RICE EXAMINER

Rice University journal of social sciences

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Introduction: Resurrecting "the Social" at Rice University

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We face a social crisis, both at Rice University and around the world. The careful examination of interpersonal relations, institutional structures, and the influences of social forces and ideologies appears to have become severely deemphasized, leaving behind discontinuous sequences of experiences among individuals who are frequently ignored or silenced. Our project attempts to address this pattern within our university setting, standing as a compilation of ideas and advocacies from students engaging in social analysis. The primary mission of the Rice Examiner Undergraduate Social Sciences Journal is to engage students in social science research, foster interdisciplinary communication, and to provide opportunities for students to gain experience in their respective fields of study. However, alongside developing interactions and engagement related to the understanding of society and culture within Rice, our mission moves to address the increasing retrenchment of social analysis that is occurring beyond academia.

The wider relegation of 'the social' to the periphery of our experience can be observed on our university campus. Academic trajectories related to the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics are heavily promoted and seek to fill occupational demands in particular industries, and even then, many fields in the life and physical

sciences are still discouraged (Lohr, 2017). Alternatively, funding, support, and publicity of research and discoveries in the social sciences and humanities appear to be far less emphasized in universities across the United States (Strauss, 2018). These developments can be observed clearly at Rice, where few research projects from fields such as sociology, history, or psychology are advertised to the public, and even fewer can afford employing student researchers. Career fairs, often an area of complaint with students in the social sciences and humanities, distinctly lack opportunities for careers that do not fit neatly into areas of consulting, finance, or advertising. School administration, faculty, and student advisors frequently offer advice to those pursuing degrees in the social sciences and humanities to bolster their marketability with a complementary skill-based degree. For some, this retrenchment of fields that center their focus on issues and phenomena in society points only to the inability of disciplines such as anthropology or English to remain competitive in an increasingly specialized job market. However, this argument remains a tautology. The disappearance of fields or careers related to the core subject material taught in social sciences classes, and the corresponding increase in specialized positions related to manipulating economic and business productivity, indeed reflect the prioritization of corporate models to critical models. Yet this observation does not reflect the shortcomings of social analysis. It reflects a dangerous condition which the social sciences are apt to criticize, understand, and improve.

  The emphasis that many universities place on the 'hard sciences'

and engineering do indeed reflect market concerns, but these concerns are not indicative of an objective teleology for improvement. Alternatively, the increasing trend toward marking intellectual endeavors as productive or unproductive in terms of industrial necessity have many adverse effects in both individual and social experiences. Guy Debord, Asger Jorn, and Raoul Vaneigem address these effects in their criticism of modern society, arguing that "the primacy of structures" in society had shifted from production to consumption (Situationists, 2000). The incessant drive for occupations that match consumption is designed to maintain this productive demand, thereby maintaining a superstructure of commodities (Gramsci, 1985). University output is thus organized around "maintaining, defending, and developing the theoretical and ideological front" of a materially based ideology, or, as Antonio Gramsci argues, the "fortification of the dominant class" (Gramsci, 1985). Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno further this argument by describing the ideology of mass production and incessant consumption as a "culture industry." Horkheimer and Adorno claim that technical rationality has become the "compulsive character of a society alienated from itself" (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944). Culture has entered into a reproductive process, in which all aspects of life (work, recreation, and education) are transformed into products and judged by productivity.

With every action and reaction measured by standards of economic utility, individuals in society are alienated from each other, and from themselves. Employees around the United States leave their homes in the early hours of the morning, travel for an hour to their workplace,

and continue working within their jobs, rewarded with brief breaks, and then sent back home. This cycle of labor extends beyond those that work in factories or in the service industry, going so far as to define the daily experiences of workers at even the higher echelons of society, such as engineers or technicians. Despite a stringent future, efficient but confined, essential but entrapped, these occupations receive the greatest emphasis in colleges in the United States, and likewise draw thousands to pursue their economic benefits.

Universities, in scaling down their support for research in the humanities and social sciences, contribute to the mechanical reproduction (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944) of these experiences, by emphasizing their usefulness and deemphasizing a critical understanding of utility itself. Indeed, as many university faculty, administration, and student advisors suggest, those in search of lucrative opportunities should pursue fields that quickly send students into their cubicles in a mechanical system of production. However, in finding wealth and economic satisfaction, sociological distress emerges as well. This doesn't necessarily mean that wealth and wellbeing are mutually exclusive (a claim that to many would seem counter-intuitive), but instead that without critical social analysis and deeper understanding of the social forces that construct our experience, the celebration of careers that are linear pathways to wealth is dangerous. The retrenchment from analyzing "the social" indicates a disconnect between our human experience and an understanding of this experience, resulting in the separation of the subject from their own reality; without

socio-cultural examination, the subject is rendered as a "spectator" in the social developments that surround him/her.

Without social questions, subjects are transformed into spectators and individuals are alienated from themselves. It is clear that economic demands for productivity launch many into life-long careers in technical industries, regardless of those persons' desires or dreams. Even the early sociologists, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, noted the increasing psychological issues that came with increased specialization and alienation (Durkheim, 1897), citing increased cases of depression and suicide within industrially 'developed' nations such as France. In contemporary society, these observations are still applicable as studies continue to find high levels of depression and general anxiety surrounding questions of autonomy in socioeconomically stratified conditions (Prins, 2015). Oppressive demand for specialized and unceasing work in the mass production of commodities inevitably leads to cognitive dissonance among those who participate. It is from this logic that Adorno and Horkheimer argue that humanity becomes alienated from itself.

Subjects who are alienated from themselves don't only produce psychological effects. Problems with humankind's "relationships to its extensions, institutions, (and) ideas" escape possible "technical solutions" (Hall, 1976). Furthermore, even if technical solutions "could be applied" to environmental, racial, and economic issues, they "can't be applied rationally until mankind transcends the intellectual limitations imposed"

by its institutions and dominant philosophies (Hall, 1976). People exist in terms of their extensions. As Clifford Geertz explained, "(hu)man is an animal suspended in webs of significance s/he has spun" (Geertz, 1973). These webs represent religion, politics, philosophies, literature and art, and a subject alienated from him/herself is also separated from political, economic, philosophical, environmental, and social issues. Through a process that Edward Hall terms "extension transference", humans have become alienated from their extensions through the never-ending progress of technological advancement and specialization (Hall, 1976). Furthermore, the imagined communities that are formed between subjects from shared experiences (Anderson, 1983) give way to 'spectator communities', where individuals suffer from global crises, but do nothing in response. This inaction, or apathy, stems from the fixation of contemporary society (Universities included) on the consumption, and maintenance of commodities.

Climate change and the environment are perfect examples of this phenomena. The ideology of consumption and productivity that dominates academic spaces simultaneously maintains exploitative resource extraction methods, damaging local environments with drilling for oil and natural gas, and subsequently perpetuating the release of carbon emissions. The world's oceans are experiencing biomass depletion, ecosystem degradation, and acidification, while forests shrink by hundreds of acres daily, and air conditions trigger public health problems (Clausen and Clark, 2005). The culminative impact of consumption, extraction, and productive

development in all environments on Earth have created a metabolic rift (Clausen and Clark, 2005). However, despite these clear warnings, contemporary western society maintains its rate of consumption and refuses to pursue critical sustainability projects. As discussed before, this is due in large part to the pacification of the public sphere through the dominant narrative of mass production, endless growth, and insatiable consumption.

Whereas Universities should stand as a bastion of critical analysis and intellectual development and should support the improvement of human quality of life in a sustainable and just fashion, they have fallen into a cycle of dismissing the advice and insight of voices in the humanities and social sciences, which offer the most direct pathways to positive change. The only way to combat the alienation that is occurring at both the individual level (the alienation of the self) and the social level (the alienation of humanity from its extensions), is to study man's extensions themselves, and "rediscover the lost, and alienated self" (Hall, 1976). Social analysis reframes the institutions, social forces, and ideologies that humanity has weaved around itself to offer a clearer understanding of human relations, and human experiences. Only in this way can we address today's prevalent issues.

The Rice Examiner is a step in this direction. In facilitating discussion on social issues and incorporating ideas and experiences that directly relate to topics such as identity, discrimination, environmentalism,

and economic inequities, we hope to reengage Rice University with fields in the social sciences and humanities and all that they have to offer. We hope to spur a new academic emphasis on social analysis, and to point to the innumerable benefits that critique and activism have in shaping the world to an equal and sustainable future. We recognize that the social sciences at Rice University are in need of an organization that provides two services: first, a medium by which authors can submit, share, and publish their works to be read by fellow students and other organizations and employers. Second, a united form by which students in any department can engage with others who share their interests and passions. The Rice Examiner fill these roles by alerting students to the outstanding work done by students in social sciences and humanities fields and providing a foundation for shared ideas.

Within the course of one year, the Rice Examiner has grown to include five staff members, six editors, three graphic designers, and ten faculty reviewers. We have received more than fifty submissions from August, 2017 to February, 2018, reflecting the incredible support for a medium of social science communication and publication. Going beyond printing, we have also hosted events such as a research panel in November, 2017 and hope to include other formats for reaching the student body, like podcasts. At a social sciences town hall in February, 2018, we announced our mission and offered our organizational infrastructure to Rice University students and were received with applause and approval. This wave of support from students who seek to improve the world constitutes

our movement. They understand, as do many others who work inside and outside of the academic arena, that we face many global issues today. They also understand that the dominant ideology has failed to address these issues. Our organization seeks to be a starting point for Rice University to reengage with social problems. We believe that the world does indeed face a social crisis, and only social examination can fully address it.

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Racial Experiences: Two Opposing Views

Elizabeth Rasich

Chinese Americans have faced a long history of discrimination in the United States, and African Americans an even longer one. In their works, biracial Chinese American writer Sui Sin Far and African American journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates address racism and discrimination against their respective peoples but come to two different conclusions about what race relations should look like moving forward. With their personal experiences of racism towards black and Chinese Americans informing their views (being respectively black and part-Chinese themselves), they see the future of race relations in disparate ways. Coates emphasizes an unbreachable divide between black and white in *Between the World and Me* and "The Case for Reparations," while Far offers a more nuanced perspective on assimilation in her short stories "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," "Its Wavering Image," and "The Inferior Woman." Ultimately, Coates' vision of race relations is one of enduring difference and Far's one of inevitable coalescence.

Coates is open in expressing his anger about racism in the United States. His arguments in "The Case for Reparations" and his reflections in *Between the World and Me* are filled with raw emotion and outrage. They make a forceful appeal for America to examine what he perceives to be an intentional gap between black people and white people that "allows for the efficient sorting of the plundered from the plunderers . . . the cannibals from food" (Coates, *Between* 138). He accuses "White

America" of being a "syndicate arrayed to protect its exclusive power to dominate and control [black] bodies" (Coates, *Between* 42). Racism is for him an ever-present force capable of not only disenfranchising, exploiting, and belittling his race, but also an expression of power that "dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, [and] breaks teeth" (Coates, *Between* 10). The disparity in the average quality of life between white lives and black lives is, according to Coates, the result of an accumulation of efforts by white people to ensure that they enjoy prosperity granted to them at the expense of black people. Whiteness is the very real architect of the framework that places black people at the bottom rung of the societal ladder; without this stratification, "'white people' would cease to exist for want of reasons" (Coates, *Between* 42). Every white person is complicit in this system, especially those who have achieved the level of middle-class success that makes up the American Dream--a Dream (as Coates calls it) to which many black people aspire but are unable to realize. To remedy the institutional quality of racism, he advocates in "The Case for Reparations" that the United States pay monetary reparations to African Americans to account for centuries of enslavement, segregation, and discrimination (Coates 21).

Sui Sin Far does not ignore the discrimination and racism that affects Chinese Americans, but she offers a different vision of race relations than does Coates. The white people in Far's writings are not completely innocent of wrongdoing, but neither are they portrayed as agents of a system aligned against the success and personhood of Chinese people.

They are depicted as largely unaware of the extent of the hurt they've caused. When a young, white reporter in "Mrs. Spring Fragrance" says that all foreigners are welcome in America and will be treated like part of the "royal family" (given that all Americans are "princes and princesses"), Mr. Spring Fragrance raises the point that his brother is still being detained after arriving in America for a visit (Far 23). The young reporter dismisses this detail as a "shame" and remarks that "it will all come right some day. We're not a bad sort, you know." (Far, "Mrs. Spring" 23). The reporter is unwilling to come to terms with the fact that how he'd like to think of America—as open and accepting to foreigners—is not the same as the reality, even when confronted directly with facts. Mark Carson, the white reporter in "Its Wavering Image", is similarly uncomprehending: after he has written a story about his time experiencing Chinese traditions with Pan that exposes the "things . . . sacred and secret to those who loved her," he fully believes that Pan will still welcome him with open arms (p. 65, Far). Upon discovering the unhappiness he has caused, he makes light of the Chinese cultural traditions that Pan loves and about which he has written his newspaper exposé, saying they are "superstitions" that must be "done away with" (Far, "Wavering" 65). He is unwilling to accept the validity of Pan's connection with the Chinese people with whom she lives. Far portrays white people as ignorant and dismissive of the cultures of others but does not make a point of systematic oppression the way that Coates does. Her milder assessment of the state of race relations is in contrast with Coates' often openly aggressive confrontation of discrimination. Hers is a

critique, but not one that reaches the pitch of Coates' condemnation.

Child in Chinese Market. Photo by Chelsey Wen

Coates cannot grant white people the same benefit of the doubt. He sees in the label of blackness the opportunity to share and celebrate a common identity. If white people have constructed their supremacy in America such that it is "difficult to imagine a country without it," then there remains only one solution: embrace the divide and revel in the difference (Coates, "Case" 49). Throughout *Between the World and Me*, Coates emphasizes the great comfort he receives from belonging to a community of black people, who over time, by virtue of the discrimination they suffered, have become a historically and culturally distinct people. African Americans have been able to transform the shame and inferiority imposed upon them into a source of pride; they have, in a sense, repossessed their identity. "'They made us into a race," Coates says. "We made ourselves into a people" (Coates, *Between* 149). This sense of a black community connects even complete strangers. When Coates bumps into

another black man at the airport one day, he says, "My bad," and the man replies, "You straight" (Coates, *Between* 119). This simple exchange is an immediate connection indicative of the "private rapport that can only exist between two particular strangers of this tribe that we call black" (Coates, *Between* 119-120). Coates experiences the comfort of this shared heritage most acutely at Howard University, which is a historically black university he labels "The Mecca." At Howard, he sees "everything [he] knew about [his] black self multiplied out into seemingly endless variations" (Coates, *Between* 40). As Coates describes the Mecca, he remarks upon the diversity of a race often simplified and reduced to its stereotypes. The richness of the culture he depicts only enhances his perception of a people who, despite their differences, are still connected by a thread of common heritage and culture.

Far, on the other hand, depicts a blended community of Chinese people interacting with white culture that is largely absent of the open tension that defines race for Coates. The portrayal of Mrs. Spring Fragrance as an "Americanized" woman is not a negative one: Far does not attempt to make Mrs. Spring Fragrance an example of the insidious lure of the Dream but rather a Chinese woman who enjoys aspects of American culture and has integrated elements of it into her daily life. In "The Inferior Woman," Mrs. Spring Fragrance admits an initial hesitation to wearing American-style dress, but once her husband brings home "a gown fit for a fairy," she finds she likes the style (Far 25). What Coates might have interpreted as a symbol of white oppression—Mrs. Spring Fragrance abandoning part

of her Chinese culture to assimilate further into American culture—Mrs. Spring Fragrance embraces happily. She makes fudge, reads American poetry, and has a network of white American friends who adore her. Far describes a "social good feeling between the American and Chinese families" which extends to young Will Carman visiting Mr. Spring Fragrance to discuss Chinese literature and Mrs. Spring Fragrance dishing out matchmaking advice to Mrs. Evebrook and Mrs. Carman (Far, "Inferior Woman" 39). The Chinese and white characters in her stories interact (for the most part) without issue. Far's characters don't appear to feel the need to find sanctuary in other Chinese people the way that Coates does in black people. Their identities are not affirmed in relation to their own race but rather by a negotiation between American and Chinese cultures.

The cultural and historical divide between black and white is, for Coates, one that cannot be crossed with fudge-making or friendly neighborhood gossip. In his understanding, the racial divisions between black people and white people will never heal—at least, not without the sort of national reckoning he calls for in "The Case for Reparations." The advantages enjoyed by white people and the disadvantages suffered by black people together create a gap in wealth, knowledge, and possibilities that may never close. Although many would like to think that America is in a post-racial moment and that racism, both subtle and overt, is a challenge of the past, Coates argues that racism is far from extinct in America. He points out that black college graduates find it more difficult to get a job than white college graduates, and black people without criminal records

are only successful in job applications at about the same rate as white people with criminal records (Coates, "Case" 45). He also describes how Wells Fargo settled a suit in 2012 over the revelation that it had targeted black people for subprime loans, proving that racism has persisted into the present day (Coates, "Case" 56). According to Coates, a black person who wants to enjoy the success of a white person would have to work twice as hard, but even then could be shot down like his unarmed friend Prince Jones, who was the "patron saint of the twice as good" and yet still "forever bound" (Coates, *Between* 81). Faced with this "tenacious gravity," the idea of racial harmony in the modern era seems like an impossibility to Coates (Coates, *Between* 20-21). Discrimination has "matured into habit and addiction," and rather than expecting race relations to improve in the future, Coates cautions his son that white people "must inevitably plunder much more" (Coates, "Case" 150). The pull of difference is inescapable.

