for the Main Guard."¹⁸

The next person of the group called was James Selkirk, and he included the man in the red cloak in his explanation of the events in the street. He gave the same version as the other two witnesses, saying that the people gathered around a "large man, with a red cloak and white wig," and that after he spoke "they gave some different cheers for the Main Guard." Josiah Quincy did not ask him any questions about the man.¹⁹ Archibald Bowman also described the man in the red cloak and white wig in his recollection of the events. Josiah Quincy asked him how many people were talking to the man, and Bowman said that he did not know how many, but that "there was a great number."²⁰

William Dixon was the last of the group to testify, but he did not mention the man in the red cloak. Nor did Quincy ask him about whom he saw.²¹ David Michaelson was the other person to see the man in the red cloak, but for some reason he did not testify even though he was interviewed by John Adams.²² The evidence that these men gave about the man in the red cloak went no further than their testimony. None of the men revealed what the man in the red cloak said or who he was. It seemed as though whatever the man said provoked the crowd into attacking the Main Guard where the massacre occurred, and if this man had such an influence on creating this feeling in the crowd then John

16 *Ibid.*, 47.

17 *Ibid.*, 48.

18 *Ibid.*, 48.

19 *Ibid.*, 50.

20 *Ibid.*, 51.

21 *Ibid.*, 51.

22 L. Kinvin Wroth and Hillier B. Zobel, eds., *Legal Papers of John Adams, Cases 63 & 64: The Boston Massacre Trials* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1965), 174.

Adams and Josiah Quincy should have used this to prove that the soldiers were only defending themselves against an angry provoked mob. They did not even mention the man in their closing arguments, but one of the judges, Peter Oliver, did make special mention of this mysterious man in his message to the jury. He said:

James Selkirk, with three others, say, that before the bells rang they saw, not far from Murray's barracks, a large number armed with different weapons; some of them say nigh two hundred; that some of the people had been repulsed from the barracks, and after that, a tall man with a red cloak and white wig talked to these people, who listened to him and then huzzad for the Main Guard. I cannot but make this observation on the tall man with a red cloak and white wig, that whoever he was, if the huzzing for the Main Guard and then attacking the soldiers, was the consequence of his speech to the people, that tall man is guilty in the sight of God, of the murder of the five persons mentioned in the indictment, and although he may never be brought to a court of justice here, yet, unless he speedily flies to the city of refuge, the Supreme Avenger of innocent blood will surely overtake him.²³

The judge seems to have thought that this man was extremely important to the case since he felt that God would punish him for his supposed inflammatory words. After hearing all of the arguments, the jury found six of the soldiers to be not guilty and two guilty of manslaughter because it had been proven that they had actually fired.

The speculation about the man in the red cloak went beyond the trial, though, and into Sam Adams's favorite outlet of propaganda, the newspaper. A Tory writer in the *Evening Post*, published by Loyalist Mr. Draper, claimed to have proof that the man in the red cloak was Sam Adams. During the trial, the newspaper threatened to publish the evidence of Adams's guilt.²⁴ Sam Adams replied to this statement in the *Boston Gazette* with an article signed "Vindex." Adams denied the charge, and desired the Tory writer "would explain himself." He said that for the sake of "truth" the identity of the person in the red cloak should be revealed if Mr. Draper knew it. Vindex said that "whether he (the man in the red cloak) gave them good or ill advice, or any advice at all, we may possibly form some conjecture concerning it, when his person is ascertained. The sooner it is done the better."²⁵ Mr. Draper hinted that the man in the red cloak was a person in public office because of his dress. The red cloak and

23 *The Trial of the British Soldiers*, 117.

24 William V. Wells, ed., *The Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams, Being a Narrative of His Acts and Opinions, and of His Agency in Producing and Forwarding the American Revolution*, vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1865), 312.

25 *Boston Gazette*, 24 December 1770.

white wig were frequently worn by men at the time, and there were many men in and out of public office that would have liked to have seen the soldiers removed from Boston.

Many of the witnesses also said that the man in the red cloak was a tall man. Sam Adams, however, was not a tall man, so if Mr. Draper was looking for a tall man who held public office in Boston who wore a white wig and red cloak, he should have considered John Hancock. There was no mention of Hancock at the trial or in the newspapers. Hancock, who was tall, would have just as much reason to entice revolutionary actions as Sam Adams.²⁶ Hancock, regarding the incident with his ship the Liberty, had just as much reason to hate the British, and he was in town the night of March 5, 1770. Perhaps Adams asked Hancock to go to Dock Square because Hancock would better manipulate the mob into attacking the Main Guard. It would seem more likely that the two were acting together since planning a massacre was no easy task.

