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Editors
> Amy Steadman
> Mark Hawks

Editorial Staff
> Maggie Brown
> Jessica Calendine
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> Elizabeth Smith

Faculty Advisor
> Anke Voss-Hubbard

Cover
The tree on the cover represents the old burr oak tree located just east of Old Main. The tree is a campus legend and may well be older than the University.

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Editor's Preface

This year's issue is the ninth publication of Eastern Illinois University History Department's journal *Historia*. We are quite pleased with the myriad of articles this year, encompassing both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and both the History and Historical Administration programs (and even one from the English Department). Beyond the traditional format of a print copy, we are continuing to post *Historia* on the web, and we hope many will visit us there at http://www.eiu.edu/~historia.

Other important news is that last year's publication of *Historia* won the Phi Alpha Theta, Gerald D. Nash History Journal Prize in Division I (campuses with more than 150 enrolled history majors). This prize marks *Historia* as a high-quality publication that remains close to its mission of presenting the best work of Eastern's History Department.

Due to the wonderful variety of submissions we received, this year's *Historia* contains papers that encompass a wide variety of topics. From literary and film criticism, to communal studies of the local towns of Charleston and Mattoon, to works on the Civil War and its aftermath, to personal relationship with braiding rugs, many historical currents are explored in this issue. Two Eastern History Department award winners are included. Chuck Backus received the Lavern M. Hammand Graduate Writing Award for his paper, " '. . . the example Mr. Carnegie has set:' The Philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie." And author Teresa Cribelar was awarded the Alexander Hamilton Paper Award in American History for her article, "Separate But Equal: The *Plessy* Case." Ms. Cribelar also was presented the Errett and Mazie Warner Presidential Award for her exemplary work in the Department.

Throughout this semester we the staff received much support from many, and would like to acknowledge our advisor, the dedicated Anke Voss-Hubbard. But beyond the classroom, others, like Maggie C. Brown, also contributed time and energy. But above all, we would like to thank those who submitted papers, and especially our authors who worked with us to make this a wonderful issue.

- Amy Steadman, editor

" . . . the example Mr. Carnegie has set:"
The Philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie

Chuck Backus

Chuck is a graduate student in the Historical Administration program. This paper was written for a course on the Emergence of Industrial America with Dr. Lynne Curry. This paper won this year's Lavern M. Hammand Graduate Writing Award.

In *Books and Blueprints: Building America's Public Libraries*, Donald Oehlerts examines the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie and states, "Numerous families had built libraries in their hometowns throughout the country before 1890. Carnegie's library building program was just a continuation of a trend on a grander scale."[1] If Mr. Oehlerts is correct on this point, it is only at the most superficial level. Rather, this study will attempt to show that Andrew Carnegie, already a pioneer in "big business," was also a pioneer in "big philanthropy." In addition to making charitable gifts to communities with which he was associated, Carnegie, in a marked departure from other philanthropists, expanded his field of giving to communities where he had no ties. This new manner of giving took the form of a philanthropic machine, constructed on a business model. The primary focus of this paper will rest upon the Carnegie Library program that reached hundreds of communities. This paper will attempt to identify the roots of Carnegie's philanthropic efforts and to define the evolving concept of his giving. To this end, the paper will consider the following points:

To what extent was the Homestead Strike of 1892 a motivational factor for Carnegie's philanthropic deeds?

How did the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie differ from that of other, earlier givers? What formative effects did Carnegie's efforts have on later expressions of corporate giving?

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[1] Donald Oehlerts, *Books and Blueprints: Building America's Public Libraries* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 61.

Roots of Carnegie's Giving

> There are some clues in Carnegie's early life, which shed some light on his generosity. Personally, I think his early life in Dunfermline when he was surrounded by a family of political radicals was certain to have made a great impression on him, being barred from Pittencrieff Park because of his families agitation and political leanings left him with the desire if he ever had enough money to buy the Park for the people of Dunfermline. In Allegheny gaining access to Colonel Anderson's library gave him the realisation that there was no better use for surplus money than to give libraries.[2]

The "rags to riches" story of Andrew Carnegie is a part of the collective consciousness of this nation. As a young immigrant from Dunfermline, Scotland, who rose from mill boy to millionaire in the United States, Carnegie's was a tale better suited to the pages of a Horatio Alger novel than the streets of a Pennsylvania coal town. Carnegie rarely spoke of his love of libraries without acknowledging his debt to Colonel James Anderson of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Carnegie was a "bobbin boy" in the textile mills of Pittsburgh whose imagination and leisure hours were enriched through reading. Anderson's practice of opening his library each week to the working boys of Allegheny allowed the young Carnegie access to the books he so treasured.

> When I was a working-boy in Pittsburg, Colonel Anderson of Allegheny—a name that I can never speak without feelings of devotional gratitude—opened his little library of four hundred books to boys. Every Saturday afternoon he was in attendance at his house to exchange books. No one but he who has felt it can ever know the intense longing with which the arrival of Saturday was awaited, that a new book might be had . . . it was when revelling in the

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[2] Derrick Barclay, Curator, Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum Dunfermline, Scotland, 8 October 1999, correspondence with the author.

> treasures which he opened to us that I resolved, if ever wealth came to me, that it should be used to establish free libraries, that other poor boys might receive opportunities similar to those for which we were indebted to that noble man.[3]

While still a young man of thirty-three, Carnegie wrote what Carnegie Birthplace Museum curator Derrick Barclay refers to as the "St. Nicholas Hotel memorandum."[4] This memorandum, found in Carnegie's papers after his death, indicated his desire to retire from business to devote himself to education and public works. It can be viewed as an indication of Carnegie's commitment to the paternalistic view of philanthropy prevalent during the Victorian era in the United States. This paternalism can be found in early library philanthropists such as wealthy Massachusetts and London financier George Peabody (1794 – 1869). Peabody characterized his efforts as "a debt due from present to future generations."[5] Other such benefactors detailed in Kenneth A. Breisch's study of Henry H. Richardson would include Albert Crane, Oliver Ames, and Elisha Slade Converse.[6]

Paternalism fit Carnegie well. Had events not transpired as they did, it is reasonable to assume that Carnegie could have happily concluded his career as a paternalistic philanthropist. But this was not to be the case.

The Effect of the 1892 Homestead Strike on Carnegie's Giving

> As the tight-fisted employer he reduces wages that he may play philanthropist and give away libraries, etc.[7]

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[3] Theodore W. Koch, A *Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917), 8.

[4] Derrick Barclay, 8 October 1999.

[5] Franklin Parker, *George Peabody: A Biography* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 59.

[6] Kenneth A. Breisch, *Henry Hobson Richardson and the Small Public Library in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press, 1997).

[7] *The Saturday Globe*, Utica, New York, 9 July 1892.

A discussion of the intricate role Andrew Carnegie played in the Homestead Strike of 1892, while fascinating, is well beyond the scope of this paper. What does fall within these parameters is a consideration of the Homestead Strike as a motivational factor for Carnegie's philanthropic deeds. It must of course be noted that Carnegie's library philanthropy began in Dunfermline, Scotland in 1881, fully eleven years prior to the Homestead Strike.[8] As such, it is pointless to consider the Homestead Strike as chief impetus to Carnegie's library benefactions. However, thoughtful analysis reveals the libraries that Carnegie donated to the Pittsburgh area and particularly the Homestead Library were pivotal in Carnegie's philanthropic efforts.[9]

Although he was a skilled and experienced businessperson well prepared for the contingencies of labor relations, most scholars agree that Carnegie was caught completely off-guard by the violence which erupted at Homestead. Carnegie was the workingman's friend whose rise through the ranks had given him a special empathy with those he employed.[10] It must also be understood that those now employed in Carnegie's steel mills were ethnically a much different group than those who had worked side by side with him as a young Pennsylvania mill boy. Charles Schwab, the post-strike superintendent of the Homestead Mill, wrote to Carnegie in 1896 to warn that the company had been forced to "draw on foreigners for our skilled mechanics."[11] Changing immigration patterns were bringing to the workplace employees with backgrounds far different from Carnegie's Scottish roots.

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[8] George Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 76.

[9] While a significant aspect of this work, it must be recognized that even within the confines of its limited focus, many of the complexities surrounding the effect of the Homestead Strike cannot be properly analyzed to the degree they deserve.

[10] Abigail Van Slyck, *Free to all: Carnegie libraries and the transformation of American culture, 1886-1917* (Dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 1989), 83.

[11] Van Slyck, (Dissertation), 86.

The public image of Andrew Carnegie had suffered significantly during the Homestead Strike of 1892 and his reputation was in jeopardy. By establishing a library in Homestead, Carnegie could be seen as hoping to reestablish himself as a benevolent paternal figure in his steel towns. Events would play out differently.

Andrew Carnegie divided his library benefactions into two distinct phases. He referred to these, doubtlessly with humorous intent, as his "retail" and "wholesale" periods.[12] The retail phase ran from 1886 to 1896 and affected six communities: Allegheny, Pennsylvania (1886); Johnstown, Pennsylvania (1890); Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1890); Fairfield, Iowa (1892); Braddock, Pennsylvania (1895); and Homestead, Pennsylvania (1896). Fairfield, Iowa is an obvious anomaly in this list, and begs for explanation. Carnegie's contribution of $30,000 can be attributed to a personal request from Senator Joseph F. Wilson who was at the time president of the Jefferson County (Iowa) Library Association.[13] The five remaining communities are Carnegie Steel communities. In these cases, Carnegie offered a charitable donation for the construction of a total of thirteen libraries and in each community, a civic center. That the benefactions deal with communities associated with Carnegie ties in well with the concept of paternalistic philanthropy outlined above. That so many of the libraries are *branch* libraries is an issue we shall address now.

Bringing books to people was obviously a concept near to Carnegie's heart. As mentioned previously, this can be traced to his acknowledged debt to Colonel Anderson. In constructing branch libraries, Carnegie seemed intent upon avoiding the imposing and massive library structures of Henry Hobson Richardson in favor of a more domestically scaled building, located nearer the working class members of the community.

However, the Homestead Strike had left its mark on Carnegie. His workers had betrayed him. A look at the floor plan (Figure 1) of the Lawrenceville branch library, the first of Pittsburgh's branch libraries, reveals that upon entrance to the library, one may gain access to the main reading room simply by

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[12] Bobinski, 15.
[13] Bobinski, 78.

entering the door to the left (labeled C). To enter the children's reading room, one simply turned right (D).   Once inside the reading rooms, the patron could enter the radial stacks through doorways (A) or (B).

But this situation would be the subject of alteration. The following extended quote sheds interesting light on the Lawrenceville floor plan. (Emphasis has been added).

> The Lawrenceville Branch, the first to be opened, was planned to house 20,000 volumes on the same floor as a general reading room and a children's room, **and it was required that every part of this floor should be visible from a central delivery desk**. The card catalogue is built into the rear of the circular delivery desk, and with the drawers facing towards the book-stack. By having the bookcases radiate from the delivery desk complete supervision of all the rooms on this floor is obtained. In order to operate this branch on the free access plan, **it has been found advisable to close the doors C and D on either side of the delivery lobby and have the public enter the stack-room through the registering turnstile F (which moves only in one direction), and to enter the reading room through the doors A and B. The only exit from any of these rooms is through the turnstile E.**   Thus, between the supervision of all readers while in the building and the necessity for their passing out immediately in front of the delivery desk, **there is comparatively little danger of books being carried off without being charged**.[14]

After examining the floor plans of more than one hundred Carnegie libraries, one can find only one additional structure (Brooklyn, New York) that indicates the existence of turnstiles in its floor plan.   Nothing in Charles Soule's monumental work on library design comes close to the concept

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[14] Theodore Wesley Koch, *A Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917), 127.
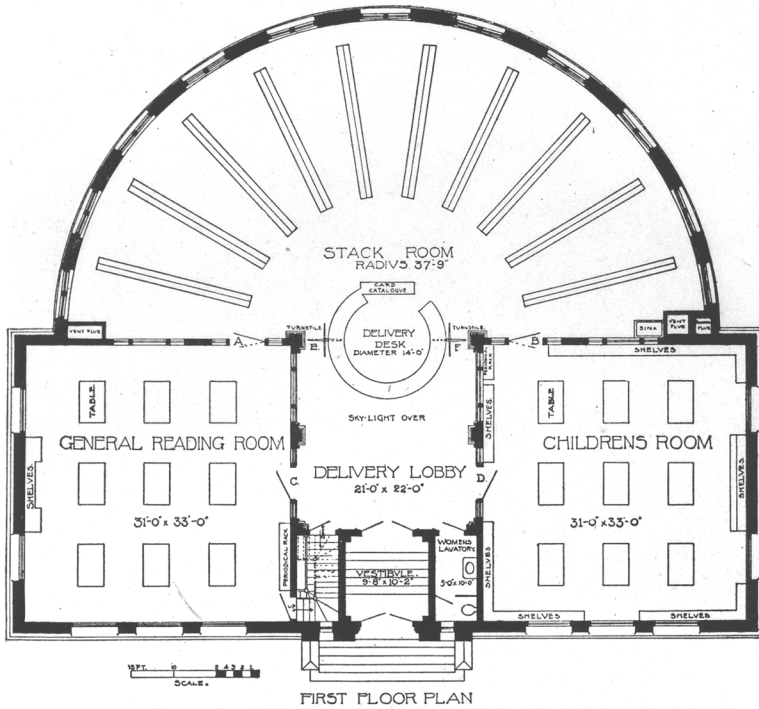
Figure 1: The Lawrenceville Branch Library in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From Theodore W. Koch, *A Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917).

of turnstiles.[15] Yet, each of Pittsburgh's branch libraries was so equipped. Analysis of the floor plans of these libraries shows an evolutionary process in which the doors that were kept closed at Lawrenceville were simply omitted from later Pittsburgh branch libraries. In her excellent and indispensable work on Carnegie Libraries, Van Slyck draws a conclusion similar to my own.[16] While she does not, on this particular point, specifically site a source for her information, she notes the closed doors, turnstiles, and routes of accessibility at Lawrenceville.

In 1895, Washington Gladden, the minister of the First Congregational Church in Columbus, Ohio published an article entitled "Tainted Money." While not mentioning Carnegie, or any other philanthropic entity, by name, the article proposed that by accepting money realized in an unethical manner, institutions expressed *de facto* support for the unethical behavior. Progressivism had raised its head and struck at Carnegie's heel. Almost immediately discussion of philanthropy changed. No longer was the charitable act of the donor the central issue. Now the focus was on the ethical value of the gift.

Dedication of the Homestead Library is the final page in Carnegie's "retail" phase. It also draws to a close the period that Van Slyck considers to be Carnegie's paternalistic period of philanthropy.[17] The year was 1896, and at that time, there were 971 public libraries in the United States having 1,000 volumes or more.[18] In 1897 no libraries were offered, or built by Carnegie. However, in 1898, Andrew Carnegie would re-emerge with a new type of giving that would shape philanthropy in the century to come.

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[15] Charles Soule, *How to Plan a Library Building for Library Work* (Boston: The Boston Book Company, 1912). Soule notes "The problem of branch libraries has come into prominence recently, especially since Carnegie has made so many gifts in this direction." Yet the problems discussed are those of location, economics of service, number of books to be housed, and an admonition for "absolutely open access."

[16] Abigail Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and American Culture, 1890 – 1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) 107-109.

[17] Van Slyck, (Dissertation), 116.

[18] Bobinski, 7.

A New Type of Giving

> It is not at all likely that you have ever heard of Charleston or of Coles County of which Charleston is the County seat.[19]

The "wholesale" phase of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy had begun. Rather than attempting to restore his paternal status by buying favor in the communities he had fed, he reshaped his philanthropic efforts along the lines of a model he understood well: big business. In reconstructing philanthropy, Carnegie's largess was to be no longer a beneficent outlay, it was simply a *commodity*. There would be no more examination of his own community of influence to find the most deserving of his "family" members. The family had grown too large and unruly. Now his philanthropic efforts would deal with those with which he had dealt so successfully with in business: consumers. If the consumer wished to obtain Carnegie's product, that consumer would come to him and meet his price. The consumer would shoulder all the petty infighting and exhaustive groundwork. Here, for the world to see, was Carnegie's business acumen at its most brilliant.

There is elegance to the procedure Carnegie established for obtaining a library. First the community sent a letter to Carnegie requesting a library. This request received a written response from Carnegie's personal secretary, James Bertram. Typical of the response is the following:

> Dear Sir:
>
> Mr. Carnegie has considered yours of Aug. 23, and if Charleston will furnish a suitable site and pledge not less than twelve hundred dollars a year for support of library, Mr. Carnegie will be glad to give twelve thousand dollars for a Free Library Building.
>
> Respectfully Yours,
>
> Jas. Bertram, Sec'y.[20]

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[19] Charles S. Wiley, President of the Charleston, Illinois Library Board, 23 August 1901, to Andrew Carnegie. Charleston, Illinois, Carnegie Library Correspondence, Microfilm Reel #5.

The letter required that the community provide only two things: A suitable site for the building, and a signed agreement committing the mayor and trustees of the community to providing an annual support fund of at least 10 percent of the building grant. The site was to be free of any debt, and large enough to allow addition to the library in the future.[21]

Yet, for all its simplicity, note how much the new system encompassed. In less than fifty-five words, the tone, timbre, and five key criteria of the transaction are established within the familiar framework of big business. Although the system was to be refined, and on occasion abused, it was none the less a system from which Carnegie would not stray.

The first important element to note is that, as in any good business deal, all arrangements were made in written correspondence. On only the rarest occasions were requests for an audience granted. Transactions occurred in writing, thus allowing an undeniable permanent record to exist of all dealings between the consumer and Carnegie's new philanthropic machine.

Second, Carnegie's initial site-specific action was a *response* to a request. The consumer, not Carnegie, had recognized a need for the commodity. There was no need to expend capital in a search through every hamlet and town for an appropriate donee. The consumer approached Carnegie. No need to worry about whom did or did not want a library. If the consumer desired the goods, the consumer came to Carnegie.

Third, the consumer arranged the actual location for the finished product. Carnegie's fortune was not spent securing plots of ground in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, Dickenson, North Dakota, or Osawatomie, Kansas. Such speculative work was now left to the consumer. Carnegie's money and effort was spent producing the product he valued, the library. Carnegie correspondence files are filled with examples of communities asking for money to purchase land, or to clear the debt of a particular plot of ground. There are also accounts of

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[20] *Charleston Daily Courier*, Charleston, Illinois, no date. Circa mid-October 1901.