Co-exist. Photo by Vy Pham

Sui Sin Far does not emphasize the importance of difference so much as the inevitability of cultural blending; she looks upon racial divisions as boundaries which will blur and eventually disappear. There are always forces at play which edge characters towards the adaptation of American customs. In "Its Wavering Image," this force takes the form of the reporter Mark Carson, who explicitly tells half-white Pan to abandon her Chinese roots, because, after all, she "cannot be both" white and Chinese (Far 63). In her writings, Chinese Americans retain some elements of their culture while making the transition to an American way of life. However, those Chinese traditions which they maintain are portrayed as old-fashioned and expected to eventually be extinguished. Unlike Pan, Mr. and Mrs. Spring Fragrance don't face open pressure to conform to American culture, but Mr. Spring Fragrance still finds himself wondering if his wife might be adapting white American ideas of love—that it comes before marriage, rather than after, as would hopefully be the case in an arranged marriage—and doesn't eat for several days and nights because the possibility of this particular form of assimilation seems so possible. The younger generation is especially subject to the pull of cultural unity. Although the Chin Yuens attempt to give their daughter away in an arranged marriage, they ultimately fail. Their daughter, who goes by the American name Laura, will instead marry Kai Tzu, who is as "ruddy and stalwart as any young Westerner" and an excellent player of America's favorite pastime, baseball (Far, "Mrs. Spring" 17). The pull towards acculturation is more subtle than Coates' tenacious gravity of difference,

but it is still effective. As time goes on, Mr. Chin Yuen notes, "the old order is passing away, and the new order is taking its place" (Far, "Mrs. Spring"). The Chinese people in Far's stories adapt to American culture piece by piece; they do not retreat within themselves due to a hostile white world but rather trend towards assimilation with every new generation.

The difference in how Coates and Far approach racism has its roots in their own individual experiences. The authors' disparate attitudes must be understood in the context of their social situations. Far has a far less dismal view of race relations than does Coates, which is likely informed by her identity as half-white and half-Chinese. Chinese Americans faced significant discrimination in the United States, including laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which severely restricted Chinese immigration and the 1880 revision to California's Civil Code (which applied to Sui Sin Far as a resident of San Francisco) which banned intermarriage between whites and "Mongolians" ("Chinese American Women," "Chinese Exclusion Act"). However, Sui Sin Far had also her white identity as Edith Eaton (her birth name) upon which to fall back, and may never have experienced the full brunt of racism directed towards Chinese people who could not pass as white (Ling). Additionally, these legal forms of discrimination, although a burden for the Chinese, pale in comparison to the discrimination faced by African Americans throughout United States history. Over the 435 years of African American presence in the United States, the country has progressed from outright enslavement to sharecropping and the Jim Crow period to lynchings and segregation and

finally to the police shootings and the Black Lives Matter movement today (Coates, "Case" 1). Coates experiences the full brunt of prejudice firsthand as a black man, and his anger and subsequent comfort in the black community is therefore unsurprising. His frustration with the state of race relations today is also understandable, as he struggles to reconcile a United States which saw the racial progress of the Civil Rights Movement with the reality of continuing discrimination against African Americans. Sui Sin Far is reacting to a comparatively short and mild history of discrimination and Coates to a more entrenched form of racism.

Experiences of racism do not always result in the same assessment of race relations, as demonstrated by Coates and Far, whose differing views of race are revealed in their works. Coates depicts an enduring, damaging racism which systematically targets black people and which is unlikely to be alleviated without drastic measures such as monetary reparations. His works are emotionally charged and challenge assertions of racism as a problem of the past. Far, on the other hand, portrays an ultimate trend towards assimilation and integration in which white people are a much less oppressive force towards Chinese people. Her writings show a society in which divisions are less distinct and a future in which Chinese culture ultimately merges with American culture as new generations of Chinese Americans arise. These distinct attitudes are the result of differing heritages and personal experiences of race. What we will likely see in the future is a blend of both views: perhaps not Coates's reparations, but instead an ongoing recognition of the black American struggle and the myriad ways

that the present challenges are a direct result of past oppression as well as attempts to compensate and mitigate those challenges; and perhaps not Far's assimilation, but rather a merging and blending of races and cultures that continuously changes as new immigrant communities arrive and reshape notions of what it means to be American.

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Can States Avoid The Conflict Trap?

Eliza Martin

Introduction

Most dyads never experience a recurring conflict. However, the dyads that do experience recurring conflict and enduring rivalry, constitute a majority of the wars fought since 1816 (Sense, Vasquez 2008). In fact, Thompson and Dreyer contend that strategic rivalries have been responsible for approximately eighty percent of warfare in the past two-hundred years (Thompson, Dreyer 2011). Understanding rivalries presents the opportunity for political scientists to explain not only a significant amount of war, but also the conflicts which do not escalate to become rivalries. Such an understanding could result in policy changes to help terminate rivalries and prevent militarized interstate disputes from escalating to conflict.

The concept of an enduring rivalry directly challenges the traditional idea of war as exceptional events of armed conflict occurring in a short time duration. As a result of the traditional view of conflict, much of the existing enduring rivalry theoretical and empirical arguments focus on explaining the casual mechanisms behind the recurring nature of such conflicts that theoretically diverge enduring rivalries from traditional wars. However, little work has been produced to examine the inability of states to resolve conflicts and issues within the framework of enduring rivalries. This paper seeks to address how states are able to resolve these issues and conflicts that cause enduring rivalries.

Literature Review

A significant amount of research has been conducted on enduring rivalries as the small subset of feuding dyads account for a disproportionate percentage of all interstate conflict. However, much of the literature focuses on the formation and escalation of rivalries or the termination of rivalries after they begin. Overall, there exists little consensus between scholars and limited attention has been given to the resolution of the issues that are the foundation for recurring conflict, which I seek to demonstrate through an analysis of the literature. In order to understand the deficiency in current literature, it is important to understand how political scientists conceptualize and contextualize rivalry.

How do we determine which rivalries should be classified as enduring rivalries?

The Correlates of War (COW) Project's definition of enduring rivalry stipulates the following; that there must be a minimum of five to seven militarized disputes involving the same two states; at least twenty or twenty-five years between the outbreak of the first dispute and the termination of the last dispute. The COW definition is detailed, but presents concerns as the definition theorizes the context of enduring rivalries.

Goertz and Diehl (1996, 2000, 2016) define an enduring rivalry as a competition between two states that involves six or more militarized disputes over a period of twenty years. The rivalry terminates when there has been no militarized dispute for ten years. I will be utilizing Goertz and

Diehl's definition of an enduring rivalry as I employ their "Peace Data" set in this paper. I acknowledge the limitations of their definition.

How do we contextualize the enduring rivalry framework within the theories of war?

Contextualizing enduring rivalries within the theories of war is important for understanding the merits and faults of the theoretical arguments in favor of and against rivalries.

To begin, realists believe enduring rivalries to be spurious, misleading, and "historical accidents" that are the product of rational choice in a stable international system. To realists, rivalries play no role in the theory of war.

On the contrary, system structuralists believe that enduring rivalries begin after changes in system configurations and end when the system alters itself. However, within the system structuralist community, there is debate as to how the structure or polarity of the international system affects rivalry. Deutsch and Singer (1964) assert that one would expect to find fewer enduring rivalries in multipolar systems due to increased levels of interaction. Leng (1983) diverges from Deutsch and Singer's theory by suggesting that repeated conflict in a multipolar system will lead to less war. Rivalry is able to fit into the bipolar and multipolar peace theories as it is a form of conflict. If rivalry is to be considered a result of uncertainty in a bipolar and multipolar system, it faces traditional critics of systems structure.

There is also debate within the democratic peace theory community

as to whether the rivalry framework can be appropriately applied. Proponents of democratic peace theory assert that the theory provides a unique opportunity to study the intersection of democracy on entire periods of relations, not just isolated conflicts.

Baker Institute. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

More broadly, those who subscribe to the theory of democratic peace believe that democratic dyads and militarized conflict have no statistically significant relationship due to shared norms and democratic structures. Russett (1993) and Ray (1995) go so far as to suggest that no two democracies have engaged in conflict with each other in the modern era. Extending this foundation of democratic peace, enduring rivalries should not exist between democratic dyads. Goertz and Diehl (2000) further the argument of democratic peace and rivalry by discussing the pacifying effect of democracy as result of the deepening of democratic

norms over time. If we are to extend Goertz and Diehl's argument, then as time progresses, the likelihood for a dyad of democratic states to enter an enduring rivalry, decreases. Supporting this argument, empirical research conducted by Thompson and Tucker (1997) and Goertz and Diehl (2000) has found that there are very few democratic dyads that are enduring rivals.

There are significant concerns as to whether the rivalry framework can be applied to democratic peace theory. There are concerns that democratic peace theory only takes into account conflict between countries in the post-World War II era, therefore delegitimizing the rivalries between democratic countries such as Britain versus France and Britain versus the United States, prior to the 20th century. Mansfield and Snyder (1995) highlight the structure of principal rivalries that changed fundamentally in the 20th century from rival democratic dyads to democratic states versus autocratic states and argues that enduring rivalries between democratic states before World War II should be considered within democratic peace theory. While enduring rivalries fit easily into the framework of democratic peace theory, concerns of the theory itself persist which makes it difficult to accept enduring rivalries within the theory.

The steps-to-war theory contains interstate rivalry within the model that was developed by Vasquez (1987) and expanded upon by Senese and Vasquez (2008). The steps-to-war argument assumes that territorial issues, if handled a certain way, are most likely to cause militarized disputes. Repeated militarized disputes then leads to a sense of rivalry between

actors. The steps-to-war assumes that once a threshold of repeated conflicts is crossed, the probability of war greatly increases.

As with the previous theories of war, the steps-to-war theory presents concerns. The first consideration is that the steps-to-war theory relies heavily on the assumption that territorial disputes are the issues that cause militarized disputes and therefore, enduring rivalry. The steps-to-war theory is silent on the effect issues other than territory may have on militarized dispute and rivalry. Additionally, the steps-to-war theory does not provide an explanation for states that remain in the cycle of enduring rivalry, but not enter war. Is it possible for the state to exit the rivalry stage of the steps-to-war without having to go to war? Vasquez and Sense do not address this issue.

Much of the literature regarding enduring rivalries and bargaining focuses on recurring conflict (Morrow 1994; Fearon 1995, 1998). Conflict can recur as a result of difficulties in producing agreements during bargaining. When bargaining occurs during conflict, the terms of agreement reflect the belligerents' mutual expectations about the consequences of continued fighting (Kecskemeti 1958; Wittman 1979; Pillar 1983; Goemans 1996; Werner 1998, 1999). This theoretical argument implies that if the belligerents' expectations remain unchanged, then the agreement should endure. However, if either party feels that they would stand to gain more were they to resume fighting, the agreement falls apart and there is an incentive to renegotiate the settlement (Blainey 1998; Wagner 1993). However, if the belligerents are unable to bargain and reach

a new agreement, conflict can resume. Further, there are many historical cases where agreements break down after a short-time.

Should we study enduring rivalries to understand rivalry termination or rivalry inception?

The literature largely diverges on this issue. Researchers such as Diehl and Goertz, Thompson, and Vasquez typically focus their empirical research on rivalry initiation as opposed to rivalry termination. Despite this general trend, there are a few theoretical and empirical studies that analyze rivalry termination, which either focus on "political shocks" or issue resolution.

The "political shock" theory put forward by Goertz and Diehl (1995), and later expanded upon by Cox (2010), asserts that shifts between rivalry and non rivalry dyadic interaction occur abruptly through the system and state-level systems in a series of "political shocks." However, political shocks are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for the termination of enduring rivalries, which may explain why there has been no consistent empirical relationship between political shocks and rivalry termination (Bennett 1998; Diehl and Goetz 2000).

Werner (1999) seeks to understand why agreements and settlements last longer than others, by studying whether agreements imposed upon by one side or the other affects the length of the settlement. Ultimately, though, Werner finds little statistical significance as to whether agreements imposed on one side or the other are more or less likely to last.

There is a significant opportunity for improvement in

understanding issue resolution and particularly, how the components of an agreement affect issue resolution. Throughout this paper I seek to present a greater understanding of the components of agreements that lead to either enduring conflict or issue resolution.

Theoretical Argument

I seek to build a theoretical argument to explain how the components of an agreement affect issue resolution and more broadly, rivalry termination. I hope to examine how the content of an agreement affects the number of years of peace following the agreement, and thus, issue termination. In this section I will discuss the assumptions I will use to create my theoretical argument and hypotheses.

This paper addresses enduring rivalry development. However, in order to discuss and test enduring rivalries, I will be contextualizing enduring rivalry within the bargaining theory of war. In order to apply enduring rivalry to the bargaining theory of war, the assumptions supporting the theoretical argument must be detailed. It is generally held that issue disagreements are a central cause for militarized disputes or conflict (Goertz and Diehl (1995); Bennett (1997); Blainey (1998); Werner (1999)). If we assume that issue disagreements can lead to conflict, then we assume that they can also lead directly to avoidance of war or agreements. Additionally it can be assumed that if all issue disagreements within a dyad are resolved, there is no conflict. However, if there are unresolved issues between a pair of countries, militarized interstate disputes or conflict can arise. At the time in which both parties believe they will gain

more from the potential bargaining solution than conflict, bargaining

begins. Bargaining can either terminate in no agreement, and the states

can continue to engage in a militarized dispute, or it can result in an

interstate agreement between the belligerents. The creation of an interstate

agreement can result in the breakdown of that same agreement within

ten years, and result in conflicts and the formation of an enduring rivalry.

Conversely, an interstate agreement can also result in no conflict for ten

years and thus, no enduring rivalry. Additionally , at any time during

the rivalry, the states can end the conflict through means other than an

agreement.
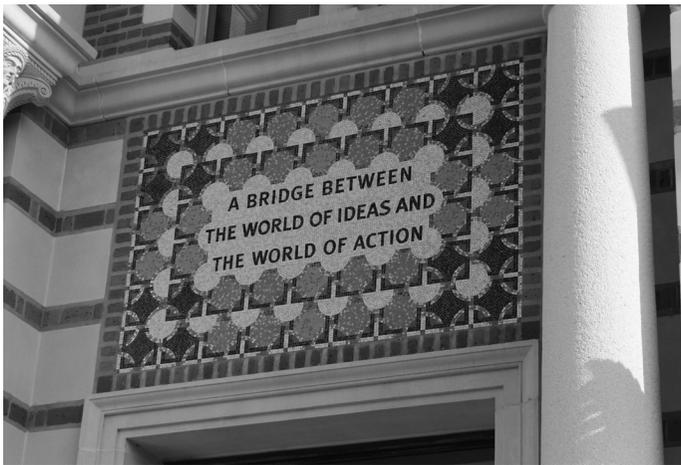
Ideas and Actions. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

Enduring rivalries can potentially be rooted in multiple issues,

and an interstate agreement can either focus on all of them or just a few .

Therefore, we cannot assume that an agreement addresses all or even any

of the issues that led to conflict. As such, the interstate agreements that

potentially eliminate conflict differ in content. All interstate agreements

have a focus in addressing an issue, but do not necessarily resolve it. Instead of addressing issue resolution, interstate agreements can focus on ending armed conflict or on issues not related to the conflict. This argument suggests multiple hypotheses, but the most obvious is the following:

Hypothesis One: If the agreement focuses on issue resolution, there will be longer periods of peace.

This hypothesis provides a framework for my most basic expectation of the relationship between issue resolution and conflict resolution. Logically, if the agreement focuses on resolving the underlying issues that control the conflict and is able to do so to both parties satisfaction, then peace should exist until the cost of not going to war is greater than going to war. However, as stated previously, there are agreements signed by states that do not focus on addressing and resolving the issues underlying conflict. These "non-resolution" agreements often take the form of ceasefires, demobilizations, or disengagement agreements, and while they address the violence of the conflict, they don't work to resolve the fundamental cause(s) of the conflict. For example, the enduring rivalry between Syria and Israel still continues despite accepting five agreements. While there are a number of reasons for the continued rivalry between Syria and Israel, all five agreements signed by the two states beginning in 1949 and ending in 1974 were either demobilization, ceasefire or disengagement agreements. These agreements did not seek to address the underlying issues of the conflict: the existence of Israel, the

border between the two states (Golan Heights), or Syrian/Israeli presence in Lebanon. There are a number of additional cases that follow the causal pattern of my hypothesis such as the enduring rivalries of Afghanistan-Pakistan, Chad-Sudan, India-Pakistan, and Israel-Lebanon.