There was also an anonymous letter in the Boston News-Letter that said that the "person in a red Cloak declared by some of the Witnesses to have been very busy at the Beginning of the Tragedy will be ascertained, if Vindex and his Adherents desire it."²⁷ This suggests that Vindex, one of Sam Adams's many pseudonyms, knew the identity of the person in the red cloak, and could reveal it if he chose.

Who was the man in the red cloak and white wig? Circumstantial evidence would tend to point to Sam Adams. From the beginning of the unrest, Adams had played an active role in opposing troops in Boston and British rule in general. The perfect way to force the British to remove the troops from the town was to stir up enough trouble that the British had no choice. Most certainly Adams would not have liked to see any of his fellow Bostonians killed, but if it would get the troops removed then it would have been for a just cause. Adams just might have thought that harassed troops would respond just enough so that they would have to be removed from Boston.

The evening of March 5, 1770, was the perfect opportunity to cause trouble. There were many people in the streets, and a public figure like Adams would have no trouble taking control of the situation and motivating the mob. Conveniently, there was a large gathering away from where the troops were so that the people could be organized without any British official noticing. The

²⁶ Wells, 313.

²⁷ Boston News-Letter, 12 December 1770.

massacre might not have happened if the Main Guard had not been overwhelmed by the mob that was in front of them and the mob coming from Dock Square.

Also, the church bells were calling out patriots not only in Boston that evening but in nearby Charlestown and Roxbury at the same time.²⁸ Sam Adams could have called upon the Sons of Liberty in these towns to show their support for the people in Boston by ringing the church bells. Clearly, Sam Adams was in the position to have this sort of influence in Boston and the surrounding area.

The speculation of who the man in the red cloak was and what his motives were goes beyond the night of the massacre and into the trial later that year. At the trial, several witnesses mentioned the man in the red cloak. But the lawyers never followed up on the identity of the man. In fact, they never even asked the witnesses if they recognized the man. This seemed extremely odd considering that even one of the judges found the man in the red cloak important enough to mention in his message to the jury. If the man in the red cloak organized the people to attack the Main Guard, then the lawyers should have used this information to prove that the soldiers were merely defending themselves.

Someone must have recognized the man, especially since his dress was that of a public figure, but perhaps they had reason to conceal his identity. John David Michaelson saw the man in the red cloak, but did not testify. John Adams and Josiah Quincy might not have wanted Michaelson to reveal the identity of the man.

Furthermore, Sam Adams had first approached John Adams and Josiah Quincy about defending the soldiers. Perhaps Sam Adams knew that the two lawyers would help him hide the fact that he was in Dock Square trying to influence the mob there.²⁹ There would be few other reasons for Sam Adams to be interested in providing a superior defense for the soldiers unless he had something personal at stake. John Adams knew that the town's witnesses should and would not be thoroughly questioned because what they said could prove that the Bostonians were responsible for the massacre.³⁰ At stake was

²⁸ Miller, Sam Adams, 186.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 184-185.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.

not only the reputation of the city in general, but that of Sam Adams and the Boston Whigs in particular. John Adams did not press the witnesses during questioning. Of course, none of the citizens interviewed were actually in Dock Square and heard what the man in the red cloak said. Had any of these witnesses been called to the stand, they could have testified to the nature of the speech and possibly the man's identity.

Why did Judge Oliver rhetorically denounce the man in the red cloak, saying he was guilty in the eyes of God for the murder of five men on March 5, 1770? Sam Adams was seldom absent from the courtroom during the trial. Perhaps the judge's message was not intended for the jury, but for certain spectators in the courtroom.

The reaction of Sam Adams to the articles printed in a Tory newspaper showed his concern with the issue of the identity of the man in the red cloak. Perhaps Sam Adams was so concerned because the information that the Tory writer would reveal was something that Adams did not want the public to know. A later writer claimed that the identity of the man in the red cloak would be revealed if Sam Adams and his followers would allow it. This suggested that Adams knew the identity of the man even if it were not he. Adams was doing everything that he could in the courtroom and in the newspapers to keep secret the identity of the man in the red cloak.

Clearly, the Boston Massacre was much more complicated than some British soldiers firing at innocent Bostonians. An abundance of evidence suggests that the event was planned, including the ringing of the church bells, the man in Dock Square at the perfect moment, and even the selection of the lawyers. Sam Adams can be connected to most of that evidence. Most importantly, his past political views suggested that he had motive. He was one of the very first to suggest that the Bostonians rid themselves of the troops, and he was one of the first to suggest the use of force. A massacre was exactly what Sam Adams needed to get the troops out of Boston. If the man in the red cloak were not Sam Adams, the evidence suggested that it was someone close to him. Sam Adams remains the prime suspect for instigating the Boston Massacre.