[21] Oehlerts, 63.

communities asking Carnegie to intercede on this or that side of a local debate over a site. In virtually all instances, Carnegie's philanthropic machine remained distanced from such issues.

Fourth, the community was required to make a financial commitment to maintain the library. This offered Carnegie a simple guarantee that a consumer committed to the same goals would grasp his philanthropic hand. Again, the Carnegie archives show numerous examples of communities attempting to amend or circumvent this stipulation. The concerns voiced in these letters are valid. An unwilling mayor or an unruly town council could not be swayed to support the library. Local or state legislation did not allow for a library tax. The Carnegie machine was not deterred. A letter was sent to the community explaining that if a library were truly desired, then the community's voice should be heard through the ballot. New mayors and councils could be elected. New legislation could be passed.

Finally and perhaps most indicative of his business genius, Carnegie removed the most capricious element from the new philanthropic machine: himself. A trusted lieutenant, James Bertram, carried out the actual arrangements for the transfer of the commodity. Correspondence from Carnegie himself to library communities is virtually non-existent.

There are additional revelations in the new philanthropic machine of Carnegie's creation. Not least of these is the simple formula devised for determining grant values to communities seeking libraries, and the amount of the pledge required from the community.

The files kept by James Bertram on each community requesting a library were arranged alphabetically. Within each file, the contents were arranged chronologically. Each file begins with a printed form that obviously served as a sort of checklist. The word LIBRARY at its top was followed in order by the following rubrics: *Town, Population, Correspondent, Date of Application, Amount, Promised, Drafts Authorized,* and finally *NOTES*. Time after time these checklists reveal that the amount promised to each community was simply reached by

multiplying the population by two.[22] The pledge required was simply ten percent of the promised gift.

This is philanthropy for a massive audience. The family model is replaced by the model of big business. Vague promises are replaced by documentation. The paternal benefactor evolves into a partner with an active recipient. Gone is the intensely personal involvement by the benefactor in the micro-management of the beneficiary dealings and in its place we find procedures demanding efforts from the beneficiary. Hyperbole is replaced with figures and statistics. Rhetoric vacates and confirmable assets take its place. Whims of the benefactor give way to the pre-determined logic of the machine.

Although flawed and impersonal, it was a system stunning in both its simplicity and its adaptation to the task at hand. At the time of his death in 1917, Carnegie's library program had accounted for the construction of 1,679 library buildings in the United States.[23] The system prompted Mr. M. Smith to remark:

> If our millionaires desire to benefit the greatest number in the best way, so as to help them to be self-respecting, to earn what they receive, and to learn something while thereby are earning it, there can surely be no better way offered than to follow exactly the example Mr. Carnegie has set, not necessarily, however, building libraries all the time, for there are plenty of other things to be done, and money of which are even more beyond the reach of individuals. It is our belief that the good which Mr. Carnegie will accomplish by giving money as he has will in the long run be far greater, will reach more people, will elevate the community as a whole to a higher degree of intelligence and appreciation, and will leave a more lasting memorial in the hearts of his countrymen than if he had take the same amount of

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[22] Carnegie Library Correspondence, Microfilm Reel #5. Please note that it is not as though this author has made some here to fore unknown discovery. Numerous Carnegie authors, Bobinski and Van Slyke among them, have noted the same formula from various sources.

[23] Bobinski, 20.

money and with it endowed either schools, hospitals, or churches.[24]

The passage of time would add an element of prophesy to Smith's words. Philanthropic corporations would indeed follow the example Mr. Carnegie had set. The Carnegie model of philanthropy would become a standard for large scale giving. Functioning Carnegie libraries still dot the landscape, many wearing the built additions that their benefactor had recognized as inevitable. Others, retained for their architectural significance, survive through adaptive reuse within the communities that had requested them.

It has been the intent of this paper neither to justify nor to vilify the philanthropic efforts of Andrew Carnegie. The innocence of Carnegie, the inspired youth in Colonel Anderson's Allegheny library contrasts too strongly with the complexities of Carnegie the steel-fisted strike-breaker at Homestead to allow such a judgement. Rather this work has sought to understand the significance of Carnegie's reinvention of philanthropy. As such, this author can only marvel at pioneering efforts of a resilient and creative business giant.

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[24] M. Smith. "Andrew Carnegie as an Architectural Educator." *The Brickbuilder* 10 (March 1901): 46.

W.B. Yeats' Influence on Irish Nationalism, 1916-1923

Mark Mulcahey

Mark graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 1999 with a B.A. in History. He is currently working on his M.A. at Brigham Young University, studying 20th Century U.S. Military History with an emphasis on U.S. military intervention. This paper was written for a course on The World in the Twentieth Century with Dr. Roger Beck.

William Butler Yeats once said, "I understand my own race and in all my work, lyric or dramatic, I have thought of it . . . I shall write for my own people, whether in love or hate of them matters little, probably I shall not know which it is."[1] This credo is evident in the majority of Yeats' literary efforts. Yeats believed literature should shape a country's cultural identity, specifically in Yeats' case, Ireland, while being free of all political motives. Despite this intention, Yeats' literary addition to Ireland's culture also contributed to radical Irish nationalism. Yeats' main objective was to create an Irish identity free from English cultural influence. By no means was Yeats either an Anglophobe or an advocate for using violent tactics in nationalist movements. However, this did not prevent Yeats' works from inspiring Irish nationalists who believed in using violence in order to attain self-rule. Padraig Pearse and Michael Collins, both of whom admired Yeats, interpreted Yeats' works as supporting their respective ideologies during the Easter Uprising of 1916 and the Irish Civil War in 1922-1923.

Yeats' early poetry recounted Irish folklore, legends, and descriptions of Ireland's natural imagery. Examples included "The Wanderings of Oisin" (1888), "The Madness of King Goll" (1888), "The Stolen Child" (1889), "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (1890), and "Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea" (1893). It was from this poetic style that Yeats contributed to the birth of the Irish Literary Renaissance. Based on the proliferation of Celtic mythology and imagery, and the absence of theological reference in his early literary output, it can be reasonably stated that Yeats hoped this new literary movement would transform the

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[1] Herbert Howarth, *The Irish Writers, 1880-1940* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1958), 111.

foundation of Irish nationalism from its bedrock of exploiting theological differences and belligerence towards England, to its being based on pastoralism and mysticism.[2]

In 1899, Yeats, with the collaboration of Lady Augusta Gregory, formed the Irish Literary Theatre. The Theatre produced performances that were representative of Yeats' nationalistic ideal. The main theme of these plays was the prevalence of Gaelic mythology and non-denominational folklore in modern times. Despite the critical and public success for most of the Theatre's productions, it was during this period when Yeats began to come in conflict with the morals of Ireland's Catholic middle class.

One of the plays the Irish Literary Theatre planned to produce in 1899 was *The Countess Cathleen*. In this play the main character sells her soul to the Devil so that the people of Ireland may be saved from starvation. The play's end depicts Cathleen's physical ascension into heaven.[3] The play extols the virtue of an individual's sacrifice in exchange for the betterment of one's country. Deemed heretical by the Roman Catholic Church, this work received the personal censure of Cardinal Michael Logue of Dublin.[4] This incident was shortly followed by the circulation of a petition signed by almost all of the students of the (Catholic) University College condemning the play (James Joyce was the lone refusal). This was just one example of Yeats' difficulties with the conventional morals of Ireland's Catholic middle class. Yeats vented his frustration by authoring such poems as "On hearing that the Students of our New University have joined the Agitation against Immoral Literature" (1910), "To a Shade" (1914), and "On Those that hated 'The Playboy of the Western World,' 1907" (1914).[5] Yeats ultimately responded

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[2] Although born to Protestant parents, whose ancestors were cleric, Yeats grew to regard organized religion with disdain. Yeats' preference for the occult culminated in his founding of a short-lived society in 1887, and in 1890 when he joined the Golden Order of the Eagle.

[3] Michael MacLiammoir and Evan Boland, *W.B. Yeats and his World* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), 45.

[4] Ibid., 64.

[5] In these poems, Yeats is venting his frustration with Ireland's puritanical beliefs. "On hearing that the Students …" Yeats comments on the

by exiling himself from Ireland. He would not return until being persuaded to do so by Maud Gonne following the Easter Rebellion in 1916.

The 1916 Easter Rebellion lasted from April 24 to April 29. It was jointly planned by the Irish Republican Brotherhood led by Padraig Pearse and the political party Sinn Fein, under the leadership of James Connolly. The rebels seized Dublin's General Post Office and other key governmental buildings. The rebels proclaimed the creation of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic (Poblacht na h-Eireann), with Pearse as its President. Outnumbered by British military units, the rebels were cut off from reinforcements; poorly equipped, the rebels at the General Post Office capitulated after six days. The revolt's leaders, Pearse, Connolly, Thomas MacDonagh, Thomas Clarke, and eleven other rebel leaders (including the husband of Maud Gonne, John MacBride) would be executed within a month.

Yeats learned about the facts of the uprising through the foreign press while traveling in England. At the behest of Gonne, Yeats ended his exile and returned to Ireland. It was Yeats' intention to depict the Easter Rebellion as an attractive, but in the end, self-destructive, form of nationalism. Yeats fashioned his rejoinder to the uprising in his poem, "Easter 1916" (1921).

In "Easter 1916," Yeats sought to portray the fallacy of militant nationalism that permeated throughout the rebellion. Cuchulain appeared as the Irish mythological equivalent to Achilles, and like the tragic Greek warrior, Cuchulain was destined to have a short life marked by legendary heroism. The image of Cuchulain became the standard to which the Irish rebels rallied around. No nationalist leader best utilized the ethos of Cuchulain, heroism, self-sacrifice, and resolve, than did Padraig Pearse. Pearse, himself a poet, had been a devotee of

restrictive intellect of Ireland's university students who condemned *The Countess Cathleen*. "To a Shade" is his recount of the Kitty O'Shea controversy that destroyed the political career of Charles Stewart Parnell and ended the aspirations for Irish Home Rule during the 1890s. "On those that hated 'The Playboy …'" Yeats describes his increasing dissatisfaction with the Irish middle class' response to J.M. Synge's tragic comedic play depicting the rural people of Western Ireland (of whom Yeats thought best embodied true Irish culture).

Yeats' early works that prominently featured the legendary Irish warrior. Pearse became enamored with the heroic ideal of Cuchulain as described by Yeats in the poem "Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea" (1893), and in the play *The Green Helmet* (1910).[6] Pearse was transported by the idea of dying a hero's death in the struggle for Irish nationalism. He wrote an unpublished poem entitled "Renunciation" in which he symbolically rejects attending to his bodily needs and senses so that he can concentrate on becoming a martyr for a united Ireland. This can be clearly seen in the poem's last stanza,

> I have turned my face
> To this road before me,
> To the deed that I see
> And the death I shall die. (17-20)[7]

As the headmaster of St. Edna's School in County Dublin, Pearse commissioned a mural at the school's entrance depicting Cuchulain preparing himself to do battle. Stephen MacKenna, a close friend of Pearse's and a fervent supporter of the Gaelic League, related that Pearse "hoped no less than to see Ireland teeming with Cuchulains; his ideal Irishmen, whom he thought might be a living reality in our day, was a Cuchulain baptized."[8] Pearse, and a significant number of the rebel leadership, successfully established a Cuchulain cult.

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[6] As with *The Countess Cathleen*, the central theme in both works is the benefits of selfless sacrifice for the behalf of one's country. See Elizabeth Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland, and Fascism* (New York: New York University Press, 1981), 89.

[7] William Irwin Thompson, *The Imagination of an Insurrection*, Dublin, Easter 1916 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 123.

[8] Founded by Douglas Hyde in 1893, the Gaelic League sought a widespread revival in the usage of the native language in Ireland as a means to distance the nation culturally from England. MacKenna strictly forbade the speaking of English in his home. The only languages that were permitted to be spoken were Greek and Irish. See Ulick O'Connor, *Michael Collins, The Troubles: The Struggle for Irish Freedom, 1912-1922* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996), 26; Thompson, *The Imagination of an Insurrection*, Dublin, Easter 1916, 76-77.

Yeats never intended to have Cuchulain serve as a symbolic call for the men and women of Ireland to take up arms and to resort to violence in order to gain their country's freedom. Yeats referred to this misinterpretation made by Pearse and his followers in the final stanza of "Easter 1916,"

> We know their dream; enough
> To know they dreamed and are dead;
> And what if excess of love
> Bewildered them till they died? (70-73)

Yeats makes reference in this passage to Pearse and his followers confusing nationalism with blind fanaticism.

Yeats had mixed emotions about the Easter Rebellion. He admired the nationalistic ideal and promise of Pearse's Provisional Government's guarantee for both civil and religious liberties to an Irish populace that had been "oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government (England), which had divided a minority (Ulster Protestants) from the majority (Catholics) in the past."[9] Yeats abhorred the loss of life and the destruction that was wrought from the uprising. Nevertheless, this did not prevent Yeats from praising the leaders of the rebellion or their objective. In "Sixteen Dead Men" (1921), Yeats likened the failed Easter Rebellion and its leaders to the 1798 Irish revolt led by Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward FitzGerald, both of whom died in the wake of the revolt's failure.[10] The last stanza of "The Rose Tree" (1921), is a conversation between Pearse and Connolly. Previously noting that "politic words has withered our Rose Tree" (3-4), Pearse states:

> When all the wells are parched away
> O plain as plain can be
> There's nothing but our own red blood
> Can make a right Rose Tree. (15-18)

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[9] Tim Pat Coogan, *The IRA, A History* (Bolder, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1993), 15.

[10] Even though the English executed fifteen participants immediately following the Easter Rebellion in May 1916, Yeats includes the execution of Sir Roger Casement in August 1916 in this elegy.

This passage can be argued as being parallel to the sentiment put forth by Thomas Jefferson during the aftermath of Shay's Rebellion "that the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."[11]   The basic premise put forth by Yeats in these poems is that while the nationalist philosophy of the Easter Rebellion was flawed, it was not absent of admirable qualities.   Yeats would later change his thinking on this topic after the Irish Civil War of 1922-1923.

Despite the failure of the Easter Rebellion, Irish nationalists never stopped resisting English rule in Ireland. This state of affairs intensified, starting in the summer of 1919 when elements of the Irish Republican Brotherhood initiated a guerilla war against both the British Army and the Royal Irish Constabulary.   This merciless, undeclared war within Ireland lasted until the summer of 1921 when both sides agreed to a truce in order to start negotiations for the establishment of an Irish Free State. Ireland achieved a form of self-government in 1921 with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

According to the agreed terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 6, 1921, twenty-six out of thirty-two counties in Ireland would be granted self-governing dominion status in the British Empire. The six counties that were not included in this Home Rule status, Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Derry, and Tyrone, would remain under the direct control of Great Britain. A small majority in the Irish Senate ratified the treaty in March 1922. Yeats, who had been invited to become a member of the Senate in 1922, voted for the treaty's ratification. Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Fein, and General Michael Collins, a Sinn Fein party leader and President of the Irish Republican Brotherhood headed the five-man delegation that negotiated the treaty's terms in London.[12]   Opposition to the treaty came from an Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.) coalition directed by the

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[11] Thomas Jefferson to William S. Smith, in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: The Library of America, 1984), 911.

[12] The other three men that comprised the Irish delegation were Robert Barton, Eamonn Duggan, and George Duffy.

leader of Sinn Fein and Prime Minister of Ireland, Eamon de Valera. The I.R.A.'s main contention was that they would not settle for less than a fully unified Ireland that was completely free from English rule.

What de Valera and other opponents to the treaty did not comprehend was that the terms of the treaty were abhorrent to every member of the Irish delegation. The delegation agreed to the treaty's terms in order to avoid the recommencement of hostilities between Ireland and England.[13] However, this did not dissuade the treaty's opponents who absolutely refused to recognize both the authority of the British Empire and the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Correctly fearing that this situation would divide the newly born country, Collins, in a letter to a friend, expressed his concerns over the newly signed treaty,

> Will anyone be satisfied at the bargain? Will anyone? I tell you this—early this morning I signed my death warrant. I thought at the time how odd, how ridiculous—a bullet may just as well have done the job five years ago.[14]

Collins' worst fears were soon realized. Civil war ensued between Irregular Republicans who opposed the treaty, and Regular Republicans.

The start of this national fratricide began on April 13, 1922, when a force of Irregulars seized hold of Ireland's seat of judicial control, the Four Courts in Dublin. As both Prime Minister and head of the Regular Republican military, General Collins bowed to English pressure and drove the Irregulars from the Four Courts in June. Within the next few months, Arthur Griffith would die of a heart attack and Irregulars in West Cork would assassinate General Collins. Neither side gained a

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[13] Prime Minister David Lloyd George led the British delegation. Throughout the negotiations, Lloyd George maintained that England was prepared to go to war in order to retain control over the Ulster province. On the last day of negotiations, Lloyd George hinted at the imminent outbreak of hostilities if the treaty was not been signed. See Frank O'Connor, *The Big Fellow: Michael Collins & The Irish Revolution* (New York: Picador USA, 1998), 168-170.

[14] Ibid, 170.

discernible advantage throughout the conflict. Ireland's Civil War came to an end when the leadership of the Irregulars called for a suspension of all I.R.A. operations.