As I previously discussed, I assume that an agreement is signed by the belligerent parties to resolve the issue underlying the conflict for as long as possible due to the high costs of war. As time passes, the status quo of an agreement generates staying power and establishes norms. Therefore, if an agreement includes a time limit that terminates the agreement after a set period of time, then the issue driving the conflict is likely left unresolved: the agreement merely pauses the conflict and the resolution of issues. These theoretical arguments lead to the development of my second hypothesis:

Hypothesis Two: If there is no time limit on the agreement, then there should be longer periods of peace.

In order for an enduring rivalry to be considered enduring, repeated conflict over the same issue must occur multiple times in a set period of time. Goertz and Diehl take this theory farther by asserting that the concept of an enduring rivalry must have three components: competitiveness, spatial consistency, and time (Goertz and Diehl, 1993). By hypothesizing on the effects of a time clause within an agreement, I am addressing the variable of time in enduring rivalries and whether delaying the resolution of issue disagreements can produce peace or not.

In some cases states may sign, but not ratify an agreement. Article

18 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties states that signing a treaty is equal in weight to ratification or other instruments constituting the treaty subject to ratification. The process of signing an interstate agreement is important, the process is basically a unilateral action by the head of state. However, the United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly emphasized the importance of ratification due to its higher level of accountability. The process of signing an agreement holds the head of state responsible for entering or breaking an agreement, but does not place accountability on the entirety of a state. Whereas the ratification of an agreement requires legislative or another body's approval, and thus holds the entirety of the state to the agreement. It is from this theory that I procure my third and final hypothesis:

Hypothesis Three: If interstate agreements contain a ratification mechanism that   is utilized by both states, there should be longer periods of peace.

In order for an agreement to be considered official, the two states engaged in militarized interstate dispute must agree to the compact. Warner (1999) hypothesizes that the "risks of recurrent conflict are higher if the peace settlement was imposed rather than negotiated," but finds no statistically significant values to support the hypothesis. However, I believe that the theoretical argument is strong. In order to achieve peaceful interstate relations, both states must work to actively resolve issues voluntarily and consensually. A ratification mechanism stipulated in an agreement or treaty illustrates the intentions between the two states to

commit to peace and the resolution of an issue.

Research Design

In order to understand why some conflicts do not progress to become enduring rivalries using the content of agreements, I test the hypotheses presented above using empirical testing. I identify dyads engaged in an enduring rivalry between 1945 and 2016 by the Correlates of War data set reported by Goertz, Diehl, and Balas (2016).

I initially identified a list of 196 states engaged in an enduring rivalry that met my time stipulation. However, upon closer examination, I removed a number of dyads as many agreements dealt with reparations stemming directly from World War II. Additionally, there were a number of dyads engaged in an enduring rivalry that have neither signed nor ratified an agreement, or the rivalry ended without the use of an agreement. I removed those dyads. Furthermore, there was a small number of dyads engaged in an enduring rivalry that simply had no data. After accounting for these discrepancies and conditions, I determined that 78 dyads fit my prerequisites. I utilized all 78 dyads and their 174 agreements in every hypothesis test.

Upon identifying the enduring rivalries, I read the history of the rivalry or rivalries between the two states and identified all agreements. I then read each agreement or treaty between the two states and scored it using the independent variables derived from my hypothesis.

The number of years in which peace lasted after the signing of agreements is my independent variable for all hypotheses. I calculated the

number of years of peace by calculating the length of time before another militarized interstate dispute arose stemming from the same issue.

The first hypothesis addresses issue resolution. I focus my hypothesis specifically on the extent to which an agreement addresses the issue driving the conflict. I score each agreement using a dummy variable, on the extent to which the agreement addressed resolving the underlying issue. I code the extent variable with 1 if the agreement attempts to solve the underlying issue stipulated in the data set, and 0 if the agreement does not make an attempt to address the issue. As previously discussed, the independent variable is the number of peaceful years without a militarized interstate dispute rooted in the original issue, that followed the agreement.

The second hypothesis addresses whether agreements contain time limits and its effect on issue resolution. Research has been conducted in regard to vulnerability of peace agreements, but has focused on imposing settlements on states after conflict defeat (Gelpi 1997, Warner 1999). Instead, I focus my hypothesis on the effect of time limits in agreement on the years of peace. I score each agreement using a dummy variable that measures whether an agreement contains a time clause or stipulation. I code the time limit variable with a 1 if agreement does not contain a time clause and a 0 if the agreement contains a time clause.

The final hypothesis tests whether the presence of a ratification mechanism in agreements leads to longer periods of peace. Nearly identical to the other two hypotheses, I test this hypothesis by scoring each agreement using a dummy variable. I code the binding variable with a 1 if

the agreement contains a ratification mechanism and a 0 if the agreement does not contain such a mechanism or only requires a signatory.

After coding my variables, I run a linear regression to identify whether a statistically significant relationship between the variables and the number of years of peace following an agreement exists. The outcomes of my tests are discussed in the results and discussion section.

Results

The table below displays the results for each dependent variable defined by issue termination. The positive coefficients estimate the impact of each variable on the number of years of peace following an agreement. As such, an increasing coefficient suggests that an increase in the variable subsequently increases the length of peace following an agreement.

The extent to which an agreement addresses the underlying issues of conflict is displayed in column two of the table. The relationship between the extent and the numbers of peaceful years is statistically significant. Therefore, if an agreement focuses on resolving the issue driving conflict, we except periods of peace following the agreement to last longer than if the agreement does not focus on the underlying issues at hand. Theoretically, if we assume that issue disagreements cause conflict, then a conflict cannot terminate permanently unless the underlying issue is resolved between the belligerent states (Wayman 1982, 1990, Diehl and Goertz 1996, 2000, Werner 1999, Thompson 2000). The available evidence suggests that this holds true in the international system. There are numerous examples of agreements resolving issues and thus terminating

conflict. Examples include a 2000 agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea ending questions as to Eritrea's claim to independence and a 1977 agreement between Norway and Russia regarding maritime territorial claims. However, there are also countless examples of conflict that have not been terminated despite agreement.

The remaining results present a slightly less discernible relationship between agreement variables and peace. The variables testing for the relationship between time limits in agreement and binding mechanisms (ratification) are not statistically significant. However, the substantial coefficients of both variables indicate that they are having an effect on the independent variable. The variable testing for whether time limits in agreements influence the number of years of peace has a slightly higher coefficient, and therefore influence on the independent variable, than the variable testing for a binding mechanism in agreements.

Discussion

The empirical results provide consistent support for the hypothesis generated by issue resolution. However, the hypotheses regarding time limits and binding mechanisms receive mixed empirical support. It is quite possible that that the absence of strong statistically significant empirical results for hypothesis two and three is due to the statistical limits of my research design.

It is likely that there are certain instances in which the variables may hide their direct effects. These unknown effects may after or skew the data in some way. One such instance in which the variables may hide their

effects is in the historiography of conflict. One state may view a conflict or rivalry to be terminated, the opposing state may not. Additionally, an agreement may serve to address an issue not directly related to the enduring conflict, yet inadvertently resolve the issue. Similarly, ceasefire agreements may serve to terminate rivalries if they endure longer than institutional memory of the rivalry. However, as ceasefires do not directly address the underlying issues of conflict, they are not coded in favor of issue resolution.

Additionally, the data set cultivated by Goertz, Diehl and Balas (2016) presents opportunity for improvement. While the data set contains a list of all militarized interstate disputes the rival states have engaged in, there is limited research regarding the termination of such conflicts. Moreover, certain interstate agreements are not accessible or cannot be localized, leaving gaps within the data.

While the data and research design only present a fractional explanation of issue resolution, the results are not surprising given the gravity of all three variables to issue resolution. The extent to which an agreement address issues resolution provides the most direct explanation as to how states are able to resolve issues that cause enduring rivalries. Despite the weaknesses of my empirical and statistical testing, the effect of the dependent variables on the independent variable indicates that more robust future research is needed to fully understand the relationship between agreements and conflict resolution.

Conclusion

The existing literature indicates the importance of issue resolution in either the termination or inception of enduring conflict and rivalry. The results of my hypotheses tests support the existing theoretical and empirical literature regarding issue resolution. I find strong evidence that agreements which focus on issue resolution have a significant impact on the number of years that peace lasts. I only find mixed support for the importance of absence of time constraints and the presence of ratification mechanisms in interstate agreements.

The study of enduring rivalries and conflict resolution is important for understanding a significant majority of conflict. Knowledge of mechanisms that encourage conflict termination in enduring rivalries has significant policy implications. Mechanisms present in agreements can assist states and international institutions that often mediate conflict to facilitate the creation of interstate agreements that terminate conflict and deter repeated cycles of conflict. As enduring rivalries such as Israel-Palestine, India-Pakistan, and Venezuela-Guyana continue and new ones arise, the international institutions and countries that are able to facilitate bargaining, should encourage the resolution of the issues underlying conflict and pay notice to the mechanisms present in agreements that can end such recurrent conflict.

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Reimagining The Upper Chamber: Conceptions of House of Lords Reform

Ellie Persellin

Executive Summary

From its initial role as an institutional restraint on excessive monarchical power, the House of Lords has evolved into a perceived emblem of entrenched privilege and partisan patronage. In response to increasingly skeptical public sentiment, various reforms have been instituted, limiting the autonomy and diversifying the membership of the Lords. The early 20th century transformed the upper chamber into an institution whose mandate provides only for the ability to review and recommend, the ability to act having been usurped by the House of Commons. During Tony Blair's first tenure as Prime Minister, the vast majority of hereditary peers were eliminated, signifying an increasing aversion to any degree of political power bestowed by birthright. Continuing confusion over the logistics of Britain's exit from the European Union has highlighted the uncertain and fragile nature of the constitutional framework in which Brexit must proceed. As a wholly unelected body, the House of Lords is considered by many to be devoid of the political legitimacy to amend legislation already passed by the elected MPs serving in the Commons. However, still others believe the greatest merit of the upper chamber lies in the ability of its peers to act in accordance with their consciences, rather than capitulating to populist pressures. In order to reconcile the presently opposing concerns of accountability and objectivity,

the House of Lords must be reformed to better represent the demographic composition of the broader British population, while also promoting the cultivation of areas of expertise.

Introduction

The House of Lords symbolizes one of the few remaining vestiges of Britain's aristocratic past, a past in which the power of the Monarch was primarily tempered by the collective will of the nation's wealthiest landowners. As chronologically detailed in a House of Lords publication, the origins of Parliament largely coincide with the origins of the British monarchy, reflecting the need of the King to consolidate his rule via legitimacy, support, advice and taxes supplied by the prominent feudal lords and religious leaders of the day (UK Parliament, 2015). Consequently, the gradual yielding of the monarch's authority to democratic forces eventuated in a similar weakening of the upper chamber, calling into question the right of hereditary peers to dictate Britain's trajectory as a nation. The 20th century saw increasing restrictions placed on the ability of the Lords to act autonomously, culminating in the House of Lords Act 1999, a realization of reformatory campaign promises made by Tony Blair's Labour government (Great Britain, 1999). In the nearly two decades since, various proposed reforms have floundered in the face of insurmountable opposition from factions within the House of Commons. Rather than relegating Lords reform to the bottom of the policy agenda, the Brexit vote only served to intensify debate surrounding the appropriate jurisdiction of the unelected body, with historically inconsistent stances being adopted by

major parties in the interest of political expediency.

At present, the central tension seems to exist between the opinion that the House of Lords functions as little more than an enduring tribute to Britain's illustrious history, and the counter characterization of the House as an advisory entity endowed with a certain degree of clout, its members possessing valuable expertise in a diverse multitude of arenas. While the former assessment favors a composition of largely symbolic Bishops and Peers, the latter lends itself to a more intentionally selected membership, with the ultimate aim of cultivating a scholarly body capable of scrutinizing legislation more objectively than a presiding government. Thus, the necessity of reform at any given time ultimately depends upon which of these views one subscribes to, a determination not insulated from the climate in which one operates as a political actor.

Background

In concurrence with the aforementioned House of Lords publication – produced and disseminated by the chamber's Information Office – a BBC article dates Parliament as having originated in the 11th century (BBC News, 2017). Both sources note the reliance of Saxon kings on Witans, political councils composed of religious leaders, magnates and chief advisors to the monarch. The 14th century brought two distinct Houses of Parliament, with the House of Commons serving as a gathering place for shire and borough representatives, while the House of Lords accommodated the Lords Spiritual (archbishops, bishops and occasionally abbots and priors), as well as the Lords Temporal (noblemen). Critically,

Henry VIII's 1539 dissolution of the monasteries eliminated all but bishops from the Lords Spiritual, meaning for the first time in the history of the House of Lords, the Lords Temporal constituted a majority. Resolutions passed in 1671 and 1678 established the still adhered to precedent for Commons supremacy in financial matters, and the 1689 Bill of Rights decreed Parliament's authority over the king, effectively laying the foundation for Britain's modern constitutional monarchy (Pownall, 2009). The role of the Lords Spiritual was further circumscribed by the Bishopric Act of Manchester 1847, which limited the number of bishops entitled to sit in the House of Lords to its present figure of 26 (Horn, Smith, Mussett, 2004). Soon thereafter, the passage of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876 enabled the sovereign to appoint Lords of Appeal in Ordinary (i.e., "Law Lords"), strengthening the regulation of judicial appeals considered by the House of Lords, and creating, in essence, the first 'life peers' (UK Parliament, n.d). Escalating unease between Parliament's lower and upper chambers came to a head in 1909, when the Conservative-dominated House of Lords rejected the 'People's Budget' put forth by the Liberal Government, prompting said government to introduce a bill curbing the ability of the Lords to reject legislation already approved by the Commons. The resulting Parliament Act 1911 prohibited the House of Lords from rejecting bills dealing with the raising or spending of money, and in regards to all other public bills, replaced its power to veto with the lesser power of delay (UK Parliament, n.d.). This delaying power was later reduced from two years to one by the Parliament Act 1949. Though the

upper chamber's authority had been greatly and continuously diminished since the dawn of the 20th century, its membership was soon to expand. The Life Peerages Act 1958 established the creation of life peerages, providing a theoretical avenue for women to enter the House of Lords. The Act also introduced allowances for peers' expenses (UK Parliament, n.d.). Further disrupting the long-standing demographic composition of the body, the Peerage Act 1963 enabled peeresses (i.e., women inheriting peerages) to sit and vote in the House (UK Parliament, n.d.). For decades, Labour had touted a platform of radical Lords reform, which finally came to fruition in the aftermath of the Party's 1997 landslide victory. In its winning general election manifesto, 'New Labour' included a commitment to removing hereditary peers from the House of Lords altogether, making the following assurance:

The House of Lords must be reformed. As an initial, self-contained reform, not dependent on further reform in the future, the right of hereditary Peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords will be ended by statute. This will be the first stage in a process of reform to make the House of Lords more democratic and representative (Kimber, 2012).

However, political concessions meant 92 hereditary peers were allowed to remain within the Lords, at least until an intended second phase of reform could be completed. Despite an arduous campaign undertaken by the Liberal Democrats whilst in coalition with the Conservative Party, no substantive reforms have been made since Tony Blair's purported

"process" was initiated by the House of Lords Act 1999 (Brant, 2012). While the composition of the House of Lords remains a contentious issue, up until recent Brexit proceedings, the House's actual ability to legislate was presumed irreversibly hindered by earlier reforms and the conventions they spawned. Despite this precedent, the weeks following Theresa May's initiation of the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill have seen peers "defeat" the Government twice, notably voting in favor of an amendment that would endow Parliament with veto power over the final outcome of Brexit negotiations (Mason, 2017). Such a prominent defection highlights the increasing need for codified clarity, most likely necessitating further reform of the House of Lords.

Conceptualizing House Of Lords Reform

Any given conception of reform necessarily arises from a certain understanding of the status quo, with change deemed imminent when one's political philosophy or policy agenda cannot be realized within the trappings of existing institutions. As such, an appeal to "reform" represents the consolidation of various normative assessments: an assessment of the present state of affairs; an assessment of the most desirable alternative; and, hopefully, an assessment of the means best suited to attain said alternative. While reform, by its very definition, implies improvement, what exactly constitutes improvement depends upon what one perceives to be "good" – the idealized final destination thus dictates the chosen route, with certain avenues inevitably prioritized over others.

With his following observation, English novelist H.G. Wells might

as well have been referring to the trajectory of House of Lords reform: "In England we have come to rely upon a comfortable time-lag of fifty years or a century intervening between the perception that something ought to be done and a serious attempt to do it (Jay 2010)." While the Parliament Act 1911 evinced a growing consensus that reform of the upper chamber was needed, the issue remains unsatisfactorily resolved more than a century later. Of course, this is not to say that no meaningful alterations have been made to the House of Lords in the decades since 1911; rather, the continuing confusion over the chamber's proper role within Parliament hints at a broader lack of conceptual clarity. As Alexandra Kelso argues in her article "Reforming the House of Lords: Navigating Representation, Democracy and Legitimacy at Westminster," the normatively appealing concepts of representation, democracy and legitimacy – all at some point claimed as justification for House of Lords reform – have been utilized largely interchangeably by reformers, when in actuality, the terms can exist in direct opposition (Kelso, 2006).