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VENUS ON THE FIELD OF MARS: VICE AND MILITARY/CIVIL RELATIONS AT CHANUTE FIELD DURING WORLD WAR II.¹

Adelheid Napier

"Don't shoot 'em; Chanute 'em" was often heard by men assigned to Chanute Field in the early years of the camp's existence. After a quick birth and growth spurt amid World War I, the Army Air Field located 15 miles north of Champaign experienced a rapid decline, leaving a hollow shell of a military encampment. Considering assignment to Chanute the equivalent of punishment, military men regarded this isolated camp adjacent to the tiny village of Rantoul (population 1600) as the closest thing to "Siberia."² In 1938 this situation changed. Due to the distant threat of war and an allotment from the Works Progress Administration, Chanute underwent a "Great Renaissance." After a renovation totaling \$13.8 million, Chanute Field emerged, months before Pearl Harbor, the second largest Army Air Force technical training center in the United States.³ A camp which once housed 2,000 soldiers in 1938 quickly expanded to 17,500 by 1941.⁴ At its peak in 1944, Chanute Field boasted a population of 23,000 soldiers.⁵ While the base was still geographically isolated, assignment to Chanute no longer appeared an exile to the nether regions.

It is commonly thought that large numbers of soldiers prove attractive to the practice of prostitution, which is often linked to the infection rate of venereal disease. Though it increased in size, Chanute experienced a lower rate of venereal disease than other camps during World War II. Likewise, the neighboring towns achieved a high degree of success in the prosecution of prostitutes. These achievements can be attributed to the coordinated efforts of the military command at Chanute and the local communities. Together they worked to decrease the rate of venereal disease and prostitution through health measures, law enforcement, and providing the soldier on leave alternative

recreation.

Civilian and military authorities predicted potential problems from the start of the expansion program. Local newspapers outlined the need for additional policemen, claiming that as "soldiers and civilians mingle together in greater numbers all the time, some trouble is bound to pop up now and then. It just can't be helped."⁶ The threat of an increase in prostitution with a subsequent rise in the rate of venereal disease concerned both the civilian and military populace.

Historical precedent triggered alarm in the United States Army concerning this issue. During World War I, as the Army increased, so did the venereal disease rate, with over 338,000 cases and seven million service days lost.⁷ Since 1939, Great Britain experienced an increase in the rate of syphilis due to war time conditions, and the Army believed that America would follow suit if it did not act early to combat the situation. Congress reacted quickly to these reports by appropriating \$6.2 million in July of 1940 to fight venereal disease around military camps.⁸

Congressional funding had no impact on soldiers' access to prostitutes. Camp regulations allowed soldiers with leave to travel within a 150-mile radius of the duty station. Nearby cities of Champaign and Urbana reported the expansion of prostitution rings to accommodate the anticipated volume of business arriving from Chanute Field.⁹ This upsurge in business often originated from out of state. Within one two-week period, recent arrivals from surrounding states accounted for over half of the arrests. Two admitted prostitutes, arrested for vagrancy, moved to the Champaign area from Biloxi, Mississippi, claiming that "their best customers were soldiers."¹⁰

Other vice reports cited hotels in the Champaign-Urbana area operating as brothels, even providing the soldiers with civilian clothes to change into upon arrival in an attempt to hinder discovery by police and military authorities. Likewise, "The Casanova Hotel", a group of cabins located on the outskirts of town, provided rentals to soldiers for trysts with prostitutes. Even the taxi drivers, ferrying soldiers to and from the Field and about town, profited from the situation. Soldiers relied on the drivers to locate prostitutes in town or

provide one in the front seat of the cab.¹¹

To the military and local communities, prostitution equated venereal disease. Public health pamphlets proclaimed prostitution the "most prolific source of infection."¹² After Pearl Harbor, the Army's syphilis infection rate rose over 200%, with gonorrhea rates climbing approximately 140%.¹³ At Chanute Field, the incidence varied from year to year and remained an ever present problem to the command and the local communities. While in 1941 the rate of infection at Chanute was below that of the Army on a whole, the base experienced a steady climb as the war progressed.¹⁴ During the year 1942, 7 to 18 men with venereal disease appeared for every group of one thousand men at the camp.¹⁵ By the end of the war in 1945, the rate increased to an average of 41.3 per 1000 per annum.¹⁶ The year 1944 reported an all time peak of 133 per 1000.¹⁷

Answering the question of how to combat both the rise in venereal disease and prostitution required approaches from various angles. Theorizing that "the most effective method of reducing the increasing venereal disease rate is by the repression of prostitution", Congress reinstated the May Act in June of 1941.¹⁸ This act made prostitution within close proximity of military training bases a federal offense. However, the May Act involved a long process before any Federal action against the offending area took place. Only after a series of warnings, surveys, and probationary periods, would the War Department finally take action.¹⁹ Despite the use in other areas, this act was never instituted in Illinois, rendering it useless for the people at Chanute Field in their fight against prostitution. To combat the venereal disease rate, the U.S. Army also appointed special medical officers to any camp with a population of 20,000 or more. This officer worked with civil authorities in the fight against an increasing infection rate.²⁰