Ireland's Civil War and its aftermath caused Yeats to regret having imbued his literary works with nationalistic overtones. One of the unfortunate legacies of the conflict was that it alienated families and friends. Probably the most famous example of the civil war dividing Irishmen was the case of General Collins and Cathal Brugha. Allies and close friends, both men would take on opposing sides during the war. Brugha, a leading political figure in Ireland before the war, ignored the calls for surrender and suicidally attacked a Republican barricade armed only with a revolver, and was mortally wounded. Responding to a friend who questioned Brugha's loyalty to Ireland, Collins wrote,

> At worst he [Brugha] was a fanatic, though in what was a noble cause. At best I number him among the very few who have given their all for this country, now torn by civil war, should have its freedom. When many of us are forgotten, Cathal Brugha will be remembered.[15]

This letter is hauntingly familiar to the sentiment expressed by Yeats in "Easter 1916" and "Sixteen Dead Men." In Yeats' opinion, the greatest tragedy was that unlike the Easter Rebellion, the Irish Civil War resulted in the sectarian division of Ireland. The Six Counties, which are predominantly populated by Protestants, chose to remain under the direct rule of England. Catholics, who were proponents of an united Ireland, responded by both persecuting the Protestant minority in the South and committing violent acts against the Protestant majority in the North. This reemergence of nationalism, influenced by a repressive Catholic majority, utterly dismayed Yeats. In one of his last poems, "Cuchulain Comforted" (1939), Yeats describes the making of a funeral shroud for the fallen Irish hero. The

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[15] Tim Pat Coogan, *Michael Collins: The Man Who Made Ireland* (Boulder, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1996), 387.

poem's symbolic meaning is for the Irish people to disregard both the political and religious differences within the country, and to reunite so that the tragedy of another civil war can be averted. A passage embodying this emotion includes these lines,

> Obey our ancient rule and make a shroud;
> Mainly because of what we only know
> The rattle of those arms makes us afraid.
>
> 'We thread the needles eyes and all we do
> All must do together do.' That done, the man
> Took up the nearest and began to sew. (13-18)

Yeats soon recognized that his literary attempts to reunify Ireland were for naught, and permanently gave up any hope of influencing the Irish populace with his interpretation of nationalism.   This caused Yeats to regret his reluctant endorsement for acts committed by the leaders of the Easter Rebellion. Above all, Yeats expressed precisely that the national tendencies of the Irish people, fueled primarily by both political and religious differences, would result in their own destruction. In the first stanza of "Meditations in time of Civil War, V. The Road at My Door" (1928), Yeats described the self-destructive nature of extremist nationalism,

> An affable Irregular,
> A heavily-built Falstaffian man,
> Comes cracking jokes of civil war
> As though to die by gunshot were
> The finest play under the sun. (1-5)

Yeats was not indulging in hyperbole. Just a few hours before being executed by Republican Regulars, Liam Mitchell compares his death with those of Tone and Emmet, the Fenians, Tom Clarke, Connolly, [and] Pearse.[16]   Mitchell exhorts his mother not to grieve his death since he would,

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[16] Wolfe Tone's death is arguably the most famous example of Irish defiance against English rule. After being captured by the English in a failed invasion attempt, Tone was found guilty of treason against the Crown and sentenced to be hanged in Dublin. After his request to be shot like a soldier

> die for the truth, vindication will come, the mist will be cleared away, and brothers in blood will before long be brothers in arms, against the oppression of our country and imperialist England … I believe that those who die for Ireland have no need for prayer. God Bless and Protect you. Your Loving Son, Willie[17]

The emotion expressed in Liam Mitchell's letter represented the extreme nationalistic feelings which Yeats thought to be of his doing through his poetry and plays. This can be confirmed through a statement made by Michael Collins in which he declared that Ireland's literati,

> will teach us, by their vision, the noble race we may become, expressed in their poetry and their pictures. They will inspire us to live as Irish men and Irish women should. They have to show us the show us the way, and the people will then in their turn become the inspiration of the poets and artists of the future Gaelic Ireland.[18]

Though written in Yeats' lifetime, Collins' opinions would not be published until after his death. Yeats probably would have said that this misinterpretation of his literature by Nationalists contributed to a country whose sentiments are being expressed by its sons and daughters in a different manner than what both he and Collins expected.

Yeats' remorse for having his literature spur violent nationalism is apparent in "Remorse for Intemperate Speech" (1933), and in one of his final poems, "Man and the Echo"

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was denied, Tone committed suicide on the courtroom by slashing his throat with a penknife. Robert Emmet plotted an insurrection against the English in 1803. Captured after its failure, Emmet was hung, beheaded, and drawn and quartered in the same year. *See Coogan, The IRA, A History*, 25.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Michael Collins, *The Path to Freedom*, ed. Tim Pat Coogan, *Distinctive Culture: Ancient Irish Civilization, Glories of the Past* (Boulder, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1996), 103-104.

(1939). In "Remorse for Intemperate Speech," Yeats described the futility of his attempt to influence the people of Ireland into accepting his philosophy of cultural nationalism. Further on in the poem, Yeats depicted his dismay for having his cultural nationalism perverted into a vehicle to spread a rabid hatred of the English and to cause the division of Ireland along religious differences. The poem's final stanza describes Yeats' view of Ireland in his day and for the future:

> Out of Ireland
> Great hatred, little room,
> Maimed us at the start. (11-13)

The intense hatred and religious chauvinism that emerged from the Irish Civil War was now erasing the sacrifices made by individuals during both the Easter Rebellion and Anglo-Irish War. This caused Yeats to question whether or not his efforts to promote nationalist thought through his literary works were equally wasted. This is the question he asks himself in the "Man and the Echo."

In "Man and the Echo," Yeats takes a self-appraisal of his life's accomplishments. As with most cases of surveying one's own life, Yeats became plagued with regret and doubt for the results of his actions. Evidence of this in evident in this poem,

> All that I have said and done,
> Now that I am old and ill,
> Turns into a question till
> I lie awake night after night
> And never get the answers tight.
> Did that play of mine send out
> Certain men the English shot? (6-12)[19]

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[19] The play to which Yeats is referring to is *Cathleen ni Houlihan*. The general response elicited by the play from most of those who saw it was that of great patriotism. The play can also be viewed as a dominant influence to Pearse's "Renunciation." See Leonard Nathan, *The Tragic Drama of William Butler Yeats* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 88-89; Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland, and Fascism*, 51-53.

By the poem's end, Yeats is unable to give an answer to this self-imposed question. His thoughts on the subject become diverted by the cry of a rabbit. Yeats employs the rabbit to serve as the metaphor for Ireland, snared in a trap and too self-involved in the pain of its current state to think of how it arrived at its present condition.

Yeats' later works served as outlet for both his increasing frustration, and at the end of his life, his complete disgust with the Irish people in their fanatical nationalism. Ireland's present situation would give Yeats little comfort or hope for its future. What appeared to have been a meaningful progression towards a peaceful resolution to Ireland's "Troubles," the Good Friday Accords, has been delayed with both Catholic and Protestant paramilitary groups refusing to disarm. If William Butler Yeats was alive to observe Ireland's current condition, he would be able to reluctantly answer his question posed to himself in "Man and the Echo" in the affirmative and accept his share of responsibility for the sad and violent experiences Ireland has endured during the twentieth century.

"From a single tree to a forest city:"
Mattoon's Church Architecture, 1890-1910

Amy Steadman

Amy is a graduate student in the Historical Administration program. This paper was written for a course on the History of American Architecture with Dr. Nora Pat Small.

Incrementally and unconsciously, church designs reveal what church people are thinking"[1]

In 1908, Rollin Lynde Hartt remarked on America's defining aesthetic for public buildings, "we are outgrowing the impulse to make little things seem big." He delicately explained that little villages should not shy away from being rural and simple, and appearing quiet and picturesque. His ideal church architecture for smaller towns was that religious buildings should be monuments to the morals of Christianity, that of honesty and modesty. The romantic notion of simple agricultural life took shape in "lovely little chapels" lacking ostentatious ornament, and with clinging ivy. A church's grandeur or importance, complete with tall towers and cheap brick construction, just parodied religious faith. Apparently, Mr. Hartt believed, these smaller towns and villages were attempting to create an illusion of momentousness within their communities with this extravagant show. These church members, concerned with social status, only designed a "sanctified exposition building" instead of a sincere church of faith. [2]

Mattoon, Illinois, in the later ninetieth and early twentieth centuries, was a great railroad community that saw an increase in public architecture. Beyond just the impressive

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[1] Tim Stafford, "God is in the blueprints," *Christianity Today* 42, no 10 (September 1998): 77.

[2] Rolline Lynde Hartt, "A Proper Village Church," in *The World's Work: A History of Out Time* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1908), 10365, 10367.

numbers, the architecture and style of these buildings, especially the churches, indicated that the town was now emerging as an affluent and planned city of both commercial and cultural significance. The church-going citizenry of Mattoon built elaborate structures which symbolized their religious faith. The intricate stained glass, grand cathedral-like interiors, and conscious design expressed the many tropes of worship of the Christian faith. These grand buildings stood as celebration of belief, with design that professed the light of God.[3] Though in many other ways, the churches built in downtown Mattoon near the train rails broadcast more than earnest religious reverence.

Rollin Lynde Hartt, and his peers in architectural scholars, presented new notions in prescriptive literature of church building for this late nineteenth to early twentieth century time period:

> Churches in our suburbs and rural centres . . . though not always devoid of attractiveness, usually express a desire to make a small thing great by depriving it of its inherent character, which is smallness. Needless height, to admit galleries in which no one sits; tall spires, aiming at sensationalism more often than at grace; a skyline thrust high for mere sake of show . . . . . . urging ostentation at cost of genuineness; they would rather have a shingled steeple two hundred feet high than a masonry tower fifty feet high; they prefer a giddy, checker-board roof, lofty and showy, to the low and reasonable skyline; they plead for a profusion of fantastic ornament.[4]

Those who analyzed the true nature of church building pleaded for simplicity in décor. Hartt, for the outward face of churches, called for function over opulent form in these buildings, and asked builders to allocate funds for permanence, found in the use of stone and good masonry. The worst a church could offer was that of a high spire built of wood which signaled the village

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[3] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, "A Realm of Light, "*UNESCO Courier* (November, 1990): 40.

[4] Hartt, 10364, 10369.

congregation opted for showmanship instead of soundness for their sanctuary. Another scholar of proper church design, Michael B. Biscoe, commented on the pretense of extravagant ornament, such as tall towers, declaring them undignified for a religious building due to their ostentatiousness, "there must be nothing trivial, mean, or merely pretty . . . [p]urposeless towers and turrets, odd projecting gables with out meaning, spreading buttresses with no load to carry but their own, are to be shunned, as are decorations without religious feeling . . . . All must be simple, symmetrical, straightforwards, and church-like."[5] Herbert Wheaton Cogdan, in the 1910 *Architectural Record,* again advocated simplicity over pretension, "a really good church design must have more than beauty of mass."[6] William B. Bigelow said of the late nineteenth century country churches, that it must be of brick and should be not fully fronted on the street, but "its simplicity is protected by the intervening garden which, again, is given seclusion by a heavy retaining wall."[7]

A suitable church befitting a small town's congregation according to these men of practiced authority of church architecture, would be more than picturesque. A building that was suited for worship, would resonate simplicity with piety. Also permanence, through the use of functional design and ornamentation, would be found in stone, or less preferable brick, construction. "The message of the Church is to all the world," Cogdan proclaimed to the members of congregations in the smaller towns and villages.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Mattoon became the home of the crossing of the Illinois Central Railroad and the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad, (known as the Big Four). The town's 12,000 citizens made their livelihood from this railroad center, and defined their town by the crosscutting rails, anchored their center of commerce by the railway, and positioned the finest, and the tallest, of their architecture along the tracks. Church architecture provided

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[5] Maurice B. Biscoe, "Some Essentials in Church Architecture," *Outlook* (1 April, 1905): 822.

[6] Herbert Weston Cogdan, "Building a Church for a Small Congregation," *Architectural Record* 27 (February, 1910): 172.

[7] William B. Bigelow, "The County Church in America," *Scribners Magazine* 22 (1887): 615.

tangible evidence of the town's affluence; the prominent members presented their own contribution by their support of large, extravagant buildings with steeples that pierced the skyline, drawing attention to the cityscape. For those passengers seated comfortably in their cars and watching the passing view on their way from Peoria to Cairo, Mattoon appeared a rather urban center of sorts, surrounded by acres of rails and flat land of broomcorn.

From the 1880s to the 1910s, public and domestic building flourished in Mattoon, stemming from the prosperity of the town's position as of a railway juncture. The number of buildings increased, as did the cost for their construction. The citizenry of Mattoon expected an aura of affluence to be seen in their public architecture, and quite willingly paid the highest taxes in the county for this grandeur and civic pride.[8] Moving beyond the view of the city hall and new library to Mattoon's religious architecture, those members of the more well-established religions contributed extensively to build large cathedral-style churches in the popular Romanesque style, paying vast amounts for pipe organs as well as huge steeples and towers that emerged over the busy downtown skyline.[9] These churches, whose members consisted of the prominent commercial elite of the city, were most likely located near the business district and thus also the railroad. This city center provided immediate access to public improvements such as good streets, electric lights, trolley lines, and the concrete sidewalks built along the main thoroughfares shaded by newly planted trees. The number of these religious buildings increased drastically in the 1890s. The most consequential aspect of their construction was the funds spent on these structures. The money spent in the 1890s tripled the norm of the earlier decade. By century's end, Mattoon began to fully articulate its prominent

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[8] Charles Edward Wilson, "History of Coles County, Illinois," in *Cyclopedia of Illinois* (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1905), 734.

[9] Average price paid in Mattoon in the time period of 1890-1910 for a pipe organ was $4,000. They were found in most of the churches built in the period. According to Cogdon, in his essay on proper church adornment, this is an adequate price. Some churches in the city with these large organs however were built for under $12,000.

position in East Central Illinois and foresaw prosperity into the twentieth century with advances in technology as well as social mobility.

After the Civil War, Mattoon became a railway center of linking lines, though new residencies and business were not drawn to this town until the 1870s. From the year 1870, Mattoon, with a population of four thousand, grew from a small village in Coles County, ten miles from the county seat in Charleston, to a commercial town of over 10,000 in the 1890s. All activity concentrated around the crossing of the two railways, which became the official center of Mattoon. Built here was the city's ticket office, named the Essex House located on the main thoroughfare. This avenue, Broadway, was a thirty-four block avenue that ran down the middle of town from the east and west boundaries. It followed the tracks of the Big Four Railroad, which was the site of all of Mattoon's four banks, five furniture stores, six jewelers, six pool halls, seven clothes stores, nine candy stores, and seventeen lawyers, among others.[10]

There emerged a clear distinction of fiscal prosperity in the town, made quite visible by the crossing train lines; Mattoon was divided into four sections, reserving the northeast corner for other industry that did not serve the railroad directly. This became the first area of settlement, named "True Town," though it quickly lost popularity due to its distance from the railroad line. Church members, like the many early land speculators of the town, followed the path of the future railroad success, which is apparent in the clear trail of church building from the early settlement in the east section of Mattoon to the more gentrified Noyes settlement, north west of the tracks.

With the emergence of a strong municipal government under Mayor Frank Kern in early 1891, the town added improvements such as electric lights and telephone services, and forbid livestock from running loose in the streets. With modern features of landscaped trees planted along the new concrete sidewalks, electric streetlamps, and revitalized water treatment, Mattoon became more than just livable; it began to thrive as a city. The *St. Louis Post Dispatch* referred to the municipality in 1891 as "the Prosperous Prairie City of Coles County." In the

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[10]*Mattoon City Directory*, 1908.

year 1897, Mattoon held its first street fair, the first in the state, which attracted large crowds and the city celebrated its new prosperity. This progress of civic improvements, as well as civic pride, continued in the construction of a new library, a block south of the commerce center in 1903. In 1905, Illinois history writer Charles Edward Wilson, in describing Mattoon, focused on its urban improvement extolling the town's attempts of creating out of a flat land a picturesque scene of controlled nature and careful city planning:

> Although Mattoon was located upon the prairie, with only a single tree in what now constitutes its corporate limits (the historic lone elm at Thirty-second Street and Western Avenue), it is now truly a forest city, the streets being lined and the parks filled with magnificent trees planted by citizens, their sunrifted shade stretching over beautifully kept lawns, whose velvet surface furnishes a rich setting for pretty homes. This "city beautiful" was made possible when the "town cow" nuisance was abolished in 1892, and the fences removed from the fronts of lots.[11]

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Mattoon was in all attempts turning its small town image of "town cow" into a city of social planning and commerce. The citizens of this emerging metropolis of thriving downtown business and new development sought, through public and domestic building along the rails, progress, which became elaborated through technological improvement, civic pride, and through public architecture, especially its churches. The churches themselves were at times modest, though a few congregations abounded in members, as well as funds, to build magnificent structures in the Gothic and Romanesque styles. Even the less prominent churches of the town, with their smaller congregations and contributions strove to be prominent in Mattoon's cityscape along the rail line.

Of the three larger churches of Mattoon, the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church proved to be the most expensive to

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[11]Wilson, 725.

build. Rebuilt after a mysterious fire in 1890, the complete sum for construction totaled $50,000. Located on the eastern end of the Noyes Addition, it stood on the corner of Richmond and 20th Street, a block from the rail line. Richmond Avenue, as well as the other main east-west thoroughfares, was broken by 21st Street then slipped down half a block to continue. These discontinuous roadways that were quite obvious in the downtown, are attributed to Ebenezer Noyes himself, member of the Catholic Church and early founder of the city, who, as tradition retells, refused to allow the streets in his own part of Mattoon to connect straight with those of the east side.[12] This layout ensured the importance of the Noyes section of the city. When walking down Richmond Avenue, the Church of the Immaculate Conception quite surprised visitors with a one hundred and sixty-foot-tall tower caddy-corner to the rest of the streetway. With more than twelve hundred members, this Gothic structure of stone was an impressive T-shaped building that in many ways proclaimed an association with those who provided financial success to Mattoon.

Ten years after the completion of Mattoon's Catholic Church, the First Methodist Episcopal Church built a larger building for their growing congregation. They constructed a Romanesque style stone building, estimated to cost $40,000 on the corner of 16th Street and one block from Richmond on Charleston Avenue. Though similar in appearance to Mattoon's other smaller churches, this church's appearance of distinction and massiveness can be seen in the one-story stone extension built on the back, which stretched almost an entire block. Of the more than seven hundred members of the congregation, the one leading force was that of Dr. M. McFall, trustee of the church and one of Mattoon's most prominent physicians. This doctor was one of the leading trustees behind the building of the Memorial Hospital in 1906. The Methodist Church had much support throughout the county, due to the easy access to the

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[12]Wilson, 725.