Though the 1997 Labour manifesto promised "a process of reform to make the House of Lords more democratic and representative," democracy does not necessarily beget representation, nor does representation necessarily imply democracy. As defined by Professor of Politics David Judge, representative democracy entails the exclusion of the overwhelming majority of the population from the political decision-making process, on the grounds that participating in elections constitutes a representational transmission of power. In his work *Representation:*

Theory and Practice in Britain, Judge writes that "elections, by definition, are mechanisms for the selection of elites: but they are simultaneously mechanisms for mass participation (Judge 1999)." Thus, a belief in the principle of representation underwrites the functioning of modern democracies. However, as the composition of existing elected bodies can attest to, very rarely (if ever) does a governing institution actually serve as a microcosmic representation of the wider population or electorate. According to data collected by the World Bank Group, women constituted 50.7% of the United Kingdom's population in 2015 (World Bank Open Data, 2015). Despite this nearly symmetrical gender distribution, only 29% of all MPs elected at the 2015 General Election were female – a percentage that was sadly, if not altogether surprisingly, celebrated at the time as a record high (Keen, Cracknell, Apostolova, 2017). Evidently, when evaluated using even the most basic criteria, British representative democracy has undeniably failed to accurately encapsulate the distribution of the population at large.

Any plans to impose representation from above must be cognizant of the various possible forms a representative body could theoretically adopt, contingent upon the populace and/or trait(s) said body seeks to more acutely represent. Winston Churchill, for instance, envisioned a functional approach to representation, in which an economic parliament would be composed of individuals with expertise in some economic discipline (James, 1974). Alternatively, adherents of microcosmic representation argue in favor of granting enhanced parliamentary presence

to women and historically underrepresented races and ethnicities. Anne Phillips, Professor of Political and Gender Theory at the London School of Economics, wrote a book examining relatively recent measures designed to induce a more equitable representation of these groups within elected assemblies. Titled *The Politics of Presence*, Phillips's work deliberates upon the inadequacies associated with solely adopting a 'politics of ideas' model, in which the sex or race of a representative is deemed to be a matter of little importance (Phillips, 2005). However, she simultaneously acknowledges the essentialist understandings of group identity that could plausibly arise from placing excessive weight on preordained gender or ethnic quotas, instead advocating a finely attuned balance between electoral accountability and political inclusion. In regards to the House of Lords, this balance can be achieved by instituting reforms better aligned with the dual considerations of functional representation and microcosmic representation, so that the topical expertise touted by the likes of Churchill can work in concert with the politics of (identity) presence.

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Maternal Mortality in the United States: Who is to Blame?

Ginger Hooper

Maternal mortality remains a significant problem in the United States, despite the common assumption that pregnancy-related death is no longer a prevalent issue in the modern world. In reality, despite its impressive level of advanced medical technology, the US ranked 60th of all nations in maternal mortality in 2013 (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017). The vast majority of the world has experienced declines in pregnancy-related deaths in recent decades, while mortality in the US has more than tripled since 1987 (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Carroll 2017). The numbers become even more distressing when broken down by race: black women in the US are three to four times more likely than white women to die from their pregnancy (Eichelberger et al. 2016; Howell and Zeitlin 2017). Despite ample evidence implicating structural and institutional factors— such as medical error, racism, and social inequality—as foundational causes of maternal death and disparity, many figures in the medical and political communities continue to emphasize individual-level factors such as women's behavior and choice. Unless we reshape and broaden our approach to maternal health, the death toll will continue to climb and the gap will continue to widen.

The World Health Organization defines pregnancy-related death as "the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and the site of the pregnancy, from

any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, but not from accidental or incidental causes" (MacDorman et al. 2016:3). In 2015, there were 25 pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births in the United States (Carroll 2017). The leading causes of maternal death in the US are thromboembolic disease, hypertensive disorders, hemorrhage, infection, cardiovascular disease, cardiomyopathy, pre-eclampsia/eclampsia, sepsis, and drug overdose (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Baeva et al. 2016; Goffman et al. 2007; Fiscella 2004; Lang and King 2008). It is important to note that calculating and analyzing the maternal mortality rate is often a complex and inexact undertaking; pregnancy-related deaths have traditionally been underreported, and the relatively small number of deaths pose a statistical challenge (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Goffman et al. 2007). To address underreporting, checkboxes which specifically inquired about pregnancy status were added to the death certificate in 2003, and the category of late maternal death—defined as maternal death within one full year of birth—was added to the national health vocabulary. The resulting increase in reporting, however, cannot nearly account for the increase in pregnancy-related deaths in the United States in recent years (Moaddab et al. 2016). Additionally, states adopted the new death certificate and coding standards at different times, some delaying the change by a decade; consequently, maternal mortality data between states were rendered incomparable, resulting in the absence of a reported national rate for several years (MacDorman 2016).

Despite these changes and challenges in data collection and

analysis, it is undeniable that pregnancy-related deaths are unacceptably high in the United States. A variety of explanations have been offered to rationalize this phenomenon, including the high cesarean section rate, the growing number of women having children at older ages, the opioid epidemic, the increased number of multigestational pregnancies, and the rising rates of chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiac disease, and obesity in the general American population (Moaddab et al. 2016; Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Goffman et al. 2007; Carroll 2017; Lang and King 2008). These factors have also contributed to the increase in maternal *morbidity*, which is far more common than mortality and refers to a serious, though not immediately fatal, pregnancy-related consequence to a woman's health (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017).

Nursing and Healing. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

A similarly wide range of explanations have been offered in regard to the persistent racial disparity in maternal morbidity and mortality. For instance, the black female population has higher rates of risk factors such

as unmarried status, unwanted pregnancy, no insurance, less education, and low socioeconomic status (Moaddab et al. 2016; Eichelberger et al. 2016; Fiscella 2004; Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017). Black women are at higher risk for not using effective contraception and have a higher abortion rate (Eichelberger et al. 2016). They are also more likely to initiate prenatal care late in the pregnancy and they have a higher rate of caesarean delivery (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Fiscella 2004; Tucker et al. 2007; Harper et al. 2007; Moaddab et al. 2016). Black women tend to have higher rates of pre-existing conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, or obesity; hypertensive disease, infection, and hemorrhage during pregnancy also tend to be more severe for black women (Fiscella 2004; Eichelberger et al. 2016; Tucker et al. 2007; Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Harper et al. 2007). Additionally, hospitals that serve predominantly black populations tend to be of lower quality (Howell and Zeitlin 2017). Disturbingly, multiple studies list genetics as a possible cause in racial disparity, reflecting an outdated and inaccurate conception of race as a biologically or genetically distinct category (e.g. Fiscella 2004; Moaddab et al. 2016; Lang and King 2008).

Despite the apparent abundance of suggested causes, it is critical to note that none of them can fully account for the racial disparity in maternal death. Even when factors such as age, medical conditions, education, marital status, number of children borne, and insurance status are controlled for, the black-white gap remains (Goffman et al. 2007; Tucker et al. 2007). Similarly, black women's greater risk of hemorrhage

and infection cannot be explained by location of delivery or individual risk factors (Eichelberger et al. 2016). Even with equal access to care, identical insurance coverage, and treatment at the same hospital, black women tend to receive lower quality of care and have worse outcomes than white women (Tucker et al. 2007; Howell and Zeitlin 2017). These facts about the pervasive and stressful effects of race are vital to an informed understanding of maternal health and disparity; failure to consider these facts may lead to a theoretical privileging of individual factors such as behavior and perceived choice (e.g. getting married, using contraception, seeking out prenatal care, etc.) over structural factors which are beyond the woman's control (e.g. racism and social inequality).

Medical institutions represent another crucial factor in maternal health, also outside of women's direct control. Studies estimate that nearly half of maternal deaths are the result of readily preventable causes, and the majority of these deaths can be attributed to provider error, including errors in diagnosis, documentation, and treatment (Hirshberg and Srinivas 2017; Howell and Zeitlin 2017). Given these alarming statistics, it is odd that current academic literature and public health interventions seem to focus more on changing women's behavior rather than changing hospital standards and procedures. By emphasizing women's personal choices (e.g. women choosing to have children at later ages, opting for elective C-sections, neglecting their personal health pre-pregnancy, etc.) the current discourse subtly shifts the blame from institutions to individuals.

Texas provides an illuminating case study of these phenomena.

Between 2011 and 2012, the reported maternal mortality rate in Texas doubled—a trend first pointed out by MacDorman et al (2016). This striking rise in mortality coincided with severe cuts in the state budget towards family-planning—part of an ongoing effort to defund Planned Parenthood—which resulted in the closure of 82 clinics across the state (Stevenson et al. 2016). It is not difficult to postulate a connection between the two events, considering these clinics' function of providing effective contraception and obstetrical/gynecological care, especially to women of low socioeconomic status. Baeva et al. (2017), representing the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force, responded by suggesting that the statistical methods of MacDorman et al. overestimated maternal mortality in Texas. Baeva et al. offer alternative explanations for the increase in maternal deaths in Texas, namely the rise in chronic medical conditions and drug overdoses. They emphasize the need for "a woman to be as healthy as possible before pregnancy," which they suggest can be addressed through more continuous primary health care, screening and referrals for addicted mothers, and obesity prevention programs (Baeva et al. 2017:618). Similarly, Berlin (2016) responds to the situation in Texas by describing factors such as narcotic addictions, obesity, lack of pre-pregnancy health care, an increased number of women choosing to give birth outside of the hospital setting, and "a change in the childbearing environment" which has resulted in increased childbearing age and increased use of fertility treatments (Berlin 2016:52). The closure of women's health clinics in Texas

is mentioned only passingly. In these ways, Texan academic and medical institutions appear to focus on individual-level risk factors and behavior rather than acknowledging broader social and political processes in their conceptualization of women's health.

Given the vast resources which the United States possesses, the high maternal mortality rate in this country represents a grave injustice to women, especially women of color and women of socioeconomic disadvantage. The inequitable distribution of resources within our health care system exacerbates and perpetuates the challenges that vulnerable populations face in obtaining quality and affordable care. Effective interventions will target institutional and structural barriers to health, rather than placing the burden of improvement on women themselves. Texas is currently in a unique position to set an example for the nation by acknowledging and remedying the political violence it has enacted against Texan women. Though analysis and action at the individual level is useful, an imbalanced focus on individual over structural factors obscures the underlying social causes of disparity and places undeserved blame on women for their constrained choices.

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Integrating Sustainable Urban Agriculture Into Pre-Existing Built Environments

Joanne Kim, Emma Foster

Introduction

An excerpt from the General Assembly of the United Nations provides good insight into the research's definition of sustainable development: "Defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), sustainable development has emerged as the guiding principle for long-term global development. Consisting of three pillars, sustainable development seeks to achieve, in a balanced manner, economic development,

social development and environmental protection." 1 Five cases across different cities in Paris, Gothenburg, and London will be studied according to this definition. Each case study will be subjected to critical analysis in the categories of economic, social, and environmental sustainability's. With that information in mind, the research will conclude with a proposal for how Rice University can achieve sustainable development.

Economic Sustainability

One of the most important factors in determining economic sustainability is to examine the cycle of cost and revenue in the construction of an individual site's business. The research will examine

how each business operates and whether or not the business is successfully maintaining itself financially to continue for a long term, exceeding a 7 year operation with no gross loss.

While the goal of economic sustainability is not in profit itself, the research will attempt

to conclude whether or not the businesses in the case studies are effectively generating enough

revenue to financially sustain their expenses and whether they are effectively utilizing their profits for future development and innovation.

Social Sustainability

According to the United Nations, "Social sustainability is about identifying and managing business impacts, both positive and negative, on people." For the purposes of this investigation, the metrics of success in this category are split into each site's levels of pedestrian engagement, maximized use of space, and effects on the surrounding neighborhood. These subcategories were chosen because they indicate a positive effect of the business on the people it affects. The average of three categories determines the site's overall social sustainability.

For the subcategory of pedestrian engagement, success is indicated by several street level

interactions with the site within an observed time period of an hour. Specifically, pedestrians must be engaging with the space within the site, such that they observe and/or react to the intervention the organization

has made. Maximized use of space is indicated by efficient use of preexisting infrastructure and integration of green space such that the new site is much more environmentally efficient than previous infrastructure on the same site, as shown through reduced energy use, rainwater collection, or offset of the urban heat island effect. Effects on the surrounding neighborhood is measured by the site's outreach to the surrounding community, and whether or not it creates a culture of positive engagement with the environment.

Community Garden. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is defined as "a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the

capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet

those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity". As

such, the research takes into consideration how these projects meet their resource needs without outpacing the corresponding ecosystem's ability to provide such resources. The environmental sustainability of each site will be determined by approximate considerations of inputs and outputs within its system of production that aren't regenerated or repurposed in the system itself, as well as the waste and pollution produced by each site's respective systems. As the availability of this information from these case studies is limited, the measurement of environmental sustainability will be based on industry standards of production, such as open-loop system of resource use, as compared to unique approaches to production in each site, such as waste reduction mechanisms.

Case Studies Analysis

Stadsjord Aquaponics

1. Overview

As part of the organization Stadsjord in Gothenburg, Sweden, Niklas Wennberg created a small-scale aquaponics system in a former slaughterhouse as a way to shift the region's consumption of fish from predators to herbivores, which better sustains the ecosystem. Today, this system accommodates enough room to produce two tons of fish a year, which eat the vegetables and insects they produce in house, which in turn supply a more sustainable and less wasteful food source to local restaurants and farmers markets.

2. Economic sustainability

Stadsjord's aquaponics system demonstrates high economic sustainability. It has a stable network of revenue and expenses loop enabled by the usage of the fish farm, sustainable feeding system, and farming system, which makes it likely to be sustainable in the long run. As part of a non-profit organization, Stadsjord's aquaponics system generates revenue through the sale of locally raised fish, mostly catfish and tilapia. The fish are fed waste from a local coffee shop, plants grown through hydroponics (where its nutrients are derived from fish waste), and insects from local waste management sites. The method in which the fish feed is obtained is not only environmentally sustainable, it is also highly economically sustainable, given the definite stability of the resources. Waste, plants, and insects are all easily obtainable at a reasonable cost continuously and consistently. Stadsjord is encouraged to set the goal of minimizing the transportation cost and the cost of goods sold as a long term, not immediate, solution. Major expenses that Stadsjord has considered include: initial capital investment, labor costs, and marketing. Initial capital investment was minimized by utilizing an abandoned slaughterhouse to avoid high rent prices and by recruiting unspecialized personnel. Personnel involved in the initial stages of the project were from various backgrounds with little specialization in aquaculture, hydroponics, and urban farming. While this may have minimized the initial capital investment, it also brings into the question of research expenses, as the unspecialized employees have to repeatedly run trial-and-error experimentations to ensure the success of end products. While the

employees now in place are becoming more familiar with the operations of the business, if Stadsjord continues to hire non-specialized employees, the cost of training may contribute to labor costs in the long run.

3. Social sustainability

Overall, the Stadsjord aquaponics system is not well integrated into the urban fabric. The building that houses the aquaponics system is far removed from Gothenburg city center which makes its pedestrian engagement low. Its use of space is somewhat efficient because the slaughterhouse in which it's housed would otherwise have been abandoned. However, since the system is in a relatively low-density environment, its use of space isn't completely maximized and is subsequently designated with a medium rating in this category. Lastly, Stadsjord is designated with a medium rating as far as its effects on the surrounding neighborhood. The organization promotes sustainable ways of thinking through information sessions, workshops, and industry education in environmental management but rarely engages the public in the aquaponics system itself or promotes a balance of social needs in the community. This amounts to a relatively small socially sustainable effect on Gothenburg. This gives Stadsjord an overall medium rating of social sustainability.

4. Environmental sustainability

Of the case studies that this paper will examine Stadsjord's aquaponics system has the most closed-loop sustainable systems for resource recycling. They use waste from the microbrewery next door in

order to grow and produce insect food for the fish. In turn, the fish's natural waste adds key nutrients to the waste that are conducive to plant growth. As the nutrient-filled water provides sustenance for the hydroponic garden, the plants filter the water which in turn goes back into the fish tanks. They sell these fish and plants to local markets, which keeps the system of production localized, reducing their carbon footprint. However, their use of energy isn't as sustainable, since they use coal to power their electricity for lighting and fossil fuels to power the transportation of the foods they sell. This gives Stadsjord an overall high rating in this category.