The command at Chanute Field approached the prostitution/venereal disease problem vigorously with assorted tactics. The venereal disease control officer regularly presented sex morality lectures to the troops.²¹ The medical department published a venereal disease bulletin and distributed it among military personnel.²² Upon discovery that over 90% of all infected soldiers did not utilize any prophylactic measures, the Army made these devices more

readily available.²³ Condoms were distributed freely. At the war's height, five "pro" stations remained open at Chanute 24 hours a day, providing prophylactic kits to any who requested them.²⁴ These kits contained injections and cleaning substances for the exposed areas. When the base stations were not open, prophylaxis kits were distributed at the guard gates immediately upon entering the camp or throughout the local communities at railway and bus depots.²⁵

Additionally, the command at Chanute requested assistance from nearby towns to aid in combating prostitution and found the local authorities more than willing to oblige. Conferences were held with local police and health officers in the cities of Champaign, Danville, Mattoon, and Charleston, asking for their cooperation in the camp's endeavors against prostitution and venereal disease.²⁶ Representatives from the Field met with local tavern owners in Champaign, Urbana and Rantoul to ask them to regulate alcohol consumption by soldiers and curb prostitution. With local agreement, Chanute dispatched military policemen to walk the neighborhoods of nearby towns, in the hope that their mere presence would dissuade potential vice activities.²⁷ When a city showed evidence of uncontrolled vice conditions, the command at Chanute closed the area to soldiers on leave. In January of 1942, Bloomington found itself off limits to Chanute men after ten infected soldiers returned from a December holiday in the red light district.²⁸ Of the 48 cases reported that month, 13 had originated in Bloomington. This prompted the command to forbid travel to Bloomington, even for soldiers who resided there, until the city "clean(ed) its skirts."²⁹ A year later, the Army called for a clean up of the vice conditions in Danville and proclaimed it off limits to soldiers on leave.³⁰ Both cities immediately took action and the Army lifted the bans within months.³¹

State and local authorities quickly devised their own methods to deal with the problem. Designating a week in February as Social Hygiene Week, state authorities distributed films, pamphlets and other material to instruct the civilian populace of the dangers of venereal disease.³² Champaign-Urbana was one of the many local health departments in Illinois which offered free treatment for the infected.³³ Representatives from the State Public Health department met with Champaign County police officers and the mayors of Champaign

and Urbana to formulate a line of attack against prostitution and the rising venereal disease rate.³⁴

Local police forces aggressively fought prostitution from every angle. At a meeting with the local taxi drivers, police officials warned of pandering charges if caught carrying prostitutes. Likewise, these charges would result in the revocation of their taxi licenses.³⁵ Severe fines and the maximum prison sentences became the normal procedure when prostitutes faced prosecution.³⁶ To garner these arrests, the authorities even attempted to enlist soldiers from the Field in an entrapment scheme.³⁷ During the height of the war, over 65% of prostitutes infecting Chanute men faced prosecution, proving the efforts of the authorities moderately successful.³⁸

While state, local and military officials concentrated on the hygiene and legal aspects of venereal disease and prostitution, the citizens of the nearby communities joined forces with the camp in order to provide wholesome recreational alternatives to a trip to the red light district for a soldier's recreation time. Along with the usual Officers' Club and Non-Commissioned Officers' Club, the Field soon boasted a Service Center. Eager to make the Center a success, the grand opening offered free cigarettes to attendees, a strong inducement to soldiers. The Center also offered shows featuring magicians, jugglers, and ventriloquists.³⁹ In the hope that religion would prove persuasive in the fight against vice, the camp quickly erected five new chapels, offering services in mainline religious denominations.⁴⁰ If the soldiers found their religious needs unfulfilled by the camp's services, the First Methodist Church in Rantoul often reminded them that the door to its chapel remained open seven days a week. On each holiday, the Church planned events and published an open invitation to the soldiers at Chanute.⁴¹

Along with attempts to fill the spiritual needs of the soldiers, the community and the camp sought to offer activities geared towards personal improvement. The camp boasted a rigorous and varied athletic program, featuring softball and bowling leagues, basketball, fencing and boxing.⁴² The Rantoul Methodist Church offered art lessons to the men, while the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana created an off-duty education program, with

classes in Algebra, Spanish, German and Rhetoric.⁴³

The entertainment needs of the soldiers at Chanute proved trickier to fill. The Field housed such a large population that the camp and local establishments found it impossible to provide entertainment for all who desired it. Thus, the community clamored for the creation of local United Service Organizations (U.S.O.) Cantens. By the end of 1941, through cooperation of federal authorities, the local communities of Champaign and Rantoul each erected a U.S.O. building.⁴⁴ These institutions proved so popular that by mid 1942, another U.S.O. cropped up in Rantoul and Urbana built its own in 1943.⁴⁵ These institutions provided such wholesome activities as checker meets, community sing alongs, theater groups, and the chance to record vocal messages for the folks back home.