WEST PART OF
MATTOON
ILLINOIS
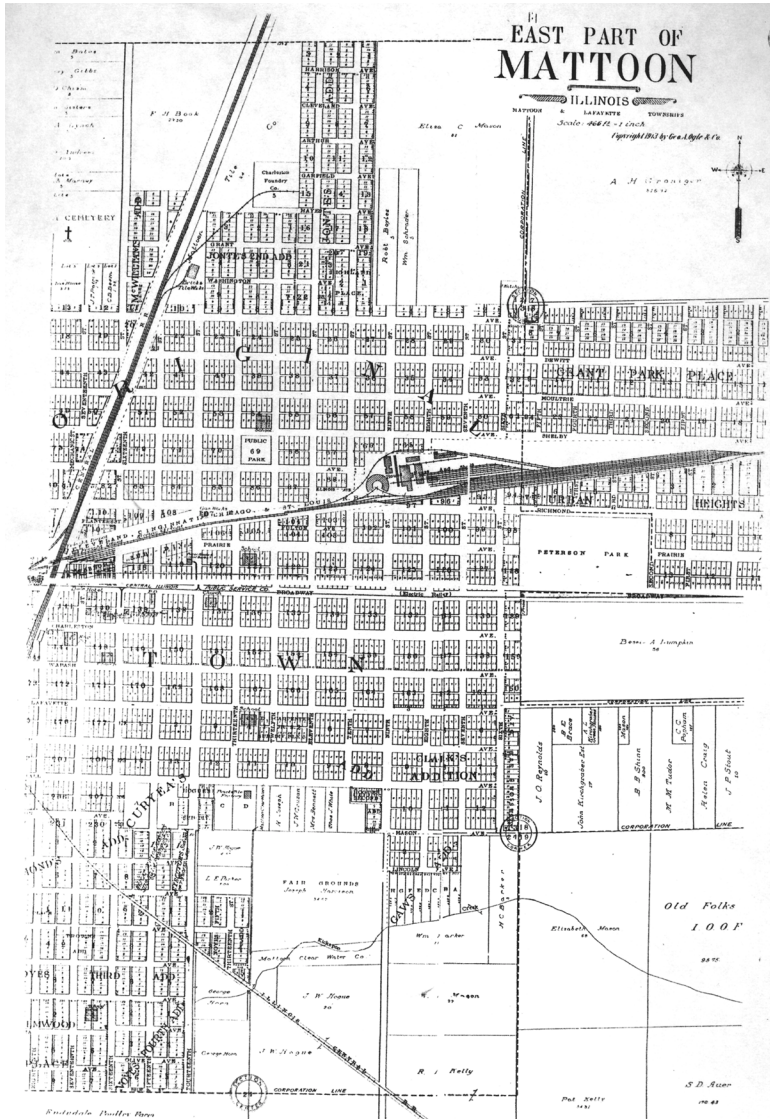
Figures 1 & 2: *From Standard Atlas, Coles County, Illinois 1913* (Chicago: George A. Ogle & Company, Chicago, 1913).

railroad. Mattoon became this religion's head district in Illinois.[13]

The third of the larger churches constructed during this prosperous fifteen-year period was the First Presbyterian Church, consisting of two Presbyterian congregations joining in the 1870s to a total membership of around four hundred. Finished in 1903, it was located on the corner of 21st and Western Avenue, the second road south of Richmond, and one block from Charleston Avenue. With a final price of $45,000, this red brick structure's tower rose over 180 feet, far above the trees planted along the street by the city to create a picturesque walk through downtown. Within this massive steeple was placed a clock and a bell costing an extra $2,000 provided by a single donor. The congregation itself was comparably smaller than the other affluent churches of the town. But within that membership was John Voight, an attorney, Harlan McNair, the head cashier of the Mattoon National Bank, Frank Coppage, co-owner of a drug store, Frank Cox, a real estate developer, L. R. Nobel of Spitler, Noble & Co., and W. W. Willians, druggist and owner of a well-known Queen Anne style house on Western Avenue. These men, serving as Elders and trustees, all can be seen as fond supporters of their church, as well as possessing civic pride of their growing city and their contributing parts of its success. The most affluent of all the members of the Presbyterian Church was John Stubbins, a co-owner of the Dole House, one of the first and finest hotels in the town located on the main street of Broadway. In 1900, he sold his half of the business and retired, but stayed on as a trustee of the church until the end of the 1910s. Of the other members of the congregation, about one-fourth of the working-age men were connected directly with the railroad and shops as machinists, ticket agents, conductors, and engineers. Most likely though, a member of this church would be a shop owner, such as a grocer or jeweler, or a tradesmen,

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[13] Martha Cates Ladd and Constance Schneider Kimball, *History of Coles County, 1873-1976* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, Inc, 1976), 396.

such as a carpenter or contractor, real estate, law, or insurance.[14] From these more affluent affiliates of the church, came donations totaling $18,000 in collections, on opening day services, November 1, 1903.

The earlier church of Mattoon's Presbyterian congregation certainly lacked the grandeur of the newly built structure. The first Presbyterian church constructed was located only a block north of the second church, and pre-dates it by forty years. Built with wood in the Federal style, with a steeple and bell, it still stood as an impressive monument to the religious faith and style of architecture. But its successor appeared as an imposing brick structure. With a hipped roof and cross gables, along with an octagon shaped wing protruding from the front left, it presented an irregular outline. With a massive white painted wooden steeple, which can be seen as almost jutting out of the middle, this building's designers were not dutifully minding simplification; the First Presbyterian was hardly a quiet sanctuary. A church should be a monument, Maurice B. Biscoe expounded, but "there must be no striving after effect."[15] This public building certainly possessed visible power, with a steeple that is said by tradition to be the tallest structure ever constructed in Mattoon.

Mattoon's church congregations also built three smaller churches, the Cumberland (Broadway) Presbyterian, built in 1895 for $12,00 with a membership of 250; the Christian Church, built in 1896 for $12,000 with a membership of 400; and the Congregational Church, built in 1897 for $14,000, with a membership of 200. All were constructed a few blocks from each other, along the downtown's central thoroughfares, with close proximity to the railroad. They also acted as indicators of importance of the train industry and urbanization to Mattoon. The extensive number of church buildings constructed during the 1890s and 1900s are significant indicators of this new wealth from the central source of the railroad.[16]

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[14] *Matton City Directory, 1898* (Chicago: Samson Directory Company, 1898); *Matton City Directory, 1908* (Chicago: Samson Directory Company, 1908*); First Presbyterian Membership Directory*, *1910*. Photocopy

[15] Biscoe, "Some Essentials," 823.

[16] *Mattoon City Directory, 1898, 1908.*

A historian of religious architecture, Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, once wrote of the early European cathedrals of the 12th and 13th centuries as representing powerful messages, quite visible, of a Christian identity.

> Spires, massive stonework and other external features were also a response to the cathedral's relationship with the city. A cathedral had to be visible from a distance, and no other building was allowed to compete with it. At a time when there were few stone buildings and houses were no more than one or two storeys high, the cathedral towered over its surroundings and gave an identity to a community[17]

For Mattoon in the 1890s and early 1900s, the building of churches, these substantial cathedrals of glorification, appeared to announce more than reverence for Christianity. Prosperous members of these churches contributed their wealth to create monuments that exemplified the members' importance to the town. The vibrant and visible railroad brought great wealth to the town of Mattoon and enabled the congregations to build churches that reflected this new prosperity. And through other civic improvements this town-wide self-consciousness could be interpreted as solidifying the appearance of the new modern Mattoon, a clean, prosperous city. Public structures, emulating the wealth of the commercial downtown, attempted the portrayal of successful urban city planning.

Mattoon's religious architecture consciously strove to pretense, in many ways a vexation to those scholars of proper church building such as Hartt and Biscoe. The prosperous business man, who either gained his fortune directly from the railroad, in sale of land or services, or the shop owner who depended on the influx of consumers from the train line, manifested their success and held just pride of this town in the prairie. A town did not need a courthouse or normal school to control some of the county's wealth. Mattoon, at the beginning of the twentieth century, possessed all the advances in

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[17] Erlande-Brandenburg, 44.

technology available now in the land south of Chicago. These massive sanctuaries, along the rail road track, with high steeples that could be seen walking down the commercial strip of Broadway, glorified personal wealth in a new world of economic power apart from agriculture. Simplicity reserved itself for the quiet village; the picturesque and disguised, possessed images of the rural, and for Mattoon, the demure rehashed the picture of the roaming cow through rutted streets.

Separate But Equal: The *Plessy* Case

Teresa Cribelar

Teresa is a junior in the History Department and is working towards her teacher certification. This paper won this year's Alexander Hamilton Paper Award in American History. This paper was written for a course on The United States Constitution and the Nation with Dr. Lynne Curry.

The case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896, brought the concepts of "Jim Crow" and "separate but equal" into prominence in the United States. With that decision, the United States Supreme Court allowed for legal segregation in all public areas. The decision stood for fifty-eight years before being overturned. During this time whites and blacks were kept separate, and for fifty-eight years, tension mounted until the Supreme Court reversed itself in 1954 and ordered the integration of schools with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. *Plessy* has affected every person in the United States in some way because current race relations can be traced back to those of former years when segregation was the norm.

Contrary to popular belief, segregation was not common in the nineteenth century and as late as the 1880s most establishments in the United States, including public transportation, were not segregated. Blacks may not have been allowed in the ladies' car, but they were allowed in all other cars with white men. Private owners and managers made the decision on whether or not to segregate - the law did not require it.[1] New Orleans, where the *Plessy* case originated, was highly integrated. One reason was the diversity of the area; French, Spaniards, Germans, freeborn blacks, and freed slaves dominated the population in large numbers and the races intermingled without much tension. New Orleans was the only southern city

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[1] C. Vann Woodward, "The Birth of Jim Crow," *American Heritage* 15 (April 1964): 52.

to integrate public schools. The city also integrated the police department and paid city employees equally regardless of race. Blacks were allowed to serve on juries and on public boards as well. Louisiana had many black senators and representatives at the state and federal levels and the state even made intermarriage legal, though the practice was not always accepted.[2]

Starting around the years 1887 to 1900, states began adopting "Jim Crow" laws, specifically in transportation, but in other areas as well, such as education. "Jim Crow" was coined by a minstrel, "Daddy" Rice, who introduced a blackface act in 1832, based on the antics of a slave with that name. People began to use the word to describe segregation laws, which stigmatized blacks as inferior.[3] New Orleans reluctantly began segregating, but the city did it more slowly than most other areas.[4]

Louisiana began debating a "Jim Crow" transportation law in the late nineteenth century and in 1890 passed Act 111 segregating railways. Many white judges and legislatures opposed it based on the fact that many blacks had light complexions and had blood ties to the white gentry.[5] There were sixteen black senators and representatives in the Louisiana General Assembly who vigorously fought the bill. Blacks in New Orleans organized to fight it, but on June 10, 1890, it passed anyway. It was called "An Act to promote the comfort of passengers," and required railroads "to provide equal but separate accommodations for the white and colored races."[6] According to the Separate Car Act, as it was also known, there was a $500 fine to railway companies who did not provide separate cars or partitions. If a black person was on the wrong car, he or she could be fined twenty-five dollars or spend twenty days in jail. The only exception was for "nurses attending

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[2] Keith Weldon Medley, "The Sad Story of How 'Separate But Equal' Was Born," *Smithsonian* 24 (February 1994): 106.

[3] Woodward, 52.

[4] Medley, 108.

[5] Charles Edwards O'Neill, "Separate But Never Equal," *America* 172 (April 1995): 13.

[6] Woodward, 53.

children of the other race."[7] By the early1890s, segregation had become a part of life in Louisiana.

New Orleans' black citizens organized to work against this act. *The Crusader*, a paper founded by attorney Louis Martinet, led the opposition to this racism and segregation policy. Rodolphe Desdunes was often a columnist who rallied people behind the cause. [8] The Citizen's Committee to Test the Constitutionality of the Separate Car Law formed on September 1, 1891, and with eighteen men joined *The Crusader* to fight the law. A boycott was considered, but the group decided to initiate a test case instead. A test case is an act where a person breaks a law in order to get into court to test the constitutionality of the law. Money was raised, and Albion Winegar Tourgée of Mayville, New York, was chosen to be leading counsel.[9] Tourgée was a former "carpetbagger" who had written novels about his experiences during Reconstruction. He was born in Ohio, served in the Union Army, and in 1865, moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, to practice law. There, Tourgée became a radical member of the Republican Party and helped write the Reconstruction constitution of North Carolina. For six years, he had also been a judge of the superior court and earned distinction there. He was enthusiastic about the fight to end segregation. James C. Walker, a local New Orleans attorney, was picked to help Tourgée with the case.   The committee decided a person of light complexion should be used for the test case. A woman was not favored because a light-skinned woman would not be denied transportation on a white car. Martinet said he would volunteer, but because of his status, he would always be allowed to ride the white car as well. Once the proper person was found, the group needed a railroad to cooperate. The first official approached said he did not enforce the laws beyond posting the required signs and providing the required cars. Two more thought the law was wrong and would be willing to help as soon as they talked to their legal counsel.[10]   The railroad companies' willingness surprised many people, but the railroads

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[7] Medley, 108-109.
[8] Ibid., 109-111.
[9] Woodward, 53.
[10] Ibid., 54-55.

had financial reasons for wanting to get rid of the laws. Providing extra cars meant spending more money, especially when a white car was not full and a car had to be added to transport just a few blacks. Also, in New Orleans, deciding which race a person was could be tricky because of the ethnic diversity of the area, causing the officials to offend passengers.[11]

The plan was for a black to get on a white car and a white passenger would object. The conductor would then ask the offender to move back to the "Jim Crow" car, and he would refuse. The conductor would call in the police to arrest the black man without harming him or forcing him to move back, and the white passenger would swear out an affidavit.[12] In February of 1892, Daniel Desdunes, son of Rodolphe Desdunes, provided the first test case. Desdunes bought a ticket to go out-of-state, and everything went according to plan. The case made it as far as the Louisiana Supreme Court, and Desdunes won. But this was not the victory blacks wanted. The Louisiana Supreme Court ruled that the state legislature had no jurisdiction over interstate travel. The group had to use a passenger car traveling *within* the state to get the ruling they wanted, for the law to make it to the Supreme Court and make the Louisiana law unconstitutional.[13]

On June 7, 1892, Homer Adolph Plessy bought a ticket to New Orleans and boarded the East Louisiana Railroad on a white coach. The conductor asked him to move back, and he refused. Detective Christopher C. Cain peacefully arrested Plessy. It can be assumed the railway agreed to help in the case because Plessy was only one-eighths black and had few visible features of his African heritage.[14] Plessy was released on $500 bond, posted by Paul Bonseigneur, who had raised the money by mortgaging his home.

In October of 1892, Plessy's attorney filed for a bar to prosecution instead of a plea. This was done in order to invoke the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed due process, to make the state acknowledge the segregation law as

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[11] Medley, 112.
[12] Woodward, 54-55.
[13] O'Neill, 13.
[14] Woodward, 55.

unconstitutional and prevent a local trial. On October 28, 1892, the attorneys debated Plessy's plea and the court decided to make a ruling. That November 18, Plessy's original plea was overruled and he was released on bond to wait. Judge John H. Ferguson had upheld the constitutionality of the law.[15]

Plessy's attorneys then applied to the Louisiana Supreme Court and were heard in November of 1892. The court realized that the interstate commerce clause and the equality of accommodations were not the issues. What was in consideration was whether the law requiring separate but equal accommodations violated the Fourteenth Amendment. The court ruled the law to be constitutional and cited several decisions in the lower courts, which ruled that accommodations did not have to be identical or together to be equal. The Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court was Francis Redding Tillou Nicholls who had signed "Jim Crow" legislation while governor. Before that however, he had always been fair to blacks, even appointing them to office. He felt pressured by the Populist rebellion of white farmers and turned to support segregation to slow the rebellion. Nicholls did grant Plessy a writ of error that allowed Plessy to take his case to the United States Supreme Court.[16]

At this point, it is important to explain what part of the Constitution Plessy's lawyers were using to bring this case to the Supreme Court. The Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, was invoked in order to explain the inferiority felt by blacks living under "Jim Crow" laws. The lawyers tried to make a connection between the ideas of slavery and involuntary servitude to that of inferiority. Both appear as "badges" of shame. Later on, it was seen that this did not work well as an argument. Most of the defense was based on the Fourteenth Amendment, specifically Section One, which states: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."   Forcing blacks on separate cars

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[15] O'Neill, 13-14.
[16] Woodward, 55, 100.

violated privileges and liberty. Blacks were not receiving equal protection in the form of equal treatment.

Beginning April 13, 1896, the Supreme Court heard the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Besides Tourgée, Samuel F. Phillips helped with the briefs and oral presentation. He was the former Solicitor General and advised Tourgée on matters regarding procedure because he was familiar with Washington. Walker and Martinet did not participate in the oral presentation because one was in ill health and neither could get there in time, but they had helped prepare the briefs. Attorney Alexander Porter Morse represented the state of Louisiana, and Louisiana Attorney General Cunningham decided not to appear.[17]

Tourgée submitted a brief arguing that Plessy had been deprived of property without due process of law. The property was the reputation of being white. This appearance was valuable because being white under the "Jim Crow" laws allowed people to advance and have more privileges. Tourgée defended the light-colored man, Plessy, against the penalties of color. The Court was not impressed. The brief also emphasized the incompatibility of "Jim Crow" laws with the spirit and intent of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. The distinctions made under these laws mirrored the segregation of slavery. Facilities and protection would not be equal under separate but equal, and the laws codified white superiority. Tourgée pointed out that black nurses could ride in white cars if attending white children. Of this he said, "The exemption of nurses shows that the real evil lies not in the color of the skin but in the relationship of the colored person sustains to the white."[18] The fortune of one class is asserted in its superiority. Tourgée asked the Court to look to the future. If the "Jim Crow" laws were upheld, segregation would prevail everywhere.[19] It was also argued that the law implied a grant of power to railroad officials to determine racial identity at random. In this case, the white race would always have the advantage.

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[17] Charles A. Lofgren, *The Plessy Case: A Legal-Historical Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 148-151.

[18] Woodward, 101.

[19] Ibid.

The Court dismissed the question of Plessy's racial identity as an issue for lack of federal jurisdiction, but did mention that there was confusion. In 1853, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that any mix of African blood made the person black regardless of complexion. Other cases were mentioned that added confusion to the problem of deciding on the race of a person.[20] This left the constitutionality of the Louisiana statute unclear. Justice Henry Billings Brown dismissed any problems with the Thirteenth Amendment, implying that it had been used as a filler to bolster the case. It all came down to the Fourteenth Amendment and the equal protection clause.