La Ferme Urbaine

1. Overview

In the dense neighborhood of Porte de Clignancourt, Paris, the REcyclerie cafe houses a 1000m2 urban farm situated on old, unused train tracks. It includes hens, ducks, beekeeping, an aquaponic greenhouse, a composting system, and a vegetable garden. The goods produced from this farm are used in the kitchen of the REcyclerie. Through the development of high biodiversity in the garden, La Ferme Urbaine, also known as Les Jardins des Rousseau, has managed to reverse the damage of years of waste accumulation along the railway so effectively that now it's some of the most fertile soil in Paris.

2. Economic sustainability

La Ferme Urbaine generates revenue through its restaurant. Utilizing the concept of sustainability as a major marketing tactic, La

Ferme Urbaine attracts customers and researchers alike. Because it operates as a restaurant, researchers or visitors are able to purchase meals, thus making the site a popular site of attraction. Due to the lack of information, it is difficult to determine if La Ferme Urbaine's finances are being used effectively for long term economic sustainability. What the research can determine, however, is that La Ferme Urbaine minimizes its expenses by selling the goods that the farm produces and that by making the park a popular attraction the site is doubled in value. Given its rich history and strong community presence, the restaurant is likely to continue its business growth as long as its community and business operations continue their stable support of the farm.

3. Social sustainability

This site has a very high integration into the urban fabric. It is situated in a busy pedestrian area next to a metro stop, which allows La Ferme Urbaine to become an avenue for solace and exploration in the midst of a busy Paris street. It's open to visitors of the restaurant and passersby almost every afternoon, allowing for high pedestrian engagement. Through its biodiversity, La Ferme Urbaine creates a beautiful and environmentally sustainable space in an area that would otherwise be an underutilized eyesore. In this way, its use of space is maximized, giving it a high rating in that subcategory. The combination of the cafe and the farm promotes a sustainable lifestyle in the neighborhood, bringing together like minded people. This gives it an overall high rating in its effects on the neighborhood. Overall, La Ferme Urbaine is given a high

rating in social sustainability.

4. Environmental sustainability

La Ferme Urbaine has a few initiatives to keep their project moving towards environmental sustainability. They repurpose their kitchen and garden waste into compost, and the nature of the site offers a moderate level of natural insulation, sunlight, and rainwater collection to minimize energy and water usage. There's a self-sustaining aquaponics system (see Stadsjord Aquaponics), and carbon emissions due to food transport are minimized because their produce is used by the restaurant directly adjacent to the garden. However, it must be considered that gardens such as this often outsource their pest prevention, farming infrastructure, and chicken and fish feed. As such, La Ferme Urbaine could work to minimize its carbon emissions and resource inputs that aren't completely regenerated by the system itself. Overall, it is given a medium rating for this category.

AgroParisTech Roof Garden

1. Overview

In 2011, AgroParisTech (also known as the Paris Institute for Life, Food, and Environmental Sciences) established an experimental urban garden on the roof of the research institute's building. This garden was used to research materials suitable for vegetable beds, as well as to study the impact of pollution on harvest and optimize cultivation in an urban context. This organization has also published several scientific articles on the potential of urban agriculture in Paris.

2. Economic sustainability

AgroParisTech s funded by the Scientific Council of AgroParisTech, the Vinci Company, and the Ile-de-France. The Scientific Council of AgroParisTech initially funded the project by supporting its first installations, experiment, and training courses. The Vinci company currently supports the experimentation of the roof garden, along with the Ile-de-France region for the thesis of Baptiste Grard. One of the major issues of AgroParisTech is that it is funded by a research institute and does not generate any quantifiable revenue. Because it derives from an educational institute, it does not have the end goal of economic sustainability. Rather, its end goal is to produce intangible research that will ideally have a future external benefit. That being said, the educational institute has direct control over the operations of the farm, and the garden could cease to exist at its funder's discretion. Thus, the economic sustainability for the garden of AgroParisTech itself is rated as low.

3. Social sustainability

Because of its nature as a research institute, the AgroParisTech roof garden has little interaction with the surrounding neighborhood. There are scheduled visit days about once a month which are open to groups of less than 10 people at a time. However, it appears that only people in the agricultural research industry know of its existence, and there isn't any indication of it on the street level: it is housed in a nondescript building on a busy street. This gives the site very low pedestrian engagement. AgroParisTech maximized its use of space in this project, since it effectively

creates a working vegetable garden and green space in an urban condition that would otherwise contribute to the urban heat island effect and use up much more energy, so it is given a high rating in this category. It engages with the people affiliated with the accompanying research institute, but rarely with the neighboring community in the 13th arrondissement of Paris. This gives it a low rating in the category of effects on the neighborhood. Overall, AgroParisTech is given a medium rating in social sustainability.

4. Environmental sustainability

Although AgroParisTech's urban roof garden is primarily used for plant growth research, there are many ways in which the organization creates a more environmentally sustainable system than an industrial farming system would. It uses urban waste for garden infrastructure and plant nutrition with items such as crushed bricks, coffee grounds, recycled wood, and compost. Roof gardens also have numerous positive effects on a building's energy use such as cutting heating and cooling costs, collecting rainwater, and offsetting the urban heat island effect. There are also little to no carbon emissions from food transport since most of the produce is kept within the building. However, it can be assumed that AgroParisTech outsources some products, such as pest control, water, and soil, used for their garden that are not created by or recycled back into the system of production. Overall, AgroParisTech is given a high rating of environmental sustainability.

GrowUp Urban Farms

1. Overview

GrowUp Urban Farms has two branches. The first one is The GrowUp Box, which is a demonstration farm in Stratford, London containing a small-scale aquaponics system designed from an upcycled shipping container. It works to educate communities on sustainable agricultural production as well as to produce salad greens and herbs to local restaurants . The other branch is Unit 84, a similar system at a commercial scale, which is housed in an industrial warehouse in Beckton. It combines aquaculture with a vertical hydroponics system which produces over 20,000 kg of combined salad greens and herbs and 4,000 kg of fish a year.

2. Economic sustainability

GrowUp Urban Farm is ranked with medium economic sustainability. Given that it is a commercial business, GrowUp Urban Farm needs to better utilize its resources to ensure the continued success of its business among the growing aquaponics industry. GrowUp Urban Farm is in a different position from Stadsjord in that it generates its entire revenue from the sale of goods to local retail markets. While selling its products to local retail markets is very environmentally friendly as it reduces the business's carbon footprint, GrowUp Urban Farm could improve its economic sustainability by investing more into research in order to enable energy-efficient and environmentally friendly ways to transport its goods to a further market. Restricting its sales to only a local region is not only limiting, but also makes the business vulnerable to

competitors and stronger buyer power in negotiations. GrowUp Urban Farm's biggest strength is its ability to provide a low-cost, sustainable, and stable supply of its goods to the local retail markets. Compared to other natural farms, GrowUp Urban Farm's aquaponics system has lower risk associated with natural disasters, changing ecosystems and climate change, and unpredictable harvest conditions. At the same time, however, there is a growing interest in the aquaponics industry, putting GrowUp Urban Farm at risk of losing profits due to growing competition.

3. Social sustainability

According to ourmetrics, GrowUp Urban Farms has a medium level of social sustainability . The GrowUp Box has a high level of pedestrian engagement because it's a part of Roof East, a social hub on the roof of the Stratford Centre and offers many workshops and exhibitions on their aquaponics and vertical growing systems. Unit 84, however, is a commercial working farm, so it doesn't allow visitors or engage with the community around it. Both projects

maximize the use of space on their sites, as the GrowUp Box would otherwise be a wasted shipping container in a landfill, and Unit 84 is housed in an underutilized industrial warehouse district. This gives it a high rating in the subcategory for use of space. Roof East allows Grow Up Box to be a part of the cultural fabric, reminding visitors of an ambition of environmental sustainability within a dense environment. Unit 84 is not a part of its corresponding neighborhood, but both units supply local restaurants and supermarkets and offer training for young people

who forego formal education or are otherwise unemployed and provide them with skills and jobs in urban farming. This gives the organization a medium rating in the subcategory of 'effects on neighborhood.'

4. Environmental sustainability

GrowUp Urban Farm's chief ambition is a complete closed-loop system of production, such that all inputs of their aquaponics system are produced by the system's outputs or are otherwise completely renewable. In both the GrowUp Box and in the Unit 84 commercial farm, water is continuously recycled through the fish tanks and plants, as the fish add nutrients to the water for the plants, which then filter the water to go back into the fish tanks. This also prevents outsourcing of nutrients, which is a problem many farms face. The mesh in which the plants are grown in their vertical system is initially imported from an American manufacturer, but it is indefinitely reusable for future plant harvests. The verticality of the plant beds allows for the lowest possible energy use, since light and heat costs do not increase with an increase in height of the beds. This minimizes GrowUp Urban Farms' carbon impact. However, there are some elements of the system that aren't completely environmentally sustainable. It uses industrial fish feed and sprouts seedlings using recycled carpet pieces that can't be reused. GrowUp also uses a van to transport their produce to local supermarkets, travelling about 80 miles a day, which causes a relatively large carbon footprint per pound of produce compared to other forms of mass-produced agriculture. Overall, GrowUp receives a high environmental sustainability rating.

Hackney City Farm

1. Overview

Hackney City Farm has thrived in the London Borough of Hackney for over 20 years with the chief goal of giving young people and locals the opportunity to experience farming and small-scale agriculture firsthand. There are a variety of farmyard animals, vegetables, and other food plants available for people to engage with and learn new skills directed towards improving the community and the local environment. It supplies fresh produce, but it also aims to become a hub of projects developed by staff and volunteers in response to the needs of the community.

2. Economic sustainability

One of the major drawbacks of Hackney City Farm is stated in the website itself:

"We rely on the support of our community and funders to do the incredible work we do. We do raise about a third of our own money through delivering contracts, hiring and licensing out assets, running courses, and of course, selling eggs, honey and vegetables. We are trying to increase the amount of money we make for ourselves to ensure our financial sustainability. However, we still rely on kind donors and funders for money."

As stated, Hackney City Farm generates most of its revenue from donors, and its lack of public funding is an issue that challenges its long-term financial stability. Hackney City explicitly states the way its business operates, and by doing so publicizes its need for more support and donors.

On the same website, the farm organizers state that "During its early years, Hackney City Farm received a moderate core grant from the local authority (London Borough of Hackney). Over the last three years, this has been greatly reduced in line with council cutbacks. In response the farm has concentrated on securing a sustainable future by developing areas of social enterprise." These social enterprises include commercial souvenir shops, office space rentals, and open markets. By specifically stating its future plans to make itself more sustainable, Hackney City Farm is on the right track to achieve long term financial sustainability, but its results are yet to be determined. That being said, the research has concluded the Hackney City Farm's economic sustainability as low.

3. Social sustainability

Hackney City Farm has a strong, observable, and positive presence in its community, and therefore has a high rating in social sustainability. The pedestrian engagement is particularly strong, as there is a welcoming entrance from the main busy street which draws wanderers in to engage with the farm animals and produce. This gives is a high rating in this category. Its use of space on site isn't completely maximized, however. Although it is on the site of an old brewery, the site would otherwise be a part of Haggerston Park, a green space adjacent to the site. This gives it a medium rating in the 'maximized use of space' category. The farm contributes to the neighborhood as a community resource: it hosts many artistic, musical, and family events in addition to distributing locally grown food through vegetable boxes. It even offers courses related to

the environment, such as in beekeeping and solar power, and there's an alternative education provision attached to the farm for children aged 13-17. Therefore, its overall effects on the neighborhood are high.

4. Environmental sustainability

Since Hackney City Farm is mostly a demonstration farm, there are few initiatives to make it completely environmentally sustainable, besides perhaps beekeeping, which helps maintain an efficient harvest and biodiversity. It can be assumed by the general industry standard of city farms that it outsources its animal feed and fertilizer, and that the transport of their produce around the city also causes carbon emissions. Otherwise, there is little information on how this site is any more or less environmentally sustainable than the average local farm. Because of this, Hackney City Farm is given a low rating for environmental sustainability.

Conclusions and Proposal for Rice University

Conclusions

According to this comparative analysis, three conclusions can be drawn about the relative social, environmental, and economic sustainability of these urban sustainability projects. First, a project with high environmental sustainability often means that it also has low pedestrian engagement and less of an effect on the surrounding neighborhood. This may be because in order to create a completely closed-loop system of production, all inputs and outputs have to be carefully monitored, minimizing contact with consumers in the process. This

is seen in the case of GrowUp Urban Farm's commercial farm, which requires seclusion from it's neighborhood. Vice-versa, in the projects with higher pedestrian engagement and social sustainability, there is less of an environmentally sustainable closed-loop system of production, as seen through Hackney City Farm. Projects often lean towards social or environmental sustainability, but have a hard time balancing the two.

Plants. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

Second, projects with high economic sustainability usually diversify their sources of revenue. To depend on one system for revenue is risky and also means that the site is less likely to grow and improve its social and environmental sustainability. This can be seen in the comparison between Stadsjord and GrowUp Urban Farms. Because GrowUp Urban Farm generates its revenue solely through its aquaponics system, it is more at risk of being economically unsustainable because it does not have any other source of income. Furthermore, because it has to use its revenue to expand its business and rival its competitors, GrowUp Urban Farm has less margin

to allocate to improving community engagement and environmental sustainability within its aquaponics system. On the other hand, Stadsjord's ability to branch out to other sources of income lets it safely reach out to the other areas of sustainability. Stadsjord has many projects in addition to its aquaponics system, allowing it the ability to gather various sources of revenue to invest in other areas of potential profit.

Lastly, cultural attitudes about agriculture often play a major role in the kinds of projects that emerge in each city. For example, in Paris, where most buildings are routinely cleaned to maintain a certain color, urban agricultural projects often have more to do with aesthetics and are less concerned with contributions to the neighborhood's community. La Ferme Urbaine was mostly founded in order to beautify a neighborhood eyesore. AgroParisTech's rooftop garden is the opposite; it's seen as a research lab therefore it is hidden from public sight so that the building can blend into the urban fabric. However, in Gothenburg, where the culture is more oriented towards an establishment of strong community, projects were more oriented towards what the organizer could do to help their fellow citizens. Niklas Wennberg's main motivation in creating Stadsjord was bringing the sustainable industry of local fishing back to the city; therefore, the project is more focused on support for the neighborhood rather than what it looks like.

In brief, the answer to the research question "how can economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable urban agriculture be effectively integrated into a pre-existing built environment?" is

threefold. It can be done by balancing environmental sustainability with openness towards the community; by basing business models on community impact instead of profit; and by taking into account the city's cultural attitudes towards agriculture in order to optimize social and aesthetic cohesion with the urban fabric.

Infrastructure Proposal

Through this analysis, the most effective ways in which different cities integrate sustainable agriculture into their respective urban fabrics have been identified and determined. Thus, we would like to propose a similar project in the context of Houston and Rice University. Because of the densely occupied area on campus, the site for this investigation in urban agriculture would have to be somewhere in the greater Houston area, in order to test these conclusions about how environmental sustainability can balance with street-level interactions. We have also chosen to propose an urban aquaponics system similar to GrowUp urban farms because of this type of system's opportunity for closed-loop use of resources and because aquaponics is a growing industry with opportunities for investment and low overhead costs. The site we have chosen for this is Houston's fifth ward, as it has many empty lots and is being redeveloped by local organizations, specifically to help bring back pedestrian engagement and community support services, giving us opportunity for collaboration. This neighborhood has a vibrant community and lots of street life, which allows us to test the limits of social interaction with environmental sustainability. Similarly to GrowUp, we want to create a

working aquaponics system selling produce within a shopping center in order to connect people with their food, while also having an educational and vocational component that allows people to get more involved in the process.

Marketing and Funding Methods

It is important that the proposed organization be well integrated into the local community. Only through sustained integration in the urban fabric is an organization likely to succeed in the long term with a source of customers and visitors. Initial marketing efforts can include: social media, offline advertisements, and partnership with local organizations and businesses to promote and raise awareness. Websites, social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram, flyers, and joint funding efforts with other local organizations and businesses should be encouraged. The organization should also emphasize its social responsibility in the community for maximum publicity; highlighting the positive impact the existence of the organization will bring will draw more support. Initial marketing efforts would begin before the official launch date of the organization in order to fully maximize initial brand recognition. It will allocate a sufficient portion of their initial capital to enable such marketing effort. The organization should base its pitches at Rice University for a better chance in attainment of initial capital investment. Rice University offers a number of various funding efforts, such as the Rice Management Company, research grants, and scholarship opportunities. Rice students are also more likely to be aware of these opportunities and establish closer long

term and short term connections with possible funding partners.

This project in urban sustainability will serve as a catalyst for sustainable redevelopment and community building in Houston, as well as create a testing grounds for the ideas examined in this research. We anticipate that the planning and development of this proposal will take around three months, and implementation may take up to seven months.