Through both military and community efforts, the men of Chanute Field had ample opportunities for entertainment to fill the off hours without resorting to a trip to the red light district. Four U.S.O.s, two camp theaters, a library of over 10,000 books, a sports program, educational opportunities, religious services, and a never ending calendar of shows and events awaited the soldier with a few free hours.⁴⁶ However, while these opportunities provided the soldiers with activities to fill the vacant hours they did not provide the female companionship the men sought. As one observer noted, "Tiddlywinks is no substitute for a girl."⁴⁷ The local authorities soon recognized the need to provide the soldiers with a social life which included members of the opposite sex. Once again, the local communities enthusiastically stepped in to fill this need.

The chief device used to satisfy this need was weekly U.S.O. dances. Girls from the neighboring communities of Danville, Champaign, Urbana, Mattoon and Charleston volunteered to board buses and spend their evenings dancing and conversing with Chanute soldiers at the various U.S.O. clubs.⁴⁸ For those unschooled in the art of dancing, the local YMCA provided ballroom dance lessons, encouraging the soldier to take part in the fun to be had at a U.S.O. dance.⁴⁹ The U.S.O. issued invitations to the same women to attend other organized functions such as "down-on-the-farm" picnics, boating activities and moonlight hayrides.⁵⁰ The ice skating rink at the University of Illinois opened its doors to the soldiers of Chanute every Sunday night and issued invitations to the girls of the community to join them.⁵¹ Even the Army sponsored rest camp set up

at Decatur allowed women to join the soldiers for recreation.⁵²

To head off potential predicaments caused by the appearance of the "wrong sort" of girl at these functions, local communities carefully interviewed each girl.⁵³ Evidence of strong morals allowed approved women seats on the bus to any social event attended by soldiers. After passing the interview, the women still found themselves subject to rules regarding their contact with the G.I.s. Geared towards discouraging the development of attachments between the soldiers and the women they danced with, these rules included the number of dances allowed with one person and forbade any close contact.⁵⁴ These measures attempted to eliminate the possibility that the activities planned to curb the venereal disease rate might actually contribute to it.

While venereal disease and prostitution still remained an ever present problem at Chanute Field, as it did around every war-time encampment, the military authorities and local communities did meet with a reasonable level of achievement. Success was a result of the cooperative efforts between the two factions. Local and State Health Departments combined efforts with military health officials to make available every possible means to combat venereal disease. Local law enforcement officers coordinated with the military command in an attempt to annihilate the practice of prostitution in the nearby communities. In order to provide the soldiers with alternatives, the nearby towns wholeheartedly embraced the soldiers of Chanute and invited them to become a part of their communities. The townspeople eagerly invited the men to anything they had to offer. At holidays, more families issued invitations to dinner than there were men to attend.⁵⁵ What communities lacked to offer the soldiers, they quickly created, such as the U.S.O.s. During World War II, Chanute Field boasted the lowest venereal disease rate of any Army field in the United States.⁵⁶ While they did not meet with complete success, the military and civil authorities, along with the citizens of the local communities, were doing something right.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ryan Blankenship, a graduate student in American history, here reviews a new volume on the hotly debated script of the scuttled Enola Gay exhibit for the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum.

JUDGEMENT AT THE SMITHSONIAN.

Edited by Philip Noble. (New York: Marlowe and Company, 1995). Pp. 269, \$12.95.

The attempts to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—the event that allegedly ended the "Good War"—generated no small amount of cultural conflict. The much-debated Smithsonian exhibit was scheduled to feature the Enola Gay, coupled with a script providing a contextual analysis of the decision to drop it. But it was scrapped in January 1995 by the Institute due to pressure from Congress, the military, and various veterans' groups. Museum curators were chastised by claims that their attempts to analyze the bomb outside of the popular and patriotic "Hiroshima narrative" were grossly "pro-Japanese" and "anti-American." For Congress and the American Legion, merely examining the bomb and its possible negative aspects were out of the question.

The "Hiroshima narrative" contends that the bomb was necessary, wise and just largely because it saved "over a million American lives," and Japanese lives as well, by eliminating the need for a mainland invasion. Conversely, much of post-war scholarship has criticized the Truman administration for hastily using the bomb when other options were available. Many contend that casualty estimates were inflated, an invasion was not necessary for a Japanese surrender, and that the bomb was strategically used to intimidate the Russians and curb the Soviet sphere of influence in the post-war world.