Two criteria were used to test the law's constitutionality. One was whether the law was a reasonable exercise of the state's "police power" or the state's right to make regulations for the benefit of the health, welfare and moral well being of its citizens. The courts demanded that this power be used in a rational and reasonable way. It could not be random or malicious. Justice Brown argued that the law was reasonable and that there were no constitutional problems with the state's action on the railway. He argued this because the law upheld the customs and traditions of the people, that of segregation, to promote comfort for all of society. Louisiana's segregation laws were also reasonable because other states had passed similar laws. The second test was to see if the law allowed Louisiana to provide all of its citizens with equal protection under the law. Brown said political and legal equality was maintained and the state could distinguish citizens based on race. If inferiority or stigma arose out of this, the government could not help because the people were still equal under the law. Equal protection under the law did not mean identical treatment under social constraints.[21]

The Court had its answer, but it still looked for legal precedent to base it on. Since the Supreme Court had not ruled in a case like this, it looked to the lower courts for rulings and cases that related to race. In *Louisville, New Orleans, and Texas R.R.. v. Mississippi*, 1890, the Supreme Court had upheld the

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[20] David W. Bishop, "Plessy v. Ferguson: A Reinterpretation," *Journal of Negro History* 62 (April 1977): 127-28.
[21] Richard A. Maidment, "Plessy v. Ferguson Re-Examined," *Journal of American Studies* 7 (August 1973): 126-130.

constitutionality of a state law which required separate cars. This decision had been restricted to the question of interference with interstate commerce. In *Hall v. Decuir*, 1877, the Supreme Court ruled a law unconstitutional because it placed a burden on interstate commerce by prohibiting racial segregation. Of eleven cases cited to uphold the constitutionality of the "Jim Crow" laws, only one actually dealt with the constitutionality of a state statute. In *People of New York City v. Calvin King*, 1888, the court upheld the constitutionality of the state penal code provision that required everything to be equal in accommodations.[22]

In 1887, the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled segregation was legal as long as accommodations were equal. This ruling arose out of a case brought to the commission that showed the great inequality between white and black cars.[23] The Court could also referred to the Senate version of the Civil Rights Act of 1875 in which racial integration was preferred, but if a state wanted segregated schools, all schools had to be comparable and provide the same educational standard. This was consistent with the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.[24] Turn-of-the-Century intellectual currents also provided backing for the Supreme Court. Science had "proven" that blacks were inferior to whites in all aspects of physiology and psychology. Whites were more mature and "civilized." The wider intellectual content had some influence on the Court's decision.[25]

The Supreme Court handed down its decision on May 18, 1896. In the time between 1890 and 1896, segregation had become widespread in the North and South. Blacks were being denied the right to vote. Concurrent with this, in 1895, Booker T. Washington delivered the "Atlanta Compromise," which

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[22] Barton J. Bernstein, "Case Law in Plessy v. Ferguson," *Journal of Negro History* 47 (July 1962): 193-196.

[23] Bishop, 130-131.

[24] Maidment, 130.

[25] Barton J. Berstein, "Plessy v. Ferguson: Conservative Sociological Jurisprudence," *in Black Southerners and the Law: 1865-1900*, ed. Donald G Nieman (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994), 8-10.

projected the idea that segregation should be accepted by black people.

Justice Henry Billings Brown wrote the majority opinion and the Louisiana segregation law was held constitutional. Brown wrote that the validity of the law depended on its reasonableness. Laws could be created that carried on the people's "usages, customs, and traditions . . . with a view to the promotion of their comfort, and the preservation of the public peace and good order."[26] Brown added that segregation did not make blacks inferior to whites. That idea only became present in the views of black people. Blacks and whites were created differently and legislation could not make those differences disappear. As long as facilities are equal, the law has done all it can because the people are all equal under the law.[27] Justice Brown explained:

> The object of the [Fourteenth] amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either. Laws permitting, and even requiring, their separation in places where they are liable to be brought into contact do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other, and have generally, if not universally, recognized as within the competency of the state legislatures in the exercises of their police power.[28]

In short, Brown said the Fourteenth Amendment did not require the races to be equal socially, just under the jurisdiction of the law.

Justice John Marshall Harlan, a Kentuckian who had opposed secession and fought in the Union Army, wrote the

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[26] Woodward, 102.

[27] Ibid., 101-102.

[28] Otto H. Olsen, ed., *The Thin Disguise: Turning Point in Negro History, Plessy v. Ferguson: A Documentary Presentation* (New York: Humanities Press, 1967), 108-109.

dissenting opinion. Harlan had opposed the emancipation of the slaves and early civil rights laws, but the extremism of the Ku Klux Klan led him to renounce his views and become an outspoken champion of civil rights. Harlan wrote that the Louisiana law conflicted with the Thirteenth Amendment because segregation was a burden or badge of slavery and servitude. Segregation also violated the equal protection of dignity and liberty in the Fourteenth Amendment. The law was a way to assert white supremacy over blacks. Harlan also wrote that he believed the decision would be as destructive as the one in the *Dred Scott Case*.[29]

Barton J. Berstein wrote of the *Plessy* case that "Neither the history of the Fourteenth Amendment nor the available case law supported that infamous decision."[30] The decision had a large impact on the development of American society in the twentieth century. The *Plessy* decision allowed the color line to be legally drawn, and segregation moved into all areas of life. To uphold the segregation laws, state courts frequently cited *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The highest court in the land had given the go-ahead to segregation.[31] Justice Harlan predicted the future when he wrote that the decision would stimulate "aggressions, more or less brutal or irritating, upon the admitted rights of colored citizens. What can more certainly arouse race hatred?" [32] Race relations, as a result, did become aggressive and brutal towards blacks.

In Louisiana, the future of blacks changed as harsher segregation laws emerged. Black voters dropped from forty-five percent to four percent of eligible voters and blacks disappeared from the legislature. Southern states provided little funding for black schools and overall race relations worsened.[33] Segregation reigned and nothing could stop it until the Supreme Court reversed itself, on May 17, 1954, with *Brown V. Board of*

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[29] Woodward, 101-103.
[30] Berstein, 198.
[31] Woodward, 103.
[32] Berstein, 11.
[33] Medley, 116-117.

Education. It just took one day shy of fifty-eight years to reverse the wrong it had done.[34]

After contributing to one of the most important cases in American history, Homer Plessy went back to court on January 11, 1897, and was given a $25 fine for riding in a white car five years earlier.[35] The *Plessy* case had finally come to a close, but the decision lived on for years. The effects are still being played out because race relations today arise from this past. *Plessy v. Ferguson* helped mold that past into one of segregation when the United States Supreme Court ruled that separate but equal was constitutional.

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[34] Woodward, 103.
[35] Medley, 116.

Born After the Fourth of July:
Post-Vietnam Existentialism in 1990s War Films

Jason Serb

Jason is a junior English major.

Just as wars affect the society they spawn from, so, too, must they affect the films that depict them. War films from the 1940s were fundamentally up beat, patriotic propaganda (even from traditionally bleak and cynical studios like Warner Bros., which produced, among others, *Casablanca* and *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, both in 1943). This deep sense of American nationalism, spurred on, in part by the Cold War, continued on through the 1950s. It was not until the 1960s, with the Kennedy assassination, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the beginning of the Vietnam War, and the deepening racial divides, that American nationalism was left in ruins. The door opened for a new kind of war, one that emphasized self-awareness and rejection of conformity, two hallmarks of existentialism.

While Hollywood attempted to make so-called "anti-war" films prior to the Vietnam conflict, as Russell Earl Shain wrote, "the anti-war message failed because the harm was portrayed as an inevitable effect of a good cause. It was only when the films began to deny the nationalistic morality of war that the anti-war message could survive."[1] The Vietnam War, which was brought into America's homes through newsreels and television, provided this denial of morality. However, it was not until Vietnam was brought to the silver screen that the cinema's anti-war message took full effect.

We see the beginnings of this tone in the 1970 film *M*A *S*H*, directed by Robert Altman, yet it remains, to this day, a curious oddity in the annals of Vietnam films. For one, it is not even set in Vietnam, but rather in an army medical unit during the Korean conflict. However, the timing of its release and its stinging social commentary make it hard to analyze as anything but a thinly disguised anti-Vietnam parable, such as when Louis Giannetti asserts that "Though ostensibly about the

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[1] Russell Earl Shain, *An Analysis of Motion Pictures about War released by the American Film Industry 1930-1970*, (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 350.

Korean War of the early 1950s, the film was photographed in a TV documentary style that reminded viewers of the Vietnam carnage unreeling each night on the evening news."[2] Another unique quality about the film is that it is a comedy, a dark, violent comedy of the bleakest and bitterest sort, perhaps, but a profoundly brilliant and funny comedy, nonetheless. This style of humor, foreshadowed splendidly a few years earlier by Stanley Kubrick's nuclear holocaust comedy *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), works in sharp contrast with most war films that would follow.

To this day, just as significantly as it had been in the early 1970s, the narrative form that is the satire, which the film *M*A *S*H* indisputably is, remains a bafflingly safe form of social criticism in the American cinema. This attribute, along with the effective, if obvious, superficiality of the Korean "cover," is probably what allowed the film to be made when it was; a time when the subject of the Vietnam War cut as deeply as it ever has in our social conscience.

To see the sudden and dramatic shift between depictions of war during the Vietnam conflict, one need not look any further back than *The Green Berets* (1968), an insanely patriotic and borderline laughable (in the context of future depictions of Vietnam) film. It starred and was co-directed by John Wayne, perhaps the ultimate image of the patriotic American soldier, one whose time would clearly pass with Vietnam.

With films like *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and *Platoon* (1986), the implied insanity (the futility of fighting for a greedy, blind-with-pride nation, the magnitude of the individual death and its priority over the good of the whole cause, the sheer horror of the overall experience, etc.) of war became more "clear" and opened the door for a re-interpretation of films depicting other wars. Author John Belton asserted that "Vietnam films tend to undermine the traditional values celebrated in films about World War II and other wars by reversing or obscuring the clear-cut distinctions drawn in earlier films between 'us' and the

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[2] Louis Giannetti, *Understanding Movies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), 374.

enemy."[3]   This undermining by Vietnam films perfectly establishes a mentality for a re-examination in the cinema of other wars.

It is of significant interest to note that Vietnam films from *The Deer Hunter* (1978) to *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) dominated the 1970s and 1980s, but when the 1990s hit, Vietnam films largely dropped out of sight. In fact, the last significant Vietnam film was *Born on the Fourth of July*, which was made at the end of the 1980s. In the 1990s, we saw very little about the subject, even from someone like Vietnam veteran Oliver Stone, who has at best skirted the issue in films like *Nixon* (1995) and *JFK* (1991). The closest he came was *Heaven and Earth* (1994), which, interestingly, is a largely forgotten film now.

The biggest film of the 1990s to deal with Vietnam would probably be *Forrest Gump* (1994), which, in part due to Gump's stupidity, at times seems to make light of the war, and, more importantly, the society affected by it. Whatever the sincerity and magnitude of Gump's message, one is left to wonder how much of the movie is really an *anti-war* film.

However, the existentialism that was first brought to the genre with the Vietnam films of the 1970s and 1980s, all decidedly anti-war, still exists today, only the philosophy has transcended itself into other wars. Interestingly, this anti-war existentialism has returned to the once abandoned sub-genre of films about World War II, the so-called "good" war, which had, in some ways, taken on an almost obscenely nostalgic quality. Two recent films examining the Second World War, *The Thin Red Line* and *Saving Private Ryan*, both 1998, are clearly children of the post-Vietnam war film movement. This is not only in the increased level of violence depicted, but thematically, as well. Along with the third World War II film from the 1990s to be examined more thoroughly in this text, *The English Patient* (1996), these two films, *Ryan and Line*, as film critic Ty Burr says, view "World War II through the novel filters of post-Vietnam disenchantment."[4]

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[3] John Belton, *American Cinema, American Culture* (St. Louis: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1994), 180.

[4] Ty Burr, "Top Guns," *Entertainment Weekly* (1 March 1999): 130.

Just when Hollywood thought that America had tired of war films, it turns out that they may have only tired of Vietnam films. But since their views of war were still fundamentally the same, they would allow Hollywood to reinvent the cinematic visions of other wars, namely, World War II. Hollywood, with clear support from the masses, has taken the ground work of war-time existentialism laid down by Vietnam films and applied them to World War II, thus turning our visions of the "good war" upside down.

One aspect of existentialism is the concept of self awareness, which goes against the "traditional" war films which Belton described as being a place where "The needs of the individual frequently give way to those of the group. The exceptional circumstances of the battlefield force individuals to place their own needs beneath those of the platoon."[5] Existentialism, among other things, essentially signifies a sense of self-awareness within the world they are forced into, and we see this in the modern war film. Just as Captain Willard (Martin Sheen) in *Apocalypse Now* is forced to rebel against the mad, chaotic, and anarchic world he is dropped into by a reckless and irresponsible army, so, too, are the men in *The Thin Red Line*.

In that film, the men quickly realize the suicidal nature of their missions, and the pacifistic officer in charge, Captain Staros (played by Elias Koteas), eventually outright ignores a direct order from Colonel Tall (Nick Nolte) to attack a gun nest head-on at the top of a hill. He knows he would be sending the men straight into a wall of machine gunfire, and he refuses, failing to see any plausible justification. This is the sort of patriotic rejection that would not be seen as often- if at all, in the pre-Vietnam era. Later in the film, Colonel Tall dismisses Staros from duty, using the argument, "You're too soft," which is one way to say that he is not strong enough to see beyond the value war places on the individualism, the basis of most existential ideas. Indeed, the entire clash between Tall and Staros is symbolic of the clash between pre- and post-Vietnam images of the individual's place in war. Even in *Saving Private Ryan*, a relatively patriotic film, we see the primary ethical dilemma

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[5] Belton, 165-166.

centering on the concept of the individual (Ryan) versus the group (Hanks' platoon), a topic that was not so blatantly discussed before Vietnam.

Although Ryan is definitely patriotic in a sense (after all, it opens and closes with shots of the American flag, a classic war film icon), it never really answers the question of whether or not it is worth it to save Private Ryan. Pre-Vietnam war films felt the need to rationalize everything (even a relatively anti-war film like *Bridge on the River Kuwait,* 1956) found justification for war when one of its characters runs around at the end, shouting the simple explanation of "Madness!" over and over), but Ryan seems content with the moral ambiguity that has been a hallmark of war films in the post-Vietnam era. This ambiguity probably stems from, again, the emphasis on the existential individual, who is described by *Philosophy* writer Mel Thompson as taking each situation and showing his true nature through his reaction to it.[6] Moral ambiguity is the inevitable result of a world where ethics is defined by each separate situation.

Moral ambiguity is the benchmark of *The English Patient*, where the line is so blurred that we often do not even know if the countries are clear about their positions, let alone the people forced to interact within them. This brings us to a second aspect of existentialism, and that is a rejection of conformity, namely national conformity. In the film, we have a Hungarian, Count Almasy (Ralph Fiennes), who is mistaken for being everything from German to English (hence the ironically-titled, English *Patient*), and the mistakes are not, in any way, meaningless or insignificant. Mistaken identity plays a key figure in the plot of the film and it shows the further emptiness of war, by showing that not everything is about real ideals and beliefs, but rather about something as superficial as nationality. It is hard to imagine a more unpatriotic notion.

This blurring of "bad" and "good" guys, part of which makes *The English Patient* so rich a film, has become very common in post-Vietnam films, and though *Saving Private Ryan* reverts to the old ways of portraying the "bad" guys as pure evil without individualism (a concept that Stephen Spielberg avoided

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[6] Mel Thompson, *Philosophy* (Chicago: NTC Publishing Group, 1995), 176.

with his other 1990s World War II film, *Schindler's List* (1993), and Wolfgang Peterson rejected both beautifully and horrifyingly with the 1981 film, *Das Boot), The Thin Red Line* manages to perfectly show both the savagery and the humanity of both the Japanese and the Americans. The result is a film that shows war not as an act of good versus evil, but as an act against being, the fundamental existential concept. This is explored in most post-Vietnam films, including *The English Patient*, where we see people who are not even on the front line having their lives destroyed by World War II, and we see numerous sets of romantic couples permanently torn apart by the effects of war.

All of the ideas about ruined lives go back to a basic convention seen primarily in post-Vietnam war genre films, and that is the myth of domesticity. The one thing that becomes almost universal in war films is the reason men fight, and that is to get back to the comfort, stability, and safety of their homes and loved ones. The post-Vietnam film rejects this as nothing more than an illusion, and, by way of everything from Willard's ex-wife in *Apocalypse Now* to the treatment of Tom Cruise's disabled veteran by people back in America in *Born on the Fourth of July*, shows that this world does not exist; that men, and, subsequently, their families, are permanently scared by war. The death of Ryan's three brothers reaffirms this belief, as does the countless dead, physical and emotional, in *The English Patient*, and the wife of one of the men (Ben Chaplin) in *The Thin Red Line,* who has the audacity to ask for a divorce before he even returns from battle. This convention, commonplace today, would not be present in the pre-Vietnam era. It would have been perceived as too damaging to a nation's, and, subsequently, a soldier's, morale.

Today's war movies are, thanks to the jolt Vietnam provided to American films and society, easy to place in both a historical and philosophical context. The Vietnam films of the late 1970s and 1980s came forth with a bold new vision of war that today's war films; even ones about World War II have embraced. These films are where war is portrayed as ugly, morally ambiguous, downright brutal, and certainly not patriotic. It shows the nation's disenchantment with itself, the myth of the

United States. And, on a deeper level it shows our continued and deepening disenchantment with the act of war itself.

We now, whether consciously or not, understand the fact that war is, *as The Thin Red Line* so blatantly states, in both words and symbols, a crime against existence, thus the call for existentialism. The Vietnam films blazed this path, and now we see these concepts applied to cinematic visions of other wars, as well. As Burr wrote, some war films today are "visions . . . that could never have been realized if Vietnam had still been lying undigested in our cultural craw."[7] After years of ignorance and denial about the pain of Vietnam (and, in a sense, perhaps, all wars whose true face was once hidden by rigid, blinding and socially-conforming patriotism), films like *Coming Home* (1978), *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *Apocalypse Now*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Platoon*, *and Born on the Fourth of July,* allowed us to finally accept it and move on, but not by forgetting the true nature of war. Today's war films, like *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Thin Red Line*, and *The English Patient*, show us we have not forgotten this doctrine.

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[7] Burr, 133.

Filmography

Apocalypse Now. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. With Martin Sheen, Marlon Brando. Paramount, 1979.