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Minority Politics and the Culture of Law

Josephine Chen

Demographic shifts have long been an unavoidable element of nation-building and rule-making, with modern technological advancements regarding travel and communication encouraging such changes at a never-before-seen scale and speed. As societies across the world become increasingly diverse, peoples of different races, ethnicities, cultures, and countries of origin must contend with how to interact with and govern over one another. The law, in turn, becomes a vital tool that countries can use in order to establish a certain type of approach to growing diversity and minority rights. And in doing so, lawmakers, law-abiders, and law-breakers are forced to contend with not just the law itself, but also each other, revealing through such interactions the benefits, flaws, and many contradictions that exist within this realm of modern legality. As societal make-ups change, the law not only works to catch up to such movements, but also to define preemptively how such movements will be carried /out, viewed, and responded to. In observing how law and the expansion of diversity have subjected and been subject to each other, it becomes clear how law makes society and how society, too, makes law.

The very legal definitions of who can or cannot be considered a part of a state or community places all individuals who wish to

interact with that society at the mercy of law. Through immigration and naturalization procedures, governments have made the very idea of belonging someplace a legal (or illegal) status. Laws that encourage certain groups to become permissible members of society, while barring others from that same privilege, determine what kinds of diversity are or are not allowed at any given time. Furthermore, continued cultural changes that result from both legal and illegal subjects entering a society call for shifts in how the law must contend with such diversity. As such developments continue to progress, it becomes clear how law is not a static entity that exists above the influence of society, but a flexible and responsive process that reflects cultural changes, and vice versa (Coombe, 1998; Moore, 2001). For example, the history of Asian migration into the United States serves as a reminder of how quickly culture, society, and law can change, work together, and come in conflict with one another.

From the early boom of migration during the Californian Gold Rush in the 1950s, to the omission of Asians from the Naturalization Act of 1970, to the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, to the post-Pearl Harbor internment of Japanese immigrants regardless of citizenship status, law was used to deny Asian Americans from accessing certain rights and privileges, serving as both a response to rising numbers of Asian migrants that threatened previously held notions of society and an instigator of even more anti-Asian sentiment among the white majority (Saito, 1997). As Asian immigration boomed, especially in

the West coast, Asians were perceived to be dangers to the economy, American culture, and national security, prompting the government to target certain groups and ethnicities at different moments in time. These laws simultaneously quelled the threat by removing Asians from the national narrative of citizenship and immigration, while increasing the sense that the Asian community was something to be feared. Later, the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, the shutdown of Japanese internment camps in 1946, and the abolishment of racial restrictions found in immigration and naturalization statutes with the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, and the abolishment of all remaining discriminatory national origins quota systems with the Immigration Act of 1965 reflected and begat positively changing attitudes towards Asian immigrants (Saito, 1997). In each of these cases, laws were passed as both a response to shifts being observed in minority presence and public sentiment, and as a way to control and influence the population and its opinions—whether intentionally or not. As simultaneously a result of and a precursor to continued changes in society, law becomes part of an ongoing process that questions (and provides certain answers for) what the place of minorities is and should be in a country.

Furthermore, the ability for policy to create illegalities by making subjects that are bound to society yet denied certain legal privileges is apparent in the ways by which laws surrounding minority rights have been created and enforced (Malinowski, 1932). Though countries have

established legal guidelines through immigration and nationalization policies that categorize individuals into legal and illegal entities, grey-areas exist in the spaces between such classifications. Such in-between status reflects how law can be made to meet and echo the cultural traditions of a society, while simultaneously implemented in a manner that allows for the realities of a country's needs and desires to be met. For example, the use of illegal immigrants in America's agriculture industry creates a troubling cycle of abuse and neglect that the law oftentimes overlooks in the name of economic progress. In order to keep costs as low as possible, undocumented workers are recruited to take on jobs that American citizens do not want or would demand much higher pay to undertake. In certain US states, more than half of the agricultural workforce comprises of illegal immigrants who are paid much less than their legal counterparts, complete the most dangerous jobs, and lack the ability to advocate for protections and rights (Passel & Cohn, 2015). To meet economic ends, policy is implemented and ignored in turn, allowing the agriculture industry to flourish through the exploitation of undocumented labor. At the same time, the legal system continues to uphold the cultural values of a society that prizes citizenship and the "right" to belong in America. By taking a blind eye approach to illegal immigrants, the US agriculture complex is able to reap the benefits of cheap labor without having to give up its surface-level adherence to American values of belonging. Thus, the existence of and the disregard towards the law work together to balance the conflicting needs and goals

of society. This combination helps create illegalities without whom the economic aims of certain industries would not be met, without having to compromise the cultural interests held by the public. In failing to uphold certain immigration laws, the state finds itself exerting a different, unofficial power that protects both the traditions of society and the reality of the country's needs, pushing minorities into a 'legal limbo" that is both perilous and necessary (Comaroff & Roberts, 1986; Cabot, 2014). This type of social control over minorities and immigrants highlights the ways in which law, society, and industry work together and influence one another, creating spaces where illegalities can be integrated into the social order.

Justice Center. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

As multiculturalism becomes the norm in an increasing number of modern societies, the idea of legal pluralism plays an important role

in how the state interacts with growing diversity (Moore, 2001). In order to contend with variety in society, the law must be able to account for the differences between the peoples it exerts control over. This need to recognize difference raises questions of who can be considered a minority, how their minority status should be handled by the law, and what power the law has over independent groups and bodies. In attempting to answer such questions, the law reveals its incredible ability to make and remake culture and society as it sees fit. In order to create any type of minority policy, the law must first be able to define what a minority is. To do so is then to give policy power over how an individual's racial, ethnic, sexual, or gender identity is viewed under the law. Such legal definitions, once accepted and translated into the social sphere, are capable of legitimizing or delegitimizing certain facets of an individual's identity.

In the United States, Native American tribes must be recognized by the federal government in order to gain the lawful right to function as an independent nation (Wilkins & Stark, 2017). Thus, the state has the right to define what traits make this minority community worthy of legal recognition and protections. The very status of being a member of a Native tribe hinges on the United States government allowing that tribe to legally exist, making cultural identity inexorably linked to definitions put forth by state policy. Such control over tribal recognition demonstrates the incredible reach of the federal government over minority groups. Though Native American tribes are technically viewed

under law as sovereign entities able to interact with the United States government as independent foreign nations, the reality of the policy that has been implemented reveals how the very becoming of these nations rests in the hands of the United States federal government.

In addition, Native Americans constantly find the sovereignty and independence of their already established tribal nations being undermined, further exhibiting the contradictory nature of Native policy. For instance, legal precedent set by the 1978 Supreme Court case Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe established that Native Nations have no right to arrest and prosecute non-Indians who commit crimes on Indian territory (Wilkins & Stark, 2017). To this day, this precedent allows non-Indians to get away with heinous crimes committed against tribal members, and deeply undermines the ability of Native Nations to protect their citizens, obtain justice, and preserve their rights to sovereignty and autonomy. The power of the federal government to strip away such significant rights from a supposed "foreign nation" clearly indicates the power imbalance that exists between the United States and the Native Nations located within US territory. That laws guaranteeing Native Nations with the right to self-governance can co-exist with legislation that clearly violates the independence of those Nations not only demonstrates how wildly inconsistent minority policy can be, but also creates tangible and devastating consequences for those the law rules over. Research has found that one third of all Native American women will experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetimes, and

eighty percent of reported cases of sexual violence against Native women are perpetrated by white men (Rosay, 2016). Because tribal courts cannot legally prosecute these men and federal authorities often refuse to bring crimes committed in Indian Country to their courts, Native American sexual abuse victims are virtually barred from obtaining justice through the legal system.

In creating policy pertaining to minority groups, the state gives itself the power to make or unmake cultural identifiers, to grant or deny rights, and to offer or withhold justice. As in the case of Native policy in the United States, the government is often able to exercise all of these powers at once, creating contradictions and inconsistencies that allow the state to take on as little or as much responsibility over certain minority groups as is beneficial at the time. The flexibility of this authority further grants power to the law, as clear-cut indicators of what is or isn't legal are removed, creating a system in which the culture and community of

minority groups hinges not only on the law, but the places where the law redefines and negates itself. In using the variety and discrepancies of law to control the variety in society, states find ways to reshape the presence and place of those outside of the majority. It is the presence of minorities in society that prompts the state to create legal guidelines for contending with differences among its people, but policy does not simply work to serve the needs of a multicultural population. In establishing minority policy, states make decisions regarding the right to be and the right to

self that help mold society into something acceptable and controllable for those in power, informing the very cultural changes and societal shifts that first brought such policy into existence.

Contradictions within the legal realm of minority policy are not only observed within the written law, but also among the cultural expectations given to law in the modern world. The ideals of individuality and self-determination that are held at such high regard in Western civilizations are forced to contend with laws that view citizens—and demand that citizens view themselves—as both distinct entities and homogenous groups. Though the promise and expectation of having rights is intimately tied with the concept of the self, the preservation of rights through the law necessitates that those seeking equality present themselves as a united, uniform body (Collier, Maurer, & Suarez-Navaz, 1995; Mauss, 1985). Such incompatibility between cultural concepts and legal realities creates social assumptions and tensions that further inform the trajectory of the law. When nations use law to rule over multicultural populations, membership status in a certain group becomes a vital indicator of the amount and type of state protection an individual can enjoy. The state not only sets the boundaries and definitions of group identity, but also establishes the implications of existing within such an identity. Despite the oft-repeated and idealized belief that "all men are created equal" under the law, minority policy demands that minorities be separated out from the majority as distinctly dissimilar and thus *unequal*. In implying that

minority groups are legally incompatible with the majority, the law creates social consequences that further exacerbate divides between populations. By recognizing and emphasizing differences between the minority and the majority, the law generates and legitimizes the notion of in-groups and outgroups, allowing those in the majority to view minorities as foreign, unfamiliar, and intrinsically antagonistic (Brewer, 1999).

Law Books. Photo by Vy Pham.

As increased numbers of diverse groups enter society, the majority is made aware of the shifting social landscape through their own observations as well as through governmental responses like immigration policy and affirmative action programs. Continued changes in the state's ethnic, racial, or cultural makeup, coupled with reactions by the law that some view as discriminatory or unfair, legitimize and add to the fears many in the majority may have over

being challenged or overtaken by outsiders. Legal responses that result from an increase in diversity can therefore escalate tensions between populations, allowing the majority to blame minorities for their own plights and develop a sense that their culture is under attack. Cases such as Fisher v. University of Texas—in which a white applicant rejected from UT Austin claimed she was discriminated against by the school's affirmative action program—demonstrate how the majority can lash out against perceived threats brought about by minority policy (Fisher, 2016).

Furthermore, during times in which minorities themselves actively advocate for their rights, they must present themselves as a homogenous group, rather than represent themselves as singular entities. Minority right-seeking is nearly exclusively done through emphasizing group identity, despite the fact that equal rights is ideologically framed as inherently individualistic. From the Civil Rights marches to Indigenous movements to LGBTQ+ protests, the process of demanding for rights requires that a shared identity be felt and presented in a meaningful manner (McClain, Johnson Carew, Walton Jr, & Watts, 2009). Thus, despite the fact that the law supposedly allows for differences between individuals to be acknowledged and protected, the law also necessitates that those pursuing equality or certain rights must be able to identify themselves with a larger, homogenous body. Shifting demographics and subsequent policy changes therefore call into question long-held beliefs about personal privilege, highlighting

differences and heightening strains between members of the state.

Neither law nor society are immune to change, and change cannot happen in a vacuum. As multiculturalism spreads across the globe, the growing presence of minority groups in the population becomes an unignorable reality. In attempting to catch up to, predict, and control an ever-shifting population, states become both the slaves to and architects of such transformations. Thus, the social consequences and policy results of rising diversity find themselves intimately connected, with law and society working in tandem to determine which minorities to accept, how many of them to accept, what rights those minorities deserve, and when and where those rights can be exercised. In doing so, the flaws, contradictions, and prejudices that exist within the state are illuminated and amplified, demonstrating how legislation is both a response to societal evolutions and an instigator of further metamorphoses. As minority policy remains as a point of contention and focus in this current era of human existence, the multifarious, colorful shifts in demography and policy that have defined so much of modern life will undoubtedly continue to push and challenge definitions and beliefs of statehood and personhood.

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The Erosion of the "New Man" in Domestic and International Cuban Health Politics

Miriam Shayeb

"The vestiges of the past are brought into the present in one's consciousness, and a continual labor is necessary to eradicate them"'
– from Bosteel Bruno's "Can the New Man Speak?"
"We are at the end of an era, and not only here in Cuba." – from Che Guevara's "On Revolutionary Medicine, 1960"

Introduction

In his 1960 address "On Revolutionary Medicine," Che Guevara shared a vision for the Cuban physician in the new era. Guevara's vision for the revolution of an economy converged with his vision for the alignment of medicine with that economy to produce the concept of the "New Man," the prototypical individual in the new Cuba who, guided by the new ethos of a moral economy, would work for the collective good. According to Elise Andaya, the "ethos of reciprocal social exchange" drives the gift economy (Andaya, 2009), which frames monetary exchange as a "symbol of the giver's appreciation for aid rendered" (Andaya 2009, 359). This social exchange contrasts with the value-driven "monetary remuneration" of debts practiced in a market economy (Andaya 2009, 362). The practice of medicine in Cuba, driven by the economy of the gift, has been lauded as a success of the revolution with an effective nationalized healthcare program

and a very high physician-patient ratio (Feinsilver 1989, 5-6). Cuba is regarded as one of the healthiest nations in Latin America, with excellent health indicators, extensive access to healthcare, and rapid advancement of biotechnological research (Feinsilver 1989, 26). Cuba has extended this vision for the social practice of medicine to an international field, providing medical aid and services to a substantial number of nations (Huish 2009, 303) in Africa and Central and Latin America since the 1970s (Feinsilver 1989, 13).

What problematizes this success in the provision of care to both domestic and international patients are the changing motivations and practices by both the Cuban government and Cuban physicians, which compromise the idealism of the "New Man" that was born in the cradle of revolutionary vision. Changing attitudes and policies followed the dynamic historical context of the post-revolutionary era, notably the Special Period of the 1990s, which brought the advent of foreign health tourism to Cuba, and the Castro-Chavez alliance, which increased medical aid in Venezuela in the decade thereafter. Utilizing historical and sociological studies of Cuba from the 1980s to the present day that include reviews as well as observation and interview-based studies with Cuban physicians, this review will explore established understandings of the concept of the "New Man," Cuban physicians' responses to their careers, Cuba's policies and practices of international medical aid, and the experiences of physicians on these international medical brigade assignments. The discussion thereafter will consider the problematic movement away from the idealism

of Guevara's "New Man" in healthcare domestically and abroad as a result of changing Cuban and international health policies as well as the growing discontent of Cuban physicians in their work. These deviations from Guevara's vision of the moral practice of medicine evince the gradual erosion of the ideal "New Man," whose socialist spirit, in response to economic necessity and individual dissatisfaction, could not be sustained in the practice of medicine in Cuba or abroad.

The New Man and the Moral Practice of Medicine

Guevara's central claim in his 1960 speech about the impact of the Cuban Revolution on the practice of medicine was that it would "liberate man's individual talent . . . [and] orient that talent . . . [the] task now is to orient the creative abilities of all medical professionals toward the tasks of social medicine" (Fuevara 1960, 4). This image of Cuban physicians, with their effort and training aimed toward contributing to the socialist cause, embodies the revolution's ideal "'new man,' [who] would eschew material incentives and self-interest and instead toil for the good of the people and the advancement of the socialist project" (Andaya 2009, 362). This vision for the new Cuban physician depended heavily on the belief that the moral practice of medicine, carried out by individuals for the collective good, would exemplify the moral economy of the gift in revolutionary Cuba. This form of economy relies on "the ethos of reciprocal social exchange," which has influenced the dynamic between Cuban physicians and their patients as well as international health policies and agreements (Andaya 2009, 359). In its original form, this model for the Cuban physician does

not acknowledge market value or exchange but rather focuses on the altruism at the core of the idea (Andaya 2009, 363) The extensive network of healthcare facilities in Cuba corroborates the success of this model on a functional level; however, the opinions and practices of individual Cuban physicians challenge the idealism at the core of this model.

Experiences of Physicians in Cuba

Opinions of Cuban physicians in literature reviews and interview-based studies reveal discontent with the economy of the gift at the individual level. In Elise Andaya's 2009 study of Cuban healthcare, observations of and interviews with doctors indicated complex and disenchanted mindsets. Andaya's interview with an older obstetrician exemplified this complicated discussion of reconciling the morality of social medicine with the difficult reality of material desire and satisfaction:

"I'm delighted when a child recuperates his or her health . . . To heal the sick, yes, that is a moral compensation . . . But when I leave here I want to go to the stores too, buy some makeup, shoes, go to a restaurant, repair my house . . . and one feels, well, why have I sacrificed so much . . . Because human beings . . . live to consume . . . Che [Guevara] knew that, he talked about the "new man," . . . that we were going to have a better standard of living" (Andaya 2009, 358). In this quote, the physician's discontented revelations evince the existence of consumerist desire in Cuba, which problematizes the idealism of the economy of the gift. In Sean Brotherton's ethnographic and historical analysis of contemporary Cuban physicians, he cites the pressure to conform to the idealistic model of the revolutionary as

a source of discontent for primary healthcare providers. These physicians contested their problematic representation in "state media campaigns as selfless individuals, dedicated to la revolución" and disagreed with the claims that a moral incentive, rather than monetary compensation, drives this model (Brotherton 2008, 264). The interviews and analyses in Andaya and Brotherton's works emphasize the influence of the state's narrative in the perpetuation of the idea of the "New Man" in Cuban medicine rather than the influence of the collective impetus of individuals dedicated to the sociopolitical ideology of their work. The rampant dissatisfaction of physicians noted in these studies suggests that the ideological foundation of the "New Man" cannot be sustained.