Judgement at the Smithsonian, edited by Philip Noble, is a clear attempt to revive the debate concerning "the generally untold story behind the Bombs of August."¹ The book includes the original and controversial Smithsonian script, "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War," which was ultimately shelved in favor of the insubstantial exhibit

currently on display. The script is sandwiched between two essays sympathetic to the Smithsonian cause: a gratuitous assault by Noble and a more judicious analysis by Stanford history professor Barton J. Bernstein.

The "Crossroads" text is divided into five units. Unit Five, "The Legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki" briefly summarizes the Cold War and the nuclear arms race. The third unit, "Delivering the Bomb" is a lethargic narrative describing the technical preparations of the B-29 crews and their training—a sharp contrast to the style and content of the apparent polemics contained in Units One, Two and Four.

Unit One, "A Fight to the Finish," describes the source of the Japanese-American conflict, citing both military and cultural reasons. More important, it personifies the contemporary debate over political correctness and patriotic correctness, largely because 70 percent of the Smithsonian's operating budget comes from federal funding. Many of the anti-exhibit groups were infuriated over one passage in particular:

For most Americans, this war was fundamentally different than the one waged against Germany and Italy—it was a war of vengeance. For most Japanese it was a war to defend their unique culture against Western imperialism.²

This passage, quoted crudely out of context by many public officials, became contentious copy for pundits obviously unacquainted with the entire "Crossroads" text. The approach taken by some members of the opinion elite smacked of McCarthy-era commentary. John Leo's October 10 article in *U.S. News and World Report* (which was read verbatim in Congress), using only the above passage, charged that "the same dark vision of America as arrogant, oppressive, racist, and destructive increasingly runs through the Smithsonian complex."³

Other uninformed journalists followed suit. Jeff Jacoby of the *Boston Globe* was simply perplexed: "Western imperialism? It was not the Westerners who ... invaded Manchuria, Malaya and the Philippines, devastated Nanking, mass-raped Korea's young women, bombed Pearl Harbor and conducted the Bataan death march."⁴ Jacoby and others failed to do their homework. In the "Cross-

2 Noble, 3.

3 *Congressional Record*, October 6, 1994.

4 Noble, xxxv.

roads" text, the paragraphs above the "infamous passage" anticipates Jacoby's criticism:

Japanese expansionism was marked by naked aggression and extreme brutality. The slaughter of tens of thousands of Chinese in Nanking in 1937 shocked the world. Atrocities by Japanese troops included brutal mistreatment of civilians, forced laborers and prisoners of war, and biological experiments on human victims.

In December of 1941, Japan attacked U.S. bases at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and launched other surprise assaults against Allied territories in the Pacific. Thus began a wider conflict marked by extreme bitterness. For most Americans...

Congressional attitudes and arguments paralleled those of Jacoby and Leo, underscoring their shared ignorance—and perhaps their version of the truth. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kansas) remarked on the Senate floor, "The United States Code states that 'the Smithsonian Institution shall commemorate and display contributions made by the military forces of the nation toward creating, developing and maintaining a free, peaceful and independent society and culture'... the current script for the important exhibit is seriously flawed and should be rewritten."⁵ Perhaps it is the futile search to find something heroic in an atomic bombing that made any analytical exhibit unworthy in the eyes of Congress.

Particularly problematic is Unit 2, "The Decision to Drop the Bomb." One would be hard pressed to argue against any measure that saved the lives of "a million American soldiers." This figure, which has been used to justify the bomb, originally came from Henry Stimson, Truman's secretary of war, in a Harper's article in 1947. A decade ago, Barton Bernstein published an article challenging this number with the use of secret military documents from the Joint War Plans Committee. Bernstein's scholarship revealed that "in June of 1945, while the Okinawa battle was winding down, U.S. military planners estimated that, at most, 46,000 might die in the various possible invasions of Japan."⁶

In opposition, William M. Detweiler, National Commander of the American Legion, wrote to President Clinton arguing the exhibit's position indicates that the "hundreds of thousands of American boys whose lives were spared ... were purchased at the price of treachery and revenge."⁸ One of those lives spared was

5 Noble, 3.

6 Congressional Record.

7 Noble, xxiv.

8 Noble, xlii.

that of literary critic Paul Fussell, whose essay, "Thank God for the Atomic Bomb—A Soldier's View" argued that only the combatants themselves could be the true moral judges of the bomb.

Unit Four, "Ground Zero," emphasizes the lives that were not spared. The issue of "pro-Japanese" and "anti-American" content in the exhibit's material was raised again because many of the pictures and much of the text underscored the sufferings of Japanese bomb victims. Especially graphic depictions included photos of childrens' lunchboxes and ashes of vaporized bodies. Many complained that there were hardly any pictures of American dead, wounded or POWs who suffered in Japanese war camps. The reason, though, is that there were virtually no American casualties in the Hiroshima or Nagasaki bombings. While there are many complaints about a lack of balance in the exhibit, one fact remains clear: Unit 3 is devoted entirely to the crews who dropped the bomb from above. Unit 4 is devoted entirely to those who suffered on the ground.