Born on the Fourth of July . Dir. Oliver Stone. With Tom Cruise, Willem Dafoe. Universal, 1989.

Bridge on the River Kwai. Dir. David Lean. With Alec Guiness, William Holden. Columbia, 1957.

Casablanca. Dir. Michael Curtiz. With Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman. Warner Bros., 1943

Coming Home. Dir. Hal Ashby. With Jon Voight, Jane Fonda. MGM, 1978.

Das Boot. Dir. Wolfgang Peterson. With Jurgen Prochnow. Columbia, 1981.

The Deer Hunter. Dir. Michael Cimino. With Robert DeNiro, Meryl Streep, John Cazale. Universal, 1978.

Dr. Stranglove. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. With Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden. Columbia, 1964

The English Patient. Dir. Anthony Minghella. With Ralph Fiennes, Juliette Binoche, Kristen Scott-Thomas. Miramax, 1996.

Forrest Gump. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. With Tom Hanks, Galy Sinise. Paramount, 1994.

Full Metal Jacket. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. With Matthew Modine, Lee Ermey, Vincent   D'Onofrio.Warner Bros., 1987.

The Green Berets. Dir. John Wayne. With John Wayne, David Janssen, Jim Hutton. Warner Bros., 1968.

Heaven and Earth. Dir. Oliver Stone. With Tommy Lee Jones. Hollywood Pictures, 1994.

JFK. Dir. Oliver Stone. With Kevin Costner, Tommy Lee Jones, Joe Pesci. Warner Bros., 1991.

M*A*S*H. Dir. Robert Altman. With Donald Sutherland, Elliott Gould, Tom Skerritt. 20th Century Fox, 1970.

Nixon. Dir. Oliver Stone. With Anthony Hopkins, Joan Allen. Hollywood Pictures, 1995.

Platoon. Dir. Oliver Stone. With Charlie Sheen, Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe. Orion, 1986.

Saving Private Ryan. Dir. Stephen Spielberg. With Tom Hanks, Tom Sizemore. Dreamworks, 1998.

Schindler's List. Dir. Stephen Spielberg. With Liam Neeson, Ralph Fiennes. Universal, 1993.

The Thin Red Line. Dir. Terrence Mahck. With Nick Nolte, Sean Penn. 20th Century Fox, 1998.

Yankee Doodle Dandy. Dir. Michael Curtiz. With James Cagney. Warner Bros., 1943.

Sheridan: A Study of Generalship in the Shenandoah

Douglas Bible

*Douglas is a junior in the History Department at
Eastern. This paper was written for a course on the
Civil War Era with Dr. Mark Voss-Hubbard.*

The battles of Shiloh, Antietam, Gettysburg, and
Vicksburg are acknowledged turning points of the American
Civil War. The Eastern Theater of the Civil War had been a
singularly hostile one to the Union armies up to 1864. The
Army of Northern Virginia had defeated the Union Army of the
Potomac so many times that Gettysburg seemed an aberration.
Then suddenly, in 1864, the Confederate armies in Virginia and
Georgia were defeated and practically destroyed. The
fundamental factor of the dramatic turn-around in these
battlefields was the appointment of Ulysses S. Grant as head of
the Union Army and the leadership of General William
Tecumseh Sherman. The third great Union Commander of the
Civil War, General Philip Sheridan, orchestrated a crushing
Union victory in the Shenandoah Valley.

Looking at the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, it
is important to analyze it in the context of Sheridan's life and
experience. Where did he come from, what had prepared him
for the task, and why was he picked? These questions are
important, as is the matter of what he did to win the campaign
itself. The story of Philip Sheridan's success in the Shenandoah
Valley was a product of many things. Union battalion, regiment,
division, and corps commanders and their soldiers performed
their jobs successfully. But the key factor was that the overall
Union Commander proved to be more than capable of
accomplishing the mission. General Sheridan proved himself to
be one of the greatest generals in this country's history. His
skill, tenacity, driving force, and leadership won the Shenandoah
Campaign of 1864.

Sheridan came from a humble background. Born to poor
Irish parents in 1831, he went on to graduate from West Point
in1853. Surprisingly, this famous cavalry commander of the

Civil War was assigned, upon graduation, to the infantry branch. He was stationed on the West Coast at the outbreak of war. The expansion of the army to meet war demands resulted in Sheridan's promotion to captain, and he was assigned to the 13th United States infantry.[1] The actual manner of his transit from the West Coast to the Eastern Theater is something of a mystery. As General Grant stated, "he was promoted to a captaincy in May, 1861, and before the close of the year managed in some way, I do not know how, to get East."[2] At that point, General Henry W. Halleck snatched him for administrative duties. Then his career took off with his appointment, by the Governor of Michigan, as commander of the Second Michigan Cavalry, and simultaneously, promotion to Colonel.[3] This was to prove a watershed for Sheridan, for he "led his regiment into a half-dozen skirmishes, a daring 180-mile raid, and a masterful battle at Boonville, Missouri, where his 750 troopers routed 4,000 Confederates."[4] These achievements led to his promotion to Brigadier General only thirty-five days after becoming a Colonel.[5] He was given command of the eleventh division and at Perryville his division repelled five Confederate assaults and, by doing so, preserved the line and saved Buell's Army. He went on to further renown in the Battle of Stones River, where Major General Rousseau described the scene as follows:

> I knew it was infernal in there before I got in, but I was convinced of it when I saw Phil Sheridan, hat in one hand and sword in the other, fighting as if he were the devil incarnate, and swearing as if he had a fresh indulgence from Father Tracy every five minutes.[6]

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[1] Edward J. Stackpole, *Sheridan in the Shenandoah: Jubal Early's Nemesis* (Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1961), 109-111, 112.

[2] U. S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, ed. E. B. Long (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1952), 209.

[3] Stackpole, 113, 114.

[4] Paul Andrew Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 12.

[5] Stackpole, 115.

[6] Hutton, 12-13.

This unbroken string of successes continued through to the Battle of Chattanooga where he came to the attention of Grant. This resulted in Sheridan's joining Grant in the East and his rise to glory.

The stage was set for the Shenandoah Campaign. However, there was one more campaign to be fought by Sheridan before being sent to the Shenandoah. Grant's first assignment for Sheridan was to command the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac.[7] He achieved much success in that role. One of the principal reasons for that was his attitude toward cavalry tactics. It was in this venue that his experience in both infantry and cavalry had great effect. As stated by Captain DuBois, Sheridan's Medical Director of the Cavalry Corps, Sheridan had a distinct view of cavalry utilization; in effect he wrote that Sheridan had the "power to give the rapidity of movement of cavalry to infantry . . . and . . . to convert cavalry into infantry and to give them the steadiness and discipline of the latter."[8] At first there was conflict between Sheridan and General George Meade, who was in command of the Army of the Potomac, over the proper role of cavalry. The source of conflict lay in Meade's belief that the cavalry should be used to screen camps and protect the logistics trains. In contrast, Sheridan viewed the role of cavalry as offensive, specifically to provide reconnaissance, raids, and security by destroying hostile cavalry. This came to a head on May 8, 1864, when, after a confrontation, Grant chose to let Sheridan carry out independent operations.[9] Grant ordered Sheridan to "cut loose from the Army of the Potomac, pass around the left of Lee's army and attack his cavalry."[10] This set the stage for Sheridan's raid into the Confederate rear. The first major encounter of the raid freed four hundred Union Prisoners of War. The key battle of the raid occurred on May 11, 1864, at Yellow Tavern where the Confederate cavalry was defeated and J. E. B. Stuart killed.[11]

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[7] Stackpole, 117.
[8] Ibid., 125.
[9] Ibid., 127-129.
[10] Grant, 378.
[11] Stackpole, 134-136.

Thus, Sheridan was an experienced combat commander with an unbeaten record and a talent for independent operations, particularly where cavalry was concerned, and had been thoroughly prepared to undertake independent operations against Jubal Early in the Shenandoah Valley. There was one last prelude to the Shenandoah Valley Campaign and that was Jubal Early's campaign towards Washington through the Valley. On June 12, 1864, General Early received orders to take the 2nd Corps, with artillery attached, to undertake an independent campaign up the Shenandoah and threaten Washington.[12] Early's force defeated General Lou Wallace on July 9, and demonstrated in front of Washington's fortifications on July 11. This was quite frightening to the Union government, and Union forces were immediately summoned to "protect" the Capital. On July 18, a Union division tried to ford the Shenandoah River and was defeated by Early in the Battle of Cool Spring. With two corps, the 6th and 9th Corps, from Grant's army, General Horatio Gouverneur Wright defeated one of Early's infantry divisions two days later; Early retreated after this, convincing General Wright the threat was over and the two corps were returned to Grant. The small force under General George Crook that was left behind to secure the Valley was routed by Early's force at Second Kernstown. Afterwards, Early dispatched a cavalry force to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania to burn the town. That was accomplished with a vengeance.

In any assessment of that campaign one must remember that Early's force was quite small. The continuing victories, blemished only when a vastly superior force fell upon a single of his infantry divisions, can be, in fact had to be, a direct result of the leadership. A large share of credit should be given to Jubal Early. When Grant decided to take decisive action and dispatched the 6th and 19th Corps, augmented by two divisions of cavalry, under General Philip Sheridan to the Shenandoah Valley it was to face an accomplished and formidable foe. The stage had been set, now all that remained to be seen was whether

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[12] Jubal A. Early, "In Sight of the Dome of the Capital," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, ed. Ned Bradford (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956), 527.

this cavalry general, Sheridan, had the leadership ability to take on a Confederate army in the Shenandoah.[13]

The situation in the Shenandoah Valley was serious at this point. Sheridan was going to have to enter into a battlefield that had witnessed the defeat of many Union leaders. Would Sheridan fare any better? His abilities were questioned at the very top, especially given the history of Union forces in the Valley. On hearing of Sheridan's appointment:

> Lincoln objected because of Sheridan's youth, but youthful audacity was essential if the North was to seal off the Shenandoah breadbasket from Lee. The reputations of Fremont, Banks, Shields, Sigel, and Hunter were shattered campaigning in the valley.[14]

Grant issued the order initiating the Shenandoah Valley Campaign on August 5, 1864, and indicated his intent that not only was Early to be crushed, but the Valley was to be eliminated as a supply source for the Confederacy.[15] Upon hearing the news of Sheridan's appointment, General Sherman wrote Grant saying, "I am glad you have given Sheridan the command of the forces to defend Washington. He will worry Early to death."[16] Criticized by some, praised by others, and ordered to conduct a campaign of total destruction, it was time for Sheridan to show whether he had what it would take.

The first action of Sheridan's was auspicious as he, immediately upon establishing a headquarters for his Army of the Shenandoah, was to send for his chief engineer, Lieutenant John Rogers Meigs, to familiarize himself with the geography

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[13] National Park Service, *Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia: Pursuant to Public Law 101-628* (Washington: U. S. Department of the Interior, 1992), 38-39.

[14] Hutton, 14.

[15] Stackpole, 142.

[16] A. Wilson Greene, "Union Generalship in the 1864 Valley Campaign," in *Struggle for the Shenandoah: Essays on the 1864 Valley Campaign*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1991), 43.

and topography of the Valley.[17] Already he exhibited those traits that would make him such an effective commander, particularly the appreciation for the importance of terrain. He also established his lines of communications and supply. This created a misperception that may well have helped him later, as the result of his deliberateness in establishing his supplies he was seen as timid. This was a false impression as:

> What may have appeared to the more impulsive Early, and to many people in the Northern states as well, to be evidence of lack of aggressiveness was nothing more than the calculated deliberateness of a general who believed in leaving to chance nothing that could be provided by foresight and careful preparation.[18]

The organization of Sheridan's forces also proved to be significant. He had the equivalent of six infantry divisions and two, later three cavalry divisions. Early had four infantry divisions and one cavalry division to whom Lee detached one additional infantry division and one cavalry division.[19] In short, during the largest battle of the campaign Sheridan commanded 31,000 men and Early commanded 18,000 men.[20] It should be noted, however, that this was actually substantially less numerical superiority than the Union Army had enjoyed thus far in the war in almost every major battle. On the August 10, 1864, Sheridan finally was ready to move. Sheridan quickly pressed south until, upon reaching Cedar Creek, he found Early dug in on dominant terrain at Fisher's Hill. Sheridan showed superb generalship by refusing to allow a general engagement against an entrenched force on commanding terrain and switching to the defensive.[21]

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[17] Stackpole, 147.

[18] Ibid., 147-148.

[19] Ibid., 148-153.

[20] Thomas B. Buell, *The Warrior Generals: Combat Leadership in the Civil War* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1997), 441, 443.

[21] Stackpole, 155.

At this point, Sheridan received word from Grant ordering a defensive campaign until reinforced due to large Confederate forces moving to reinforce Early. Grant reported that the reinforcements would leave Early with a numerical advantage of 10,000 men, Grant had overestimated the number, and Sheridan's position was open to attack from two sides so Sheridan undertook a strategic withdrawal. He took the initiative to destroy the crops throughout the areas as he withdrew, thus initiating the scorched earth campaign he had been sent to the Shenandoah to undertake. It was during this withdrawal that Sheridan's cavalry became engaged at Cedarville, where one infantry and two cavalry brigades of Confederate troops were soundly defeated.

In assessing Sheridan's generalship during the Shenandoah campaign, the battles in which he was not involved, such as the battle of Cedarville, should also be mentioned. Sheridan selected his own subordinate commanders. And any significant battle of the campaign was fought, if not by Sheridan, by a commander selected by Sheridan. Sheridan's genius can be seen in his character judgement as well as his campaigns. In any case, the Union withdrawal ended at Halltown, where Sheridan dug in his Army of the Shenandoah, with impassable rivers protecting both flanks; Early showed his wisdom by declining to attack such a strong position.[22] Despite Early's acknowledgement of the strength of Sheridan's position, the whole withdrawal, conducted under orders, convinced him that, as Early wrote in his memoirs, "The events of the last month had satisfied me . . . that the commander opposed to me was without enterprise, and possessed an excessive caution which amounted to timidity."[23] At that point Sheridan and Early played a waiting game knowing that sooner or later either Grant or Lee was going to call back their reinforcements, Lee blinked first.

With the recall of General James Patton Anderson by Lee, Sheridan advanced to a new position at Berryville. When Anderson moved through the Berryville area, two Union

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[22] Ibid., 167-169.
[23] Ibid., 171.

divisions under General George Crook engaged him.[24]   The result was a sharp engagement after which Anderson withdrew. Eventually, Anderson made it back to Lee, which once again established a healthy numerical superiority to Sheridan.[25]   In the mean time, the Northern press was calling for action to the point that even Grant began to doubt Sheridan and decided to visit Sheridan in the field and force action.[26]   When the meeting took place, Sheridan preempted Grant with a plan for an offensive against Early across the Opaque River.   Sheridan had reconnoitered the terrain and seized upon his advantages, always the mark of a good general.   Early was "kind" enough, at this moment, to split his army giving Sheridan the opportunity to defeat it in detail. Unfortunately, Early received word of Grant's visit, understood its significance, and raced to reconstitute his army.   Thus, when Sheridan initiated the battle he was disappointed by the fact that, although not concentrated, Early's army was in mutually supporting positions.

On September 19, 1864, the first major battle of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign occurred; the North was to call it the Battle of the Opequon while the South called it the Third Battle of Winchester.   The Battle of the Opequon was a bloody affair that rates as the fiercest battle fought in the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War.   The first phase of the battle involved the crossing of the Opequon by General James Harrison Wilson's cavalry division, followed by the 6th Corps, the 19th Corps, and Crook's corps.   The second phase of the battle was the fording of General Wesley Merritt's cavalry division in the face of strong resistance by John McCausland's cavalry; eventually the Union cavalry broke clear and got around behind the Confederates.   The third phase of the battle involved both Early and Sheridan deploying their forces for the main battle. The fourth phase of the battle commenced at 11:40 a.m., with the attack by General Cuvier Grover's infantry division across Middle Field.   It encountered General George Washington

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[24] Ibid., 174.

[25] Wesley Merritt, "Destroying, Burning," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, ed. Ned Bradford (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956), 539.

[26] Stackpole, 179.

Gordon's division and was devastated; Grover never broke the Confederate line. The 19th Corps kept feeding brigades into Middle Field until the corps was exhausted, at which point Middle Field became quiet.[27]

Simultaneously, the 6th Corps launched an attack on Stephen Dodson Ramseur's division, which penetrated his left flank, and the Confederates started to fall back. At that point, Early had the Confederate reserve, General Robert Emmett Rodes' infantry division, counterattacked into the gap that had formed between the 6th and 19th corps. Sheridan sent in the 6th Corps reserve, General David Allen Russell's division, which managed to restore the line. At this point, the Confederate line was the same as at the beginning of the battle. In the mean time, Union cavalry under William Woods Averell and Merritt were engaging Confederate cavalry and pushing the Confederates back. Sheridan then sent the army reserve, Crook's corps, around the Confederate flank.[28] The move worked and Crook turned Gordon's flank, the end result was the Confederate line compacted in an L shape under heavy pressure on two fronts. At that moment Sheridan ordered a general attack in coordination with Averell and Merritt's cavalry, hitting the Confederate rear; the move worked and Early's army scattered.