The Rise of Health Tourism in Cuba

The idealism of the "New Man" was further eroded by an increase in profitable health services for travelers in Cuba in response to economic downturn. The financial incentive of health tourism in the 1980s compromised the state's narrative of the moral practice of medicine that rejects the free market. This turn toward profit came about during an era of major economic crisis in Cuba. The price of Cuban sugar dropped below the cost of production and global oil prices dropped, which affected Cuba's re-exportation of Soviet oil (Feinsilver 1989, 21). A major hurricane in 1985 also affected the economy by decreasing the national yield of crops (Brotherton 2008, 262-263). In the early 1990s, the loss of Soviet subsidies in Cuba following the fall of the Soviet Union contributed further to a time of severe economic downturn known as the Special Period in

the Time of Peace (Brotherton 2008, 262-263). During this crisis, health tourism became a major contributor to the Cuban economy. In this "Salud y Turismo" industry, "'socialist entrepreneurs [offered] health services on a treatment-for-pay basis, theoretically, to foreign visitors on the island (Brotherton 2008, 262-263). The creation of a health service program designed to produce profit deviated from the moral practice of medicine as a service rather than an industry. This industry produced profit by catering to tourists, who were often from capitalist countries (Feinsilver 1989, Advertisements from state travel agencies like Cubanacán supported this endeavor, with one promising "'the possibility to enjoy your vacation without worry about your health,' alongside Cubanacán's "Salud y Turismo" motto: 'Honestidad, Calidad Científica y Profundo Contenido Humano' [Honesty, Scientific Quality and Dedication to Humanity]." The ironic juxtaposition of the promise of "dedication to humanity" with the clear advertisement of a profitable venture undermines the moral foundation of the practice of medicine in Cuba and obscures the idealism of the "New Man."

The Doctors-for-Oil Exchange: Cuban Medical Aid in Venezuela

International Cuban medical aid has been an integral component of the practice of social medicine since the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to contributing to the revolutionary vision of a new social model of healthcare on a global scale, medical aid has formed the backbone of medical diplomacy for Cuba. This type of diplomacy achieves "collaboration between countries on health matters for the

purposes of improving relations with one another. . . [which produces] humanitarian benefit while simultaneously developing improved relations (Feinsilver, 1989)." Historically, Cuban physicians, known as "proletarian internationalists," have worked in areas of need in various countries that have included Libya, Ethiopia, Guyana, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Bolivia (Feinsilver, 1989). While this practice certainly follows the model for socially-oriented medical service, according to a 1989 review-based study by Julie Feinsilver, the nations that received Cuban aid in the 1970s were charged proportionally based on national wealth (Feinsilver 1989). For example, nations like Libya and Iraq, which contained profitable petroleum resources, paid a fee for the medical service while nations with less resources paid no fee (Feinsilver 1989). This consideration of national wealth in the provision of humanitarian healthcare is discordant with the economy of the gift that guided this model of social medicine.

Cuba's largest and most publicized medical diplomatic arrangement is informally known as the "Oil-for-Doctors Exchange," created by agreements in 2000 and 2005 during an era of particularly strong political ties between Cuba and Venezuela (Feinsilver 2008). Under these agreements, Cuba was to send physicians, medicines, and medical equipment to areas of need in Venezuela as well as Bolivia. In return, Cuba was to receive a regular and heavily subsidized oil supply as well as the benefit of joint investments with Venezuela (Feisnilver 2008). Different studies report different responses of Cuban physicians regarding their work in Venezuela. In her review-based study, Feinsilver notes that the "earning

potential" of Cuban physicians is substantially greater abroad and therefore provides a monetary incentive for physicians to participate in the medical brigades program (Feinsilver, 2008). The information Andaya collected in her interview and observation-based study corroborates this concept, as she asserts:

"Although values of socialist solidarity, humanitarianism, and reciprocity undoubtedly motivate many doctors to commit to international medical aid, both medical professionals and laypeople were also likely to attribute this service to the higher pay. . . as well as the opportunity to purchase consumer goods that, given the embargo, are unavailable in Cuba or available only at high cost (Andaya, 2009)."
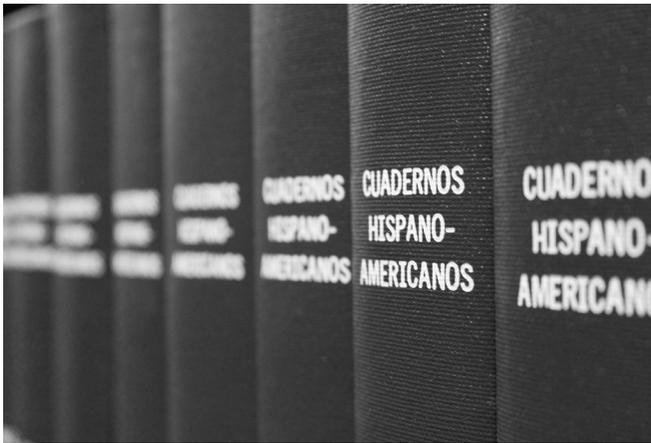
Cuadernos Hispano-Americanos. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

This claim indicates physicians' movement away from a collectivist approach to a more profit-based venture that could provide individual benefits. However, a contrasting study in 2010 by Maria Werlau depicts a radically different portrait of medical aid in Venezuela and physicians'

responses to it. In interviews with Cuban physicians, Werlau found that healthcare providers are sent to insecure areas with few means of communication or transportation, dissatisfactory salaries, cramped living conditions, and a lack of basic resources (Werlau, 2010). Additionally, many physicians noted high crime rates in the areas as well as the frequent violent victimization of Cuban doctors (Werlau, 2010). Though these observations differ substantially from those of Feinsilver and Andaya, all three studies share the same conclusion that Cuban physicians are dissatisfied, either with the domestic model of medical service or with their international assignments. This dissatisfaction has eroded the idealistic portrait of morally-incentivized social medicine.

Discussion

The studies pertaining to major domestic and international Cuban health policies as well as physicians' responses to those policies indicate that the idealism of the "New Man" has been eclipsed by the pragmatism of economic and political interests. Cuban physicians working domestically have revealed that the consumerist desire and materialist incentives theoretically eradicated by the revolution continue to play an important role in Cubans' dissatisfaction with daily life. The individualism and stratification at the core of the materialist incentive diverge from Guevara's claim that "individualism, in the form of the individual action of a person alone in a social milieu, must disappear in Cuba. In the future, individualism ought to be the efficient utilization of the whole individual for the absolute benefit of a collectivity" (Guevara, 4). The "New Man" does

not fully exist in individuals who cannot convincingly admit satisfaction in the collective work of social medicine. While the medical model has succeeded functionally, the utopic nation served by the economy of the gift has dissipated ideologically in the medical sector.

Cuba's economic downturn in the 1980s and 1990s largely contributed to changes in the ethos of healthcare in the nation. With a failing economy, Cuba turned toward health tourism as a profitable venture. As soon as state-sponsored travel agencies released advertisements intended to attract tourists for medical services in order to gain a profit, the moral practice of medicine in Cuba was compromised. This form of healthcare does not uphold the vision of the "New Man" as the medical worker oriented toward improving social welfare (Guevara, 2). Instead, it directly contrasts with what Guevara asserted as the future goals of medicine in Cuba: "to prevent disease and [to] orient the public toward carrying out its medical duties. Medicine should only intervene in cases of extreme urgency, to perform surgery or something else which lies outside the skills of the people of the new society we are creating" (Guevara 3-4). Medical tourism in Cuba functioned as an industry that catered to people outside of the "new society" who were seeking cheaper alternatives for medical procedures whose necessity is not evidenced. Therefore, this practice challenged the central values of necessity and altruism in the provision of medical service by the "New Man."

The international medical diplomacy of Cuba, particularly in Venezuela, exhibits a more pronounced erosion of the "New Man"

through the varying dissatisfaction and motivations of Cuban physicians on medical brigade assignments. The studies that indicated a monetary incentive for Cuban physicians' international work substantiate the discontent with wages observed in Cuban physicians working domestically. This desire for profit ironically responds to Guevara: "But now old questions reappear: How does one actually carry out a work of social welfare? How does one unite individual endeavor with the needs of society" (Guevara 3-4). The prototype of the "New Man" that Guevara envisioned existed without the materialist desire that plagued the "old questions" Guevara asked. As evidenced by the motivations cited by physicians to work abroad, medical and humanitarian service can be provided without fully altruistic intent. The responses of Cuban physicians suggest that humanitarian aid is given without full ideological agreement by the healthcare providers. In this way, Guevara's prophecy of the "New Man" as the solution to the "old questions" of social welfare and societal needs remains unfulfilled.

The contrasting study about the quality of life for Cuban physicians in medical aid assignments in Venezuela reveals a disenchantment with the idealism of the global practice of social medicine. Reports of lower salaries and compromised safety by discontented Cuban physicians working abroad undermine the satisfaction attributed to the provision of international medical aid. This dissatisfaction is discordant with Guevara's claim that "far more important than a good remuneration is the pride of serving one's neighbor; that much more definitive and much more

lasting than all the gold that one can accumulate is the gratitude of a people" (Guevara, 6). The shadow that this study casts on the idealism of humanitarian work abroad insinuates that Guevara's vision for altruistic dedication to the medical manifestation of socialism resides in the idealism of a bygone era.

Conclusion

Cuban healthcare has emerged from the revolutionary era as a successful institution on a functional level. Cuba is one of the healthiest nations in the Americas, and the medical service provided by Cuba to other nations in Latin America effects substantive change in the health of those countries. This success, however, does not depend on the ideological integrity of the "New Man" predicted to emerge from the Cuban revolution. In this imagined model, a new and idealized member of society would develop individual talent to work exclusively for the shared wellbeing of society and would sacrifice individual interests for the sake of that collective goal. This "New Man," if he (or she) ever did exist, now lies dormant. The tension between moral obligations and monetary needs forms the foundation of the individual dissatisfaction experienced by Cuban physicians, which contradicts the exclusively social concern envisioned by Guevara. The changing historical, economic, and political tides of Cuba shaped the direction of healthcare toward a practical and profitable approach in the interest of the state that often disregarded the idealism of the revolutionary "New Man." A failing economy, the need for profit, and rampant discontent with the status quo converged over the

decades to form waves of pragmatism that challenged Guevara's vision

of the socialist spirit in Cuba. These waves beat against the "New Man,"

eroding a figure perched on the verge of a utopic future, until it collapsed

into the prophetic fallacies of a revolutionary past.

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Central Banking and Democratization: A Discussion Of Institutional Design Principles For Developing Democracies

Samuel Akers

Introduction

In 1900, one in every five countries worldwide was democratic according to Polity scores (Polity IV Data). By 2000, one in every two countries was democratic (Valge 2006, 1). The 20th century was a veritable revolution for democracy and pluralistic government worldwide. Fledgling democracies had free reign to change and establish governmental institutions as they saw fit, with the goal of sustaining and reinforcing democratic inertia.

Simply transitioning toward democracy, however, does not guarantee success. Half of the nearly 100 states that have transitioned to a new form of democracy since 1970 have experienced at least one episode of backsliding (i.e. the breakdown of democratic institutions), most in the first five years of existence (Siegle 2005, 5). This is especially likely in low-income countries (Richards 2007, 47). No new government starts with a truly clean slate – the vestige of the past regime will remain imprinted in the minds of the people, if not in the institutions carried over. The result is an oft-unsuccessful struggle for new democracies to erase autocratic pasts in favor of populist policies.

Economic and political scholars have written extensively on

institution-building in developing democracies, particularly with respect to establishing a robust legislature and strong rule of law. What has received comparatively less scrutiny, however, is the design of the central bank in newly transitioned states. While extensive research has been done on the structure and results of central banking in developed countries (e.g. the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, etc.), very little has been done to take the lessons learned over time from the central banks in these nations and design ideal economic institutions for new democracies.

The discussion around central banking is not solely theoretical or academic – issues such as inflation, unemployment, taxes, and productivity are issues of practical importance for those living in developing democracies. Establishing clear, time-tested principles for central banking can make a tangible impact on the macroeconomies of developing nations.

The investigation here focuses on practicality rather than theory – what actions can democratizers in developing governments take to ensure the highest likelihood of success? Specifically, how should the most critical economic institution, the central bank, be designed so as to prevent economic instability as well as foster democratic ideals? To answer this question, we will draw on examples from highly institutionalized banks, like the Federal Reserve and Bundesbank, as well as central banks in developing democracies.

The analysis here is divided into two sections – the first section will deal with the reasons for CBI, the types of CBI, and its problematic aspects. The second section, building on this discussion, will offer a proposal on

how a developing democracy might best institute a central bank.

Money. Photo by Vy Pham.

Central Bank Independence

In order to dissect Central Bank Independence (CBI), we must first level-set on what is precisely meant by "independence." Independence can be broadly split into two types: legal independence and actual independence. Legal independence is the space given by a nation's constitution, laws, and codes to the central bank in order to operate. Recognizing that the letter of the law does not always reflect reality, economists have also developed analogues to measure the true level of independence from politics afforded to central banks (Debelle and Fischer 1994, 197). Unable to be measured directly, actual independence is often estimated by evaluating the turnover rate of central bank chairmen and board members, as well as rebuffs of central bank decisions by the executive or legislature (Laurens 2009, 6-20). In nations with high levels of institutionalization, actual independence is likely to reflect legal independence. In developing democracies, however, the correlation is less

pronounced.

Within legal independence, the bank's mandate can be split even further: instrument independence and goal independence. In most nations, the legislature or constitution lays out goals for the central bank to pursue. These goals are usually stable prices (i.e. low inflation), low unemployment, or both. In some nations, such as South Africa, the central bank has total autonomy to determine its goals (Crowe 2006, 25). These banks are said to have goal independence. Even if the goals are given to the central bank, almost all banks are given autonomy to decide how to go about achieving those goals. This is referred to as instrument independence (Drazen 2002, 10). Central banks control the money supply, reserve requirements, and other instruments of the banking system to accomplish monetary policy goals. Even with instrument independence, central banks are constrained. In the US, the Federal Reserve must balance its actions against the responses from its detractors. Though it maintains the autonomy to pull the levers in the economy, too dramatic of action could lead to legislation that impedes its autonomy.

What exactly is the purpose of CBI? Former Vice Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board of Directors, Alan Blinder, identifies three rationales for CBI: long time horizons, the moral hazard of inflation, and the technical nature of monetary policy (Blinder 1996, 10). The effects of monetary policy can take 18 months or more to be fully realized. In a political system with re-elections every few years, patience and farsightedness are a tall order; insulating the monetary policymaker from

a "perform or leave" culture is necessary. Related to the long time horizon, politicians face a serious moral hazard in the run-up to elections. Without proper checks, politicians will be tempted to "overheat" the economy and allow output to remain above potential (Lastra and Miller 2001, 32). Unemployment decreases while GDP increases, but inflation starts to creep up in the long term. Blinder characterizes this dilemma as an "investment:" disinflation is the price paid directly, while the benefit of low inflation appears later (Blinder, 4). Finally, the general public may not understand the intricacies of monetary policy. In Blinder's words, "[Monetary policy] is a bit like shooting a rocket to the moon, though not nearly as exact" (Blinder, 4).

Another question arises: is this not all fundamentally undemocratic? Developing democracies have just regained the ability to hold government accountable, and then they are expected to establish institutions beyond oversight? As previously discussed, the central bank makes decisions that have a tangible impact on its citizens. Indeed, turning such an institution loose is a tough sell for the electorate. The doubts of CBI are magnified in developing democracies. An independent central bank might be called an "authoritarian institution" – it makes judgment-based decisions that affect the livelihoods of people without input from the people (Maxfield 2000, 7). In some instances, more authoritarian institutions in developing democracies have seized times of crisis as an opportunity to expand control and eschew democracy (Siegle, 7). While not directed at central banks specifically, any institution in a developing

democracy has the ability to use given independence to change its function and pursue additional, sometimes tyrannical, autonomy.

CBI is not without its problems, particularly in developing democracies. Nations must weigh the pros and cons of such an approach to monetary policy in order to formulate an effective institution. Even in a vacuum, such a judgment would be difficult. Add in the circumstances of authoritarian legacies and the particular hazards of independent institutions in a developing democracy, and the puzzle becomes labyrinthine.