Noble's essay fails to emphasize this point, but does a good job synthesizing the pro and con arguments surrounding the bomb. Not unlike Bernstein, he notes that distinguished Americans such as John Foster Dulles, McGeorge Bundy, Dwight Eisenhower, former President Herbert Hoover and Douglas McArthur all opposed the bomb. Noble's essay aptly makes an important point: There is more to the bomb than its diplomatic and military aspects. There is also the waging of a "cultural war" in the America of the 1990s that did not exist at the war's end. However, Noble's essay becomes less compelling when he plays devil's advocate by putting Truman on trial for war crimes, constructing an unfitting morality play convicting Truman as an arch-criminal. Furthermore, he equates the atomic bombings with the Holocaust, which only serves to trivialize the latter.

Bernstein's scholarly critique is much more tactful and controlled. He carefully synthesizes the historiography of each issue surrounding the bomb. He attacks historian Gar Alperovitz's thesis on "atomic diplomacy," suggesting that any curbing of Soviet power was a "bonus" rather than a primary reason for the bomb. He also notes that although prominent Americans (Eisenhower, Hoover, etc.) opposed the bomb, virtually all of them refrained from public criticism.

5 Noble, 3.

6 Congressional Record.

7 Noble, xxiv.

8 Noble, xlii.

Most criticism came in the form of post-war memoirs. While Bernstein agrees with the "Crossroads" text and laments its shelving, he, unlike Nobile, ends on a positive note:

The very clash over the canceled NASM (National Air and Space Museum) exhibit may, ironically, spark a heightened interest in the issues of A-bomb history. Perhaps more Americans will become curious about the A-bomb event...[and] why it is being challenged in the mid-1990s.⁹

In 1945, had a bombing celebration taken place, the Enola Gay undoubtedly would have been ushered down Madison Avenue if possible. In the wake of the Vietnam debacle, there has been a clear change of emphasis. Bernstein believes that the decision to drop the bomb was, more or less, not a decision at all. With \$2 billion spent on a project Truman inherited from the Roosevelt years, and a desire to end the war at all costs, it seemed almost inevitable.

Any change in the interpretation of history will not change history itself, only its perception by different generations. A lasting resolution to the debate over use of the bomb, like many other historical controversies—the slaughter of Native Americans and the nature of slavery leap to mind—may have to wait until those whose lives were directly touched by the event are no longer around to contest its morality.

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Graduate student *Chris Sundheim* reviews below a new book on the Lewis and Clark expedition during 1804–1806.

UNDAUNTED COURAGE: MERIWETHER LEWIS, THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE OPENING OF THE AMERICAN WEST.

By Stephen E. Ambrose. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Pp. 511, \$27.50.

In a nation linked by interstate highways, fiber-optic cable, railroads, air traffic, radio waves, satellite signals, and the seemingly limitless Internet, most Americans today can scarcely picture a United States at the turn of the early 19th century, when St. Louis stood as the westernmost beacon of civilization. Few people then could say what lay beyond the Mississippi: scattered Indian communities, a largely uncharted mountain range and, somewhere still further west, the Pacific coast.

It was with barely more information than this that Meriwether Lewis and William Clark began their intrepid journey from St. Louis to the ocean and back. Stephen Ambrose, in this absorbing new volume on America's most celebrated explorers, takes readers along for what was surely the most important hike in U.S. history. The ride is exhilarating.

Ironically, Lewis's contemporaries could be forgiven for viewing the expedition as a failure. President Jefferson had sent the team with orders to follow the Missouri River in hopes of finding the elusive Northwest Passage, an all-water route across the continent. Jefferson hoped discovery of this new passage would help create a lucrative American trade network, which would end the British monopoly, help assimilate the Indians and prepare the area for eventual white settlement.

But ultimately, of course, it is what they saw and recorded, not what they didn't find, that endears Lewis and Clark to our national memory. Their story is epic. Exploring the newly purchased Louisiana Territory, they were the first Americans to realize the full reach of the North American continent. They were naturalists, diplomats, cartographers and outright adventurers. And they did more than any other frontiersmen to enhance knowledge of the trans-Mississippi West. This is never far from Ambrose's mind, so he is deeply enamored of these two, if occasionally overindulgent in his hero worship.

⁹ Nobile, 240.

The center of this book is the expedition itself. Ambrose, after outlining Lewis' youth, sets about writing a month-by-month account of the journey. Over two-and-a-half years between 1804 and 1806, the 30-man Corps of Discovery paddled, walked and rode more than 4,000 miles. Ambrose's account is a painstaking recreation of all the attendant triumphs and hardships: witnessing the sprawling herds of buffalo and the immense, untouched Western landscape; negotiating through tense encounters with previously unknown tribes; surviving near-fatal meetings with grizzly bears; making the arduous push over the mountains in a late spring blizzard.