The day had been grim but the Army of the Shenandoah stood triumphant upon the battlefield at dusk. The campaign was not over as Early reconstituted his army and fell back to defensive positions.[29] Sheridan had won his first major battle of the campaign, and he had done it with skill and resourcefulness. The timely use of his reserves to preserve the Union position, the flank attack outmaneuvering the Confederates, and the infantry-cavalry coordination that broke Early's forces, all of that has to be credited to Sheridan. As one of Sheridan's subordinates stated after the initial attack stalled, "he had come out to fight, and though chafing at the unexpected delay, fight he would to the bitter end."[30] Grant had this to say about his young

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[27] National, 93-94.
[28] Ibid., 95.
[29] Ibid., 96.
[30] Merritt, 541.

subordinate, "he met Early at the crossing of Opequon Creek, and won a most decisive victory – one, which electrified the country."[31]   As one historian has said, "Sheridan's personal courage, ability to respond to fluid battlefield conditions, and skillful use of combined cavalry and infantry contributed to the successful outcome."[32]   Sheridan even received a letter of appreciation from Lincoln, which stated, "Have just heard of your great victory.   God bless you all, officers and men. Strongly inclined to come up and see you."[33]

The stage was now set for the next major battle as Sheridan moved to attack Early's new defensive positions at Fisher's Hill; as Stackpole stated, "in the last analysis, it would be a question of whether Sheridan's field generalship . . . would pay off."[34] Sheridan's first action in preparing for the next battle was to detach General Torbert with a division and a half of cavalry to circle behind the Confederate position so as to cut off Early's line of retreat. Once again, like at Opequon, Sheridan scouted the terrain and Early's position before developing his final plan. He determined that there was great potential for a decisive turning movement against Early's left flank. The time had come for the next battle.[35]

On September 21 and 22 of 1864, the Battle of Fisher's Hill was fought between Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah and Early's battered Confederate army.[36] On the 21st, Sheridan moved the 6th Corps to a position opposite the Confederate right-center, the 19th Corps to the left of that, and Crook's corps in reserve out of sight; he had the 6th and the 19th Corps entrench their positions. After moving his units into position, Sheridan ordered a group of hills in front of the Confederate position seized; after a number of repulsed attacks the hills fell. General Horatio Gouverneur Wright described the importance of this move as: "Of the greatest importance to the operations the next day, as it gave us a view of the enemy's line and afforded

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[31] Grant, 475.
[32] Greene, 57.
[33] Stackpole, 233.
[34] Ibid., 244-245.
[35] Stackpole, 246-247, 249.
[36] National, 99.

excellent positions for artillery, of which we availed ourselves in the more important struggle of the 22nd."[37]

Overnight and into the next morning Sheridan pushed his forces to within skirmishing range of the Confederate works, while bringing Crook's corps up on the left flank, by way of ravines keeping the troops hidden. At 2:00 p.m. Sheridan ordered Crook to commence a flanking movement, at 4:00 p.m. Crook's was in position and ordered the charge. Once Crook's corps smashed into the Confederate flank Sheridan ordered a general assault; the Confederate army broke quickly and abandoned much equipment, including 14 artillery pieces, in their haste to escape. The only setback for Sheridan was his cavalry's defeat in the rear, which prevented him from capturing Early's entire force, thus, Early's army escaped to fight again once more.[38] The battle was a crushing Union victory. Due to Sheridan's superb planning, and his army's excellent execution, the Confederate force suffered twice the casualties of Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah.[39] Surprisingly, little appears about this battle in memoirs and campaign descriptions. Perhaps, that is because it went so well and was over so quick that there just was not the type of violent contest of wills, which normally attracts so much attention. That is a shame, as the Battle of Fisher's Hill was one of the most successful and brilliantly conceived and executed battles of the Civil War.

After a failed pursuit of Early and his men, Sheridan marched back north destroying everything of value to the Confederacy in his path.[40] While most people associate total war during the Civil War with General Sherman, General Sheridan and his Army of the Shenandoah were equally effective practitioners of it, albeit in a smaller area. The most important development, as far as Sheridan was concerned, was the revitalizing of the Union cavalry, which finally showed its mettle in the battle of Tom's Brook.[41] Sheridan had issued an order to

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[37] Ibid.,100.
[38] Ibid., 100-101.
[39] Stackpole, 256.
[40] Ibid., 262-270.
[41] Ibid., 271-272.

his cavalry which said, destroy the Confederate cavalry or die trying; his cavalry found the former preferable to the later.[42] Confederate cavalry casualties amounted to ten percent, more importantly Union cavalry showed itself as superior, pursuing the enemy cavalry twenty-six miles back to Confederate lines.[43] Early was convinced, still, of his superiority over Sheridan and confident that his soldiers were the better fighters, thus he decided to launch a surprise offensive against Sheridan at the first opportunity.[44]   The War Department called Sheridan to Washington; he arrived on October 17, and returned the next day to Winchester where he spent the night twenty miles from his Army.[45]   The next day would be Sheridan's ultimate test in leadership, for at 5:00 a.m. on October 19, 1864, the Battle of Cedar Creek commenced.[46]

The Battle of Cedar Creek started out extremely bad for the Army of the Shenandoah as the Union positions were taken by surprise.[47]   The reason for that was the acting commander, General Wright, had ignored Sheridan's orders about security; he failed to secure his flanks and invited the dawn attack on the Union left flank that routed the Union troops.[48]   After the first Confederate volley at 5:00 a.m. it only took half an hour to rout Crook's corps, thereafter the Union troops were forced to retreat.[49]   At roughly 10:30 a.m. Sheridan arrived to find his entire army on the verge of collapse and rout.[50]   The arrival of Sheridan was remembered by one of his men:

> Stopping at Winchester over night on the 18th, on his way from Washington, General Sheridan heard the noise of the battle the following morning, and hurried to the field.   His coming restored confidence.   A cheer from the cavalry, which awakened the echoes

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[42] National, 105.
[43] Stackpole, 272.
[44] Ibid., 274-277.
[45] Ibid., 279-280.
[46] National, 110.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Greene, 69-70.
[49] National, 110.
[50] Ibid., 111.

of the valley, greeted him and spread the good news
of his coming over the field.[51]

As Grant described the effect of Sheridan's return, "Many of
those who had run ten miles got back in time to redeem their
reputation as gallant soldiers before night."[52] Greene described
the occasion as, "Sheridan's arrival on the field, heralded by a
swelling chorus of cheers resonating up the Pike, transformed the
Northern army as if by chemical reaction."[53]   The undeniable
fact was that through force of will, Sheridan rallied his troops
and quickly established a line. He started a counterattack at
about 3:00 p.m. Sheridan had Merritt advance his cavalry on the
Union left, at about 3:30 p.m. General Custer launched a division
strength cavalry charge into the Confederate left; this was
extraordinarily successful and the Confederate line started
collapsing left to right. At 4:00 p.m. Sheridan ordered a general
attack; that with repeated assaults managed to collapse the entire
Confederate line.   Sheridan had his cavalry pursue Early's
devastated force until stopped by nightfall; his cavalry captured
43 artillery pieces, over 200 wagons, and large numbers of
prisoners.[54]   The story of Sheridan's ride sparked the popular
imagination, of both the man and the horse that carried him to
battle. The last part of the poem "Sheridan's Ride" goes as
follows:

> There, with the glorious general's name
> Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:
> Here is the steed that saved the day
> By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
> From Winchester – twenty miles away![55]

The Battle of Cedar Creek was Sheridan's greatest leadership
challenge of the war; to say he passed the test is an
understatement.   No other battle in the Civil War had the tide

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[51] Merritt, 547.
[52] Grant, 480.
[53] Greene, 72.
[54] National, 111.
[55] Sue Cottrell, *Hoof Beats North and South: Horses and Horsemen
of the Civil War* (New York: Exposition Press, 1975), 48.

turn against a winning army so quickly, and all as a result of one man. Sheridan was truly one of the best, if not the best, general of the Civil War, proven in the worst trial of all, the Battle of Cedar Creek.

With the Union victory at Cedar Creek, the Shenandoah Valley Campaign was essentially over. In a period of one month Sheridan had defeated Jubal Early three times, and his hand picked subordinate commanders defeated Early's subordinates at least three other times. The Confederate disaster in the Shenandoah occurred so quickly, and after over two years of Confederate domination of the Valley, that there are inevitably arguments over why such a reversal of fortune took place. Many argue that the disaster was a result of poor generalship on Early's part, and make the comparison with Jackson's campaign in the Valley. In response to that suggestion, Gallagher has a number of arguments, first, "in his entire Confederate career, Jackson never confronted a man of Sheridan's ability."[56] He goes on to assert that, "Sheridan's gifts as a commander and the Federal force's superiority in numbers would have overcome the best efforts of any general laboring under the handicaps placed on Jubal Early."[57] On the quality of Sheridan's generalship the assessment of Greene is particularly revealing:

> No general in those days of personal leadership inspired troops more effectively. He employed cavalry with infantry more skillfully than anyone . . . before him. He never knew a moment's indecision and adjusted instantly to changing tactical conditions. Above all, like another great Valley general, he nourished an indomitable will to win and always looked for a decisive victory.[58]

The truth of those statements comes from the impressive display of leadership in the Shenandoah. As Buell described the obligations of general officers: "Intelligent employment of combat power; discipline well-being and morale of troops; . . .

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[56] Gallagher, 17.
[57] Ibid., 18.
[58] Greene, 75.

supply; communications; gathering intelligence; the need for accurate maps; relations with politicians, the public, and the media."[59]

Those obligations, and the complementary traits, were well exhibited and shown by Sheridan in his service. The Shenandoah Valley Campaign displayed a remarkable general who exhibited remarkable generalship. The story of the Shenandoah Campaign is the story of General Philip Sheridan. The first campaign in the Shenandoah brought one brilliant general into the public eye. The last brought a possibly even superior general into the public eye. Either way, the Shenandoah Valley saw its share of great generalship.

The Shenandoah Valley showcased the superb skill of Sheridan. It was his generalship that finally was able to convert the Union advantages in men and material in to victory. As such, he stands in the company of Grant and Sherman. The Union had always had a manpower and material advantage, but not until the ascendancy of those great generals in 1864, did the Confederacy lose all hope of victory. In the end, the one great change between the losses of 1861-1863, and the victories of 1864-1865 were in the Union generalship. With Grant bearing down on Petersburg and Appomattox, with Sherman taking Atlanta and leaving a swath of destruction through Georgia and the Carolinas, and Sheridan ravaging Early and laying waste to the Shenandoah. The Confederacy was crushed, and the Shenandoah Campaign excels in exhibiting just what kind of generalship won the Civil War.

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[59] Buell, xxvii.

**Braided Rugs:
A Surprising Forum for Progressive Reform**

Elisabeth Engel

Elisabeth is a graduate student in the Historical Administration program. This paper was written for course on Material Life in America, 1600-1900, with Dr. Debra Reid.

When visitors enter a historic home, very little attention is paid to rugs and carpeting which soften the footfalls on the hard and softwood floors. There is a varied history to those pieces, which goes beyond its maker and its mere function to incorporate social attitudes and changes. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, carpets and other floor coverings were scarce, and most of home decor would be considered meager by current standards. In the years of English colonization the colonies produced raw materials for England, rarely finished products. Only the wealthy colonists could afford luxury items like carpeting, imported from England even after the American Revolution. Generally, colonists who could not purchase carpeting created or purchased rugs. The process of creating rugs through weaving or braiding incorporates a surrounding culture that has endured for centuries. Yet, simply reading about the history of textile production cannot fully create an appreciation for the subject. To intensify the research process the author created a rug herself to understand the historic context more completely.

After the Colonial Era the process of making rugs or other handicraft continued to be a tradition passed from one generation to the next. Also important to the traditions surrounding handicrafts was the educational and moral values associated with engaging in these kinds of home industries. Lucy Larcom wrote in 1899 of her childhood experiences in the early 1800s. She described her aunt sitting at her wheel in the kitchen spinning flax. It was in this setting that Lucy "learned [her] letters in a few days, standing at Aunt Hannah's knee while she pointed them out in the spelling book with a pin, skipping over the 'a b abs' into words of one and two syllables, thence

taking a flying leap into the New Testament."[1]   These recollections of home life would be a motivating force behind many social reforms beginning in the mid-nineteenth century.

Industrial processes made carpeting affordable by the mid-1800s and it eventually became an essential element in home decor. Helen Von Rosenstiel and Gail Caskey Winkler, in their book *Floor Coverings for Historic Buildings*, term this period "The Carpet Revolution."   A shift from a local commercially based economy to an industrial-centered society created an increase in the middle-class population. This in turn changed consumption and enlarged production patterns creating a demand for a wider range of goods including new interior decoration like wallpaper, light fixtures, artwork, furniture, and even floor coverings of all types. The biggest boom in carpet production occurred when steam-powered looms entered the manufacture scene. By 1841 these types of powered looms were producing twenty-five yards a day, four times the amount made on handlooms. The amount being fabricated coupled with a decrease in cost made it possible for the middle-class to include carpeting of some type in their homes.[2]

This mechanization caused many individuals to call for a reclaiming of "traditional" handicraft as a form of protest. They felt that industrialization created a society with escalating impersonality and moral degradation. They viewed home crafts, such as weaving and rug making, as a protest against an ever-increasing homogenous society. Many individuals joined the Arts and Crafts movement as an outlet to express the individuality they were "losing."   In 1902, Oscar Triggs wrote that, "the Arts and Crafts movement is the industrial phase of the modern evolution of individuality."[3]   Women in the Arts and

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[1] Maria Bank, *Anonymous was a Woman: A Celebration in Words and Images of Traditional American Art—and the Women who Made It* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1995), 16.

[2] Helen Von Rosenstiel and Gial Caskey Winkler, *Floor Coverings for Historic Homes* (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1988), 41-50,73-81,117,120-22. A detailed description of the floors and their coverings prior to the advent of industrialization can be found in this book.

[3] Oscar Lovell Triggs, *Chapters in the History of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (Chicago: The Bohemia Guild of the Industrial Art League, 1902), 162.

Crafts movement reinforced Victorian ideals about women's culture. Idealists intended that knowledge should be transmitted from one generation of morally upright women to the next and weaving proved an excellent model for the reform-minded craft revivalists. Like Lucy Larcom learning the alphabet at the knee of her aunt, weaving provided an oral tradition, which created a basis for a morally upright lifestyle. Weaving, therefore, became a metaphor for the strength of the moral fiber and a symbol of the unification of art and labor, the essence behind the Arts and Crafts movement.[4]

The individuals and organizations that participated in the crafts revival translated their ideas to meet the objectives of Progressive-era reforms. For example, in 1906, Pauline Carrington Bouve suggested that the revival of the weaving industry would save the mind, spirit, and heart of America from the evils of industrialization. She wrote:

> There is much that is beautiful in our country. Who knows but that some day in the future an American weaver might stand before an American inventor and say as he points to the fabric on his loom: "O Inventor of great machines, I passed through the forest and saw the sunshine through the tender green leaves and heard the songs of birds, and I put them into my carpet with love and thankfulness in my heart for them. And therefore is my, O maker of machines, greater than thine because that I deprive not my fellow man of the right to work out from his soul the thought that is in him!"[5]

Bouve believed that weaving flourished not in a commercial center but in an agricultural climate—country life was the ideal. Bouve also proposed that weaving programs be instituted as an aspect of jail reform. Establishing weaving shops in jails would not only provide the government with a profit but also provide

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[4] Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Moris, and the Craftsman Ideal in America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 122-23.

[5] Pauline Carrington Bouve, "The Story of the Rug," *New England Magazine* (March 1906): 78.

the prisoner with "inward harmony" or "new freshness . . . to his heart and soul." Not to mention that the "somber tone of prison life and prison work [would be] touched with color."[6]

Another reformer wanted to use rug making as a way to ease the lives of farmwomen. Handicraft, according to the reformer, would push back the tide of stress caused by the rapid changes occurring in America caused by industrialization and urbanization. This strain especially manifested itself in women, chiefly farmwomen. "Insanity among farms' wives, shows clearly the effect of mental and nervous energy left to turn back and ferment in a life of monotonous household care and the sordid trials of incident upon the possession of only insufficient means."[7] Weaving was a solution to this problem. It would allow women to create income without leaving the confines of the home and expand the minds and imagination of women.[8]

As we move closer to the present, the 1930s to 1990s, the literature begins to speak specifically about braided rugs and other rag rugs as part of home decoration. Designers advised placing these types of rugs in bedrooms and children's room, bathrooms, kitchens, or other hot rooms.[9] Designers and writers alike emphasized thrift, recycling of materials, beauty, practicality, and durability of the braided rug. They also expressed romantic sentiments in their promotion of rug making. Marguerite Ickis believed that homey comforts helped intellectuals like Benjamin Franklin retain a degree of practicality. In her book, *Braided Rugs for Fun and Profit*, she wrote that, "while their heads may be in the clouds, evidently philosophers know upon what their feet rested."[10] Connecting an American legend like Benjamin Franklin with an everyday object like rugs, helped perpetuate American myths. Romanticism of these myths garnered attention for these types of rugs; by having this form of rug, a commoner could relate to an

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[6] Ibid.

[7] "Distinctive American Rugs: Designed and Woven in the Homes of Country Women," *Craftsman* (June 1906): 366.

[8] Ibid, 336, 371, 372.

[9] Von Rosenstiel, 211.

[10] Marguerite Ickis, *Braided Rugs for Fun and Profit* (New York: Homecrafts, 1951), 3.

American legend. The associations of a traditional handicraft—the braided rug—with images sustaining and nurturing an ideal took on greater meaning during the Cold War. Fern Carter, also writing in the 1950s, gives us another example of this romanticism:

> As I see it, the braided rug was long ago promoted from the back porch to the parlor. By tradition alone it is entitled to a foremost place in American home. It is our first and only native floor covering and with it pioneer women succeeded in transforming crude shelters from the elements into comfortable homes.[11]

This is some of the information available to interpreters to implement into the educational goals of their sites. Interpreters in history museums can present three broad themes as they create their rugs. First, rugs were produced out of necessity. Second, rugs were used as a springboard for desired social reform. Finally, rugs were made based upon nostalgic beliefs about the countryside or specific time period such as the Colonial Era. The method chosen for interpretation depends on the time period, region, and economic status being interpreted.

Discovering the process used to create braided rugs that reflect the techniques used in 1830 or 1930 involves a survey of contemporary publications and period literature. Both offer information on the process as well as suggestions on collecting rags, dyeing, color, and design. Information can also be found in "help" books for women. For example, Mrs. Lydia Maria Francis Child's book, *The American Housewife* (1832), gave this advice to her readers: "After old coats, pantaloons, &c. have been cut up for boys, and are no longer capable of being converted into garments, cut them into strips, and employee the leisure moments of children, or domestics, in sewing and braiding them for door-mats."[12] In contrast to Mrs. Child's advice, Fern Carter suggested that her contemporaries use

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[11] Fern Carter, *Fern Carter's Braided Rug Book* (Portland: Fern Carter, 1953), 9.