The author's masterful storytelling is this book's strongest asset. He is unsparing in details, most culled from Lewis and Clark's published journals. We hear of sleeping on a cold, wet river bank after a 20- or 30-mile hike and about the expedition's dreadfully monotonous all-meat diet, including meals of dog and horse. The enlisted men, Ambrose reminds us, were likely constant sufferers of venereal disease acquired from liaisons with Indian women. And the most valued item in the corps' reserves was surely the 120 gallons of whiskey considered essential for the men's endurance.

But there is also the thrill of discovery. Lewis and Clark recorded the first observation by Americans of the prairie dog, the pronghorn antelope and 120 other new species of animals, plus 178 new plants. They were the first white men to brave the rapids of the upper Missouri, the first to cross the Continental Divide. Ambrose describes the breathtaking sights with the senses of a novelist. Long fascinated by the Lewis and Clark cult, he has spent many family vacations retracing their steps through the Northern Plains states. The first-hand experience is reflected in vivid, evocative prose.

An important second theme lies in the figure of Jefferson himself. More than any other federal official, his unflagging interest in the West was the genesis of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It was Jefferson, Ambrose argues, who deserves the lion's share of credit for pursuing the Louisiana Purchase and promoting development of its vast acreage. One should recall that Louisiana was widely ridiculed by Federalists as a foolish purchase of ground thought to be mostly desert and untillable wasteland.

Jefferson and Lewis had a close relationship starting in Lewis's late teenage years. Both were loyal Virginians and hailed from the same planter-class social background. Lewis was Jefferson's personal secretary for several years prior to the expedition and lived with him in the President's House (it was not called the

White House until after the War of 1812). Under the president's tutelage, he received much of the scientific training needed to complete the expedition's natural history survey of flora and fauna. Jefferson's enthusiasm for such intellectual endeavors proved infectious. Much of it rubbed off on Lewis, who committed himself to learning the president's keen observation skills. His captivating journal entries are filled with the musings of an amateur botanist/zoologist schooled in the language of the Enlightenment.

Jefferson's orders were carefully worded to suggest an expedition to satisfy scientific curiosity. And yet implicit were other, more self-interested national goals. Jefferson wanted Lewis and his men to be the American advance team, informing Indians of their new White Father in Washington and promoting American trade prospects. They scouted for potential trading-post sites and told tribes that U.S. leaders had great wealth to share with Indians who cooperated and great power to deal harshly with those who did not. Ambrose sees in these tactics the seeds of American imperialism. Other thinly veiled material objectives were to lay some form of claim to the land, especially territory west of the Divide, and to sell the American public on the promise of an American empire that staddled the continent.

Ambrose's exceptional balance also is reflected in his assessment of Lewis and Jefferson's attitudes toward Indians. Both men admired most Indians and hoped someday they might be integrated into the American populace. Indian help, on more than one occasion, saved the expedition from ruin. Sacagawea, a 15-year-old Shoshone girl, was critical to the team's success as a guide and an interpreter. But aggressive tribes would be answered with aggression. While on the trail, Lewis lied to Indians and stole from them once. Late in the return trip, he and his men killed several warriors who tried (as many Indians did) to steal the troops' guns.

To many history students, Lewis and Clark are simple explorers with none of the character complexity afforded larger names such as Washington or Franklin. Americans, Ambrose notes, practically think the name is "LewisandClark," a single entity with one face and one purpose. *Undaunted Courage* gives us a fully three-dimensional narrative of both the land and the men who crossed it. The high-school-text version of the expedition makes no mention of Lewis's manic-depression or his rocky political exploits as governor of Louisiana. Ambrose presents him as a genuinely tragic figure who was seemingly happy only when he was on the move. He never married, although he

desperately wanted to, and never adjusted to a life of heightened fame and new responsibilities after the expedition. Lewis was a national hero by age 30 and killed himself at 35.

Today an overland trip from the Mississippi to the Pacific coast requires little more than \$100 in gasoline and about 35 highway hours. The enormity of Lewis and Clark's achievement is almost lost in a world where communication is instant and the only unexplored frontiers are the ocean floor or outer space. Lewis himself doubted whether he had contributed to mankind's progress, as he wrote in this oft-quoted journal entry made on his 31st birthday:

I reflected that I had as yet done but little, very little indeed, to further the happiness of the human race, or to advance the information of the succeeding generation. I viewed with regret the many hours I have spent in idleness, and now sorely [sic] feel the want of that information which those hours would have given me had they been judiciously expended (280).

That, notes David Shribman in the Wall Street Journal, may have been one of Meriwether Lewis's few erroneous observations; "for in history's march, few advanced so far, learned so much, touched others so deeply—and transformed their nation so completely."