[12] Lydia Maria Francis Child, *The American Frugal Housewife* (Boston: Carter, Hendee, and Co., 1832), 13.

primarily new woolens to complete their rugs, but used rags were acceptable:

> Any craftsman will agree that it is sheer waste to spend good time working with inferior materials. For this reason I use and suggest the use of woolens . . . You may use old woolens, or new, but don't use both old and new in the same rug. The reason for this is obvious, since the used wool will wear out much sooner than the new fabric. [13]

The information presented here represents only half of an experience historic sites can provide; Testing the knowledge and creative abilities of visitors by providing hands-on experimentation and visual stimulation is the other. It is not simply enough to read or hear about rug making and its impact on society because that is living vicariously through another's work, but actual creation of an object can bring new light to a historical encounter. Personal experience opens a new understanding of the labor costs, materials, and aesthetic qualities involved in weaving or braiding no matter what period a site is interpreting. For the author, the act of creating a braided rug augmented the research in ways that simple description cannot attest to. A first hand look at braided rugs provided the author with a holistic view of the past through—reading, communicating, and creating—something a historic site can implement into their educational programming.

The goal of interpreting this aspect of our material world is for the public to learn that rugs are more than just floor coverings used to keep feet from touching cold floors or to collect dirt from shoes. In fact, rugs have been used and seen in a light beyond their utilitarian function for centuries. A piece of material culture that visitors may take for granted can become a tool to interpret the goals of reformers. Braided rugs seemed so simple and unpretentious, a braided rug turned out to be more significant than just a piece of furnishing.

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[13] Carter, 13.

The Gestapo: Control Through Fear

Jill Lauerman

*Jill Lauerman is a graduate student in the History
program. This paper was written for a seminar in
European history with Dr. Dan McMillan.*

The word Gestapo conjures up images of arrests, strange
disappearances, beatings, concentration camps and above all
fear. From 1933 until 1945, the Gestapo established and
enforced a reputation of terror among the German population.
This reputation helped the Gestapo to effectively carry out Nazi
policies against the Jews and other "enemies" of the regime, as
well as keeping the rest of the German society in line. The
Gestapo will be remembered as one of the most feared groups in
the Nazi regime because of the terror it inflicted on German
society. Despite this world view, a topic of interest for historians
is whether or not the techniques used by the Gestapo has any real
impact on society? That is to say, did ordinary Germans change
their behavior in order to not run afoul of the Gestapo? After
considering various studies, it appears that historians largely
agree that these techniques, especially that of denunciation, here
defined as the act of one individual reporting another's actions to
the Gestapo, succeeded for a brief time in fundamentally
changing the way in which ordinary Germans behaved.

In order to begin to control the population, the Gestapo
had to first establish a fearful reputation, consisting of
controlling the population through fear rather than through civil
obedience to law enforcement. The Gestapo, initially a small
police unit, grew in power after the absorption of the SA and SS
into one large police unit in 1933[1] It became the official strong
arm of the regime after the Reichstag Fire in February of that
year. The Emergency Decrees that followed gave the police
system in Germany the power to circumvent the civil liberties of

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[1] Edward Crankshaw, *Gestapo: Instrument of Tyranny* (London:
Putnam, 1956; reprint, London: Greenhill Books, 1990), 16 (page citations are
to the reprint edition).

German citizens.[2]   By 1936, the Gestapo became nationalized and soon developed into the instrument through which Hitler could now begin to attack opposition to his regime. After any threat was crushed or repressed, Hitler could then use the Gestapo against both the German and Jewish population. The Gestapo functioned both inside and outside the law because of the 1936 Gestapo Laws.   As a result they became nearly independent of the regime's administrative offices and instead acted "as the instrument of the Führer's authority." [3]   With the powers that both the Reichstag Fire Emergency Decrees and the Gestapo Laws gave to the Gestapo, the group was free to begin building its reputation and crushing opposing groups.

The Gestapo began attacking the first opposition groups as early as the spring of 1933. These first groups included the Communists, the trade unions, and other left wing groups. Those involved or associated with these groups became the targets of the infant Nazi Secret Police system. Essentially, the Gestapo rounded up these individuals and a few became the first to be sent to what became known as the concentration camps. These early attacks on political opposition to the regime built up the reputation of the Gestapo. Although Robert Gellately, in *The Gestapo and German Society*, claimed that the Gestapo played a minor role in these round-ups, he did mention the effect of them on the general public. The result usually consisted of making the public think twice before speaking out against the regime, for fear that they may get arrested next.[4]

The early acts of the SA and the Gestapo were designed, in part, as a demonstration not only of their own growing power, but that of the regime as well. The Gestapo, through their increasingly relentless pursuit of "dissidents," made it clear to the public that to speak against the regime in any capacity meant that anyone could be the next to disappear into the night. The Gestapo used secretive arrests in order to create an aura of uncertainty within a community. In doing so, they introduced

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[2] Robert Gellately, *Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy, 1933-1945 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 40.*
[3] Gellately, *Gestapo,* 42.
[4] Gellately, *Gestapo,* 38-40.

the idea that only total compliance with the regime was acceptable: "In the absence of enthusiasm, silence, compliance or apathetic accommodation was to be preferred."[5] Word about the treatment of those taken secretly into protective custody by the Gestapo affected the public by demonstrating that not cooperating with the regime could threaten one's safety. The German population began conforming to Nazi policies when the disappearances became more than random incidents.

Scholars continue to debate just what kinds of treatment those arrested endured. Charges range from absolute sadism to merely implied threats of harm. Edward Crankshaw, in *Gestapo: Instrument of Tyranny*, maintained that the Gestapo knew no other way "than to kill or torture."[6] He asserted that after each arrest, the victims initially underwent verbal or mental abuse, then physical abuse, and finally were shipped off to a concentration camp where they usually died.[7] Crankshaw builds his entire study around the assumption that the Gestapo was nothing but a large killing machine used by the Nazis to crush any opposition and later to round up the Jewish population. While asserting this claim, Crankshaw exposed the flaw in his theory. He admits that no one can truly know exactly what happened to each victim once they were taken by the Gestapo because of the lack of documentary evidence needed to confirm that torture did indeed take place. Although the records that Crankshaw examined, primarily oral testimonies given by those few who managed to survive their ordeals, make for a convincing argument, their accounts may not accurately represent the experiences of the whole.

Robert Gellately contradicted Crankshaw's theories on this subject. In his book, Gellately included torture as a method used by the Gestapo in order to control the population. He mentioned that several of those who had been repeatedly arrested by the Gestapo committed suicide to avoid yet another arrest. Gellately also described some of the other methods the Gestapo used in order to extract confessions. These include blackmail,

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[5] Gellately, *Gestapo*, 39.
[6] Crankshaw, 126.
[7] Crankshaw, 126-31.

entrapment, intimidation, and extortion, to name a few. Despite these statements, Gellately asserted that many Gestapo offices served merely as paper-pushing centers or as collection houses for the extensive files gathered on individuals. He maintained that the Gestapo retained their control over the populace not by reputation alone, but by instilling enough fear about having suspicion aroused that few dared to question the regime. Gellately also noted that the Gestapo was not a large group as is sometimes stated, instead they relied on the population as their main source of information.

As a result, many Germans felt pressured to accommodate the regime – no matter what circumstance they found themselves in. This fear often caused one individual to denounce another in order to turn suspicion away from their own actions. An example of this comes out of Bernt Engelmann's memoirs, when a man caught reading a "seditious" newspaper places the blame on another man for supposedly obtaining the paper in the first place. He had the choice "to risk being caught . . . or to denounce the other man. He chose the lesser of two evils."[8] Engelmann decried the fact that society had changed so radically that an individual could turn in a possibly innocent man in order to deflect suspicion from himself. All of this occurred in response to the terror that the Gestapo held over Germans.

Gellately evaluated behavioral changes in individuals to support his theory that Gestapo practices inspired significant social cooperation with the regime. To support this, he noted changes in some individuals' behavior when dealing with Jewish friends, relatives or co-workers. Gellately stated that some individuals slowly curtailed their encounters with Jews while others simply ceased all contact. Many of these relationships had been going on for years and with the arrival of the Gestapo and their reputation for ruthlessness, many of these relationships came to abrupt ends, often without explanation from the Germans involved. Other ordinary Germans chose to commit suicide rather than have to decide between ending such relationships or risking harassment or imprisonment at the hands

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[8] Bernt Engelmann, *In Hitler's Germany: Daily Life in the Third Reich*, trans. Krishna Winston (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 41.

of the Gestapo. Fear of being sent to the concentration camps also forced people to change their behaviors. The camps were designed by the regime as "the ubiquitous threat hanging over every German . . . the very name was intended to cast a spell over every German, to stifle every movement of opposition."[9] Crankshaw also argued that the use of the camps was largely used to terrify the German population by stating that the Gestapo began to send people to the camps as a routine occurrence.

As early as 1933, the Gestapo deported some of the political prisoners arrested to concentration camps. The camps, at this time, were not yet the final destination for the Jews. The previously mentioned Reichstag Decrees and Gestapo Laws gave the police force further privileges and an open invitation to send "social deviants" or political prisoners to the camps for forced labor. Deportation of the Jews started as early as 1941. The Gestapo became largely responsible for the deportations of the Jews and other prisoners to the camps, and did so without being responsible to the law:

> The authority to issue warrants for preventive arrest, and consign men to concentration camps placed a murderous weapon in the hands of the Gestapo . . . [no one] was unable to prevent a man from suddenly disappearing behind the barbed wire of the concentration camps.[10]

Many of those arrested by the Gestapo early in its existence, as well as some Jews before the mass deportations began went to the camps because someone had denounced them.

The Gestapo used the effective technique of denunciation to further control the population. The threat of being reported to the Gestapo came from every section of the populace, providing the Gestapo with the overall appearance of total domination. The few records that survived the destruction of Gestapo offices show that the Gestapo received thousands of letters, or other forms of communication, reporting on the

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[9] Heinz Hohne, *The Order of the Death's Head*, trans. Richard Barry (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970), 201.

[10] Hohne, 201.

actions of individuals. While the level of denunciation fluctuated throughout the years of Nazi domination, it remained a vital technique for the Gestapo until just before the end of the war.

The Jews of Germany were most affected by these reports. Denunciations against Jews increased dramatically after the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. These laws were designed to prevent Jews from remaining active individuals in German society, as well as to further dehumanize the Jews in the eyes of that society. After the Laws were enacted, the Gestapo began to collect information in order to create files on the relationships that Jews had with ordinary Germans. According to Gellately, the destruction of such relationships was vital to getting the population to accept the new anti-Semitic policies.

The town of Eisenach is a prime example of using such tactics against the Jewish population. John Connelly, in "The Uses of *Volkgemeinschaft*," pointed out that considering the small numbers of Jews in the city, the denunciation rate appears quite high. "The records reflect the intense determination . . . to dissociate themselves from Jewish neighbors . . . and] that even a trace of contact with Jews could be made to seem suspect."[11] Lower Franconia and Wurzburg were also areas that serve as examples of many incidents of accusations against the Jewish population. According to Gellately, these areas were unique because of the sudden increase in denunciations and thus the apparent increase in support for the regime after the Nuremberg Laws took effect. These regions did not initially welcome the Nazi takeover but suddenly erupted with support once the regime initiated its anti-Semitic campaigns. Connelly also argued that many of the denunciations involved German citizens as well. He maintained that Germans in Eisenach threatened other Germans, and even Nazi officials, with false accusations against them, in order to get what they wanted done. An example of this was when Eisenach district leader, Hermann Kohler, intervened in an apartment eviction dispute between two German families. In the

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[11] John Connelly, "The Uses of *Volkgemeinschaft*: Letters to the NSDAP Kreisleitung Eisenach, 1939-1940." *Journal of Modern History* 68 (Dec. 1996): 927.

dispute, the potential evictee wrote to Kohler expecting assistance from him against the eviction, and threatened to report Kohler to his superiors if no help arrived sooner. The issue was settled soon after Kohler received the letter and Connelly suggested that the issue and others like it were settled quickly in order to maintain the appearance of the regime's control over society.[12]

As mentioned, non-Jews were victims of denunciations, as well as being the accusers themselves. In many of the cases, most scholars agree that some measure of personal revenge or personal gain was involved.[13] The denunciations against the non-Jewish segment of the German population usually resulted in many of being thrown out because of lack of credibility of the informer. Despite the number of accusations regarded as false, the technique remained largely successful. "Denunciations from the population were responsible for more cases than all police, state, or Nazi Party authorities put together."[14] Considering the high rate of denunciation between non-Jews in Germany, the reason for this occurrence needs to be addressed.

As noted earlier, many of the denunciations were committed as acts of personal gain or personal revenge. Connelly and Gellately confirmed this with their research, pointing out to various surviving Gestapo files which indicate that people accused their neighbors to gain rights to an apartment, settle a domestic dispute or show party loyalty, among other motives. Gellately stated that Germans denounced Jews more for personal revenge, rather than to support the regime's anti-Semitic policies. Connelly asserted that Germans denounced other Germans more for personal gains, such as apartments.

Another obvious motive would be the anti-Semitic tendencies that ran throughout Germany during the height of the denunciations. Also, fear is another motive behind ordinary Germans accusing each other. As Bernt Engelmann specifically

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[12] Connelly, 928-29.
[13] Connelly, 929-30.
[14] Robert Gellately, "Denunciations in Twentieth Century Germany" Aspects of Self-Policing in the Third Reich and the German Democratic Republic." *Journal of Modern History* 68 (Dec. 1996): 937.

stated in his memoirs, *In Hitler's Germany*, many of those who accused others did it not out of malice or self-interest but because:

> The main thing was that each individual knew or at least suspected how brutally and ruthlessly the regime dealt with anyone who refused to be 'brought into line' or disobeyed any of the thousands of regulations and prohibitions. That's how a small minority succeeded in holding the great majority in check.[15]

The effectiveness of denunciation as a technique appears to stem from the overriding fear of what would happen once the Gestapo arrested the offender. Gellately referred to this fear in, *Gestapo and German Society,* when he reasoned that the fear of being accused led to the lack of public discourse on the increasingly radical nature of the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis.[16]

While fear controlled many Germans' lives, it did not dissuade every member of society from defying the policies of the Nazis. Despite the level of compliance from Germans during the Nazi regime, a fair number went out of their way not to conform to the policies. Many instances of resistance are found in response to the anti-Semitic regulations. The resistance to these policies ranged from ignoring the boycott of Jewish businesses, to keeping Jews as employees, and to helping Jews escape from Germany. Little thought to personal risk often accompanied such acts of open resistance to the regime.

Some scholars disagree on the extent to which Germans went against the regime. Robert Gellately, in *Gestapo and German Society*, claimed that any opposition was limited to small acts and overall did not have a large effect on the rest of the population, which offered collaboration to the Gestapo through denunciations and accommodation to the policies.[17] Others, such as Engelmann and Nathan Stolzfus, argued that

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[15] Engelmann, 38-41.

[16] Gellately, *Gestapo*, 214.

[17] Ibid.

active opposition against the regime was indeed widespread and effective. Engelmann himself was a resistance worker who helped Jews to escape during the war, and refers to others, who to his knowledge, also participated in hiding or assisting Jews to escape. Nathan Stolzfus devoted his entire study, *Resistance of the Heart*, to the extent of opposition among those who had married Jewish partners. Stolzfus argued that those who intermarried with Jews, both before and after Hitler's rise to power, offered some of the most effective resistance to the regime. The heart of the study is the most important example of this form of opposition, The Rosenstrasse Protest of March 1-6, 1943. During a round up of intermarried Jewish men and their children, the wives of these men staged a protest to get their men released from the Gestapo detention centers. Over the next several days, the largest public protest against Nazi policies grew loud. In the end, Gestapo officials were forced to free those arrested in order to stop the protest. "Mass protest erupted, without organization, because the regime attacked an important tradition [family] . . . the protesters were communicating dissent about the core of Nazi ideology and might soon be raising questions."[18] While the Rosenstrasse Protest marks the only known public protest against the regime, Stolzfus points out that the fact that many German women and men continued to marry Jews, even after the Nuremberg Laws, shows that such attempts at resistance were not rare occurrences.

The Gestapo started to lose control of the populace sometime in the beginning months of 1944, although there are some instances that occurred as early as 1943. More and more acts of non-compliance began to occur as people began to tire of war. The longer the war dragged on, the more the population began to completely ignore the regime's radical policies concerning race. This is evident in the severe drop in accusations in Lower Franconia and Wurzburg, according to Gellately. In this region, the drop in accusations against Jews or Germans helping Jews began in 1944, and is attributed to the

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[18] Nathan Stolzfus, *Resistance of the Heart: Intermarriage and the Rosenstrasse Protest in Nazi Germany*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1996), 245.

realization of the populace that the war was grinding to a halt and that the Allies might inflict severe repercussions on the region for their persecution of the Jews.

The decline in denunciations and the increase in non-compliance incidents did not diminish the ruthlessness of the Gestapo. According to Gellately, substantial evidence exists that the Gestapo became even more violent towards policy breakers: "for its part, the Gestapo attempted to enforce policy until the bitter end . . . at the very end, all kinds of people were simply shot out of hand, left in ditches or hanging."[19] From this episode, it is clear that the Gestapo continued to try and maintain order until the very end.

It has been nearly sixty years since the end of World War II, and the word Gestapo still carries an ominous threat. While the group no longer exists, its legacy lives on through the actions of secret police units all over the world. Today, acts of human rights violations are often compared to the actions that the Gestapo assisted the Nazi regime in carrying out. The way in which the Gestapo helped to change individuals' behavior is still astonishing, but given the terror that they instilled, it can be understood. The psychological impact that the Gestapo had on German society is what made them so effective as a police unit, even if only for a short while. Denunciations certainly played a role in making the Gestapo so feared and effective. Without the denunciations, the regime may not have had the control over the population that it did. Domination was the ultimate goal for both the Nazi regime and the Gestapo and through fear that goal, for a time, became a reality.

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[19] Gellately, *Gestapo*, 247.

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Editorial Staff

Maggie Brown: Maggie is a student in the M.A. in Historical Administration program. This summer she is moving back to her home state of Kansas to work at the Reno County Museum.

Jessica Calendine: Jessica is a senior undergraduate history major. In the fall she will begin working towards a M.S. in Political Science at Eastern Illinois University.

Danielle Groh: Danielle is a junior history major and plans to continue working towards her B.A. at Eastern Illinois University.

Mark Hawks: Mark is working on his M.A. in Historical Administration. A native of Chicago, he is planning to return to work at the Field Museum of Natural History in the summer. He is also editor of the *History at Eastern* newsletter.

Elizabeth Smith: Elisabeth is a senior undergraduate history major.

Amy Steadman: Amy is working on a M.A in Historical Administration. After finishing up her coursework, she will begin working at the Macon County Historical Society in Decatur, Illinois.