Policy Proposal

For policymakers in developing democracies, the establishment of economic institutions presents an array of options with varying consequences. As Peter Johnson opines, monetary stability and legal stability are the two preconditions for democracy (Maxfield, 8). What path should a nation take in order to guarantee its economic stability and institutionalize democracy? The answer is contingent on the specifics of the nation at hand. The ideal solution of an oil-rich state in the Middle East will be different from that of a coastal nation in Latin America. There are, however, rules and philosophies that dictate most societies.

Laurens, et al. give six "consensus views" for central banking based on the authors' survey of global trends:

1. Set price stability as one of the primary

    objectives of monetary policy

2. Curtail direct lending to governments

3. Ensure full independence for setting the policy

   rate

4. Ensure no government involvement in policy

   formulation

5. Ensure that accountability corresponds to the

   level of independence

6. Ensure that transparency corresponds to the

   level of accountability and financial market

   deepening (Laurens, Arnone, Segalotto, 241-

   244).

Foremost, these views completely separate fiscal and monetary policy,

as well as remove central banking from the vicissitudes of politics. Many

nations across the decades have generally converged on the six above

principles as critical aspects of successful central banking.

   The first step in constructing a central bank is defining its objective:

what is its purpose in existing? In the United States, the Federal Reserve's

objective is defined in the Federal Reserve Act:

   "[The Federal Reserve]…shall maintain

   long run growth of the monetary and credit

   aggregates…so as to promote effectively the

   goals of maximum employment, stable prices,

   and moderate long-term interest rates" (Federal

   Reserve Act, 1913, 63-45).

In the opinion of many economists, the mandate for the Federal Reserve is too broad, as it grants the central bank too much goal independence (Debelle and Fischer, 218). The central bank is not in a position to make informed tradeoffs among its the numerous policy objectives, so defining clear and specific goals of monetary policy is necessary for effective management (Maxfield, 9). The goal of the central bank can be set in the act establishing the bank, providing clear, numerical goals and timelines to periodically re-evaluate the bank's performance as well as consider amending the goals.

Until recently, a meaningful difference had not been established between autonomy and accountability. Autonomy may be seen as the ability to act independently without the worry of actions being overturned, while accountability may be viewed as the responsibility to explain and rationalize the actions undertaken. The decisions of central banks are tremendously impactful on the lives of everyone in an economy, so a full discussion of the options at hand and the reasons for choosing a particular policy path are fair trade-offs for the independence afforded the central bank.

Based on the work of Blinder, Maxfield, Debelle, and others, it seems apparent that accountability is a crucial requirement in developing democracies. Based on the work of the above, an ideal institution will have multiple advisory bodies to the bank, as well as requirements for the bank to periodically appear before the legislature to explain the rationale behind

its decisions. Ideally, top officials from the central bank would appear before the national legislature once or more per fiscal quarter to discuss the state of the macroeconomy and the metrics that drove bank decisions. In such a setup the bank still has the autonomy to make the decisions it feels are correct, but there is oversight to review the decisions made.

With the general institution established, we now proceed to how to best fill positions within the institution. In the United States, top positions in the Federal Reserve are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The rest of the staff consists of technocrats hired and promoted based on merit, rather political appointees. Maxfield suggests that nations use a mixed approach: a limited number of board members appointed in the same manner as the U.S., and a larger group selected among top economists, scholars, businessmen, and theoreticians (Maxfield, 9). Additionally, voters could even directly elect some board members, or alternatively allow a smaller, regional body to appoint positions. These selected board members would then decide among themselves who will serve as Chair of the Board. Board members, once chosen, will serve long terms and not be eligible for reappointment. Such a system introduces numerous voices into the selection of top officials, but also removes these officials from political pressure once selected.

While staff selection is an important aspect of central banking, developing democracies face many other difficulties in central bank governance. Manoel Bittencourt found that macroeconomic stabilization in developing nations occurred only after political stabilization, hinting

that CBI may be fruitless in the face of political or societal turmoil (Bittencourt 2010, 17). Furthermore, there is the more fundamental issue of giving a government institution autonomy and insulation from popular opinion, while simultaneously attempting to make government more accountable and responsive to the general public. Any institution with a degree of autocracy will be viewed with distrust in new democracies, especially one that impacts the day-to-day lives of citizens.

How do new democracies square this circle? One option is the evolution of CBI over time. At first, the central bank can be charged with closely following a general rule; for example, when inflation rises by a given amount, the interest rate is adjusted by a given amount (commonly known as the Taylor Rule). If the central bank consistently follows this rule, it starts to build credibility in the eyes of the financial market. In essence, rule policy is a form of pre-commitment. Game theory models demonstrate that a credible commitment by the central bank to respond in a certain way to changes in the economy causes market participants to be more confident and stimulate commerce. As the nation and bank mature, it can slowly be given more discretion until it has total instrument independence. The most immediate drawback of such a plan is that each transition toward instrument independence may be met with financial shocks as a result of the panicky nature of the market.

Conclusion

Central banking must be kept in perspective. It is merely one

piece of a complex puzzle for developing nations. Allan Drazen of Tel Aviv University offers a powerful indictment of central bank design in developing democracies: "…there are so many other, more problematic institutions, that the central bank should not be at the forefront of our attention" (Drazen, 16). Perhaps central banking is not a major factor affecting the success of democracy, but it is undoubtedly a contributor to the lack of success of democracies; proper central bank design is a necessary prerequisite to macroeconomic stability. The exact right design will vary based on the circumstances of the individual nation, but the process can be made simpler through general principles and guidelines for developing democracies to follow. The discussion is not esoteric; every day, economics affects billions of people worldwide. Particularly in developing democracies, slight changes in the design or execution of central banking can cause drastic differences in the health of economies. These economies are inexorably tied to the lives of those who live in them and depend on them. Economics is not merely the study of money or choice, but instead the study of human behavior and human livelihood.

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Perceptions of Crime Severity: Historical Significance and Degree of Damage in Art Vandalism Cases

Rebecca Godard

In January 2017, a section of the Berlin Wall housed at Rice University was vandalized with political messages. As students at Rice, we observed a lot of consternation and outrage among our peers. Much of their anger was related to the historical significance of the Berlin Wall; in fact, the other two structures that were vandalized at the same time received very little attention from either the student body or the outside media. There was also a great deal of anxiety about whether the Berlin Wall would be permanently damaged, a concern we will return to when discussing our study. Despite our anecdotal knowledge of the importance of the target object's historical or artistic significance to the severity of a vandalism crime, the law currently does not differentiate punishments based on these factors (Williams, 2008). This practice contradicts the morally charged concept of art vandalism, which typically carries the connotation of destroying culture (Williams, 2008). As a result, there is a large discrepancy between the popular conception and condemnation of art vandalism and the way it is treated by law, leading to a need for research into the factors that affect people's perception of crime severity.

In contrast to the legal system, several psychologists have identified differentiating factors between various types of vandalism. For example,

Zimbardo (1970) named six types of vandalism – acquisitive, tactical, ideological, vindictive, play, and malicious. He made these distinctions based on the motivation of the perpetrator(s), but his categories also differ in their typical targets. Individuals commit acquisitive vandalism in order to acquire items of value, such as breaking store windows in order to take merchandise inside. Tactical vandalism, on the other hand, is a "means to draw attention… or force a reaction", while ideological vandalism is similar but also has an explicit ideological purpose (Zimbardo, 1970, p. 4). Both are typically carried out against objects or locations associated with the group in power, from whom the perpetrators are trying to draw a reaction. Next, vindictive vandalism is carried out for the purpose of revenge, while play vandalism exists solely for the amusement of its perpetrators. Finally, malicious vandalism emerges out of "rage or frustration", and is often oriented around social class and "directed at symbols of middle-class property" (Zimbardo, 1970, p. 5).

Zimbardo (1970) also discusses the greater public censure associated with vandalism against culturally significant objects or places, comparing the appearance of the word "peace" on the Canterbury Cathedral to "obscene graffiti in less notable places" (p. 6). While the media referred to the Canterbury Cathedral vandalism as "the work of a lunatic", graffiti containing explicit language painted on non-culturally-significant buildings was merely a "prank" (Zimbardo, 1970, p. 6). As Zimbardo's article demonstrates, both the academic community and the general public recognize the importance of the target's historical significance

when judging the severity of vandalism crimes. At the same time, more recent research into perceptions of crime severity has rarely been focused specifically on acts of vandalism.

Much of the research into crime severity assumes that the construct exists on a linear, one-dimensional spectrum. Many studies have used Thurstone's (1927) Method of Paired Comparisons for Social Values, in which subjects are presented with two negatively perceived actions and asked to judge which one is more severe. In his original study, Thurstone (1927) used these paired comparisons to create a scale of the relative severity of various crimes (See Figure 1). Other researchers have used his methodology to evaluate changes in perceptions of crime severity in the past 90 years. For example, Kwan, Ip, and Kwan (2000) used the paired comparisons method to evaluate the relative seriousness of 15 types of crimes. They found relatively similar patterns to Thurstone (see Figure 2), but they changed some of the categories. For example, Kwan, Ip, and Kwan (2000) did not include abortion as a crime, since it was legalized in 1973. They also introduced a category called "criminal damages", which includes acts of vandalism (Kwan, Ip, & Kwan, 2000). They found that criminal damages were perceived as one of the least severe crime categories, ranking only above possession of arms, unlawful society offense, and bribery and corruption (Kwan, Ip, & Kwan, 2000). At the same time, they did not differentiate between different types of vandalism, and so missed out on opportunities to explore more complex factors that affect perceptionsest of crime severity.

O'Connell and Whelan (1996) conducted another study using a one-dimensional scale of crime severity. Rather than using Thurstone's paired comparisons method, however, they used an 11-point Likert scale to evaluate crime severity. They asked subjects to rate various crimes, including murder, burglary, fraud, marijuana sale, assault, underage sex, mugging, and corruption (O'Connell & Whelan, 1996). They also collected demographic variables such as gender and age, and found differences in perception based on those characteristics. For example, women rated burglary and selling drugs as more serious than men did, and older adults rated underage sex and fraud as more serious than younger adults did (O'Connell and Whelan, 1996). While O'Connell and Whelan (1996) incorporated more demographic factors than Kwan, Ip, and Kwan (2000) did, they still considered very few situational factors other than the type of crime.

Man Cleans Bull Statue. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

In contrast to the one-dimensional approach of the previous

two studies, Forgas (2007) examined perceptions of crime severity on a multidimensional scale. The four aspects he considered were the violence of the crime, the perpetrator's intentions, subjects' concern about being a victim of the crime, and the perceived commonness of the crime. He asked subjects to rate each of these dimensions on a bipolar scale when considering a wide variety of crime scenarios, and found differences based on gender, political orientation, and personality traits. For example, men focused more on intentionality, while women focused more on violence. Conservatives also focused more on violence, while liberals focused more on concern. In terms of personality factors, subjects with high mental rigidity focused more on violence, subjects with high social desirability needs focused more on violence and concern, and subjects with high neuroticism focused more on commonness and violence (Forgas, 2007). This study brought the subjectivity of the perception of crime severity to our attention. There is no objective measure of crime severity, with perceptions varying greatly based on situational factors and characteristics of the person making the judgement.

Looking at the literature on perceptions of crime severity, we saw three areas relevant to our interests where further research is needed. First, there is a lack of literature specifically on vandalism. Next, studies on crime severity tend to focus on demographic characteristics of the individuals making judgements, rather than on situational factors of the crime itself. Finally, there is often a discrepancy between perceived severity of crimes and actual legal penalties assessed: Forgas (2007), O'Connell and Whelan

(1996), and Kwan, Ip, and Kwan (2000) all mentioned that their results bore little relation to the penalties that crimes are typically assessed. We wanted to explore these aspects of crime severity by presenting subjects with vandalism scenarios and asking them to assign financial penalties. Based on our experiences with the Berlin Wall vandalism, we chose historical significance and degree of damage as our two independent variables. We hypothesized that historical significance and irreparability would each increase the financial penalty assessed, indicating a perception of greater severity based on those two factors. We did not anticipate an interaction between the two variables.

Method

Participants

This study had 98 participants. Sixteen subjects were excluded from the study – 11 of them were either not 18 years of age or older or a Rice undergraduate student and five did not complete the survey. The remaining 82 participants (29 males, 53 females) were undergraduates from Rice University over the age of 18. They were recruited through advertisement on various pages on the social media site Facebook. Some subjects were also recruited from the Statistical Methods in Psychology (PSYC 339) course with Dr. Carissa Zimmerman and the Research Methods (PSYC 340) course with Dr. Sandra Parsons. Subjects from PSYC 339 received course credit for completing the study. There was no compensation provided for other participants taking the study.

Materials

The survey consisted of 12 vignettes describing criminal activities, presented in random order. For each vignette, the participant was presented with a sliding scale from $0 - $10,000 at the bottom of the question and was asked to assign an appropriate monetary fine. The survey was designed on Qualtrics survey software and could be taken on computers, tablets, and mobile phones. The crimes described in the measure included theft, vandalism, and traffic violations (See Appendix). The four vignettes concerning art vandalism were of interest in the study.

Design

This study conducted a 2x2 within-subjects design on monetary penalties assigned by participants for the severity of art vandalism crimes. The first independent variable, degree of damage, had two levels - damaged beyond repair and somewhat reparable. The second independent variable, historical significance, also had two levels. The piece of art was either identified as historically significant, or its significance was not mentioned at all. Participants assigned a monetary penalty (on a scale from $0 to $10,000) to each crime after reading the scenario.

Procedure

A single, untimed session was administered for each participant. The average time to take the survey was 2 minutes and 35 seconds. An anonymous link was sent out through class sites and social media for the participants to take the survey online on their computer, tablets or phones. After confirming that they were at least 18 years old and Rice University undergraduates, subjects answered questions about their gender and

socioeconomic status. They were also asked how prevalent they believed crimes were on Rice campus on a 5-point Likert scale. The participants were then shown scenarios depicting criminal activity, one at a time and in random order.

Of the 12 total scenarios subjects read, eight were filler scenarios. Four were driving offenses, and four involved employees stealing money or goods from their employers. None of these scenarios were included in our analysis, but were simply there to disguise the fact that we were investigating vandalism specifically. The other four scenarios all described a piece of art being slashed with a knife. In two of the scenarios, the piece of art was described as historically significant. Two scenarios were identified as resulting in irreparable damage, while the other two could be repaired to some degree. After reading each scenario, participants were asked to assign a monetary penalty for each scenario using a sliding scale ranging from $0 - $10,000.

Results

A 2x2 within-groups ANOVA on monetary penalties assigned for crimes revealed that people gave significantly higher penalties for historically significant art (M=5205.5) compared to art that had no historical value (M=3671.4), $F(1, 75) = 36.542$, $p < .001$, 2= 0.328. There was also a significant main effect for degree of damage, such that crimes involving irreparable damage (M=5399.1) received greater penalties than crimes involving reparable damage (M=3477.8), $F(1, 75)=75.222$, $p<.001$, 2= 0.501. There was no significant interaction between historical

significance and degree of damage, $F(1, 75)=2.043$, $p=.157$, 2= 0.027. The effect of the degree of damage did not depend on historical significance (See Table 1 and Figure 3).

Discussion

The results of the study confirmed our hypothesis. There were significant main effects for both degree of damage and historical significance, such that crimes involving greater damage or historical significance received higher penalties. There was no significant interaction between the variables.

These findings reveal that people's perceptions of crime severity do not always match up with the way the crime is actually penalized. For example, the law does not currently differentiate between vandalism against historically or artistically significant objects and vandalism against non-significant objects. This occurs despite the fact that subjects in our study saw historical significance as an important factor in determining the severity and the appropriate punishment for art vandalism. Our research also indicates the need to consider situational factors when examining perceptions of crime severity. Previous studies have typically only considered crime type when manipulating situational factors, choosing instead to focus on subjects' demographic and ideological characteristics. While these variables are certainly important in the field of crime perception, our study demonstrates the need to expand the existing literature by testing various situational factors.

There are a number of limitations of this study, most of them due

to the subject pool we could access. Because our recruitment was restricted to Rice undergraduates, our subjects were quite homogenous in terms of age, location, and education level. Since vandalism is a controversial social issue, attitudes surrounding it have likely changed across time. As a result, our results may have differed had we been able to include older subjects. Attitudes towards art vandalism may also vary based on education level and location, as both of these factors influence the degree to which a person sees or experiences vandalism. Additionally, subjects with more education or from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds likely have different art-related beliefs and values than their less educated or wealthy peers. Fine art has traditionally been a bastion of the elite, whereas art forms characteristic of working-class or minority cultures have been marginalized. Consequently, the position of our subjects as Rice students may have resulted in an underrepresentation of the attitudes common among disadvantaged populations. Finally, our subjects' recent exposure to a highly publicized case of art vandalism may have shifted their opinions in a way that is not representative of the general population. While we acknowledge the effects that our limited subject pool may have had on our results, our research is valuable in that it provides important information about a little-studied phenomenon. Art vandalism is largely absent from the current literature or crime severity, and our study serves to explore a new topic and stimulate further research.

Future research into the area of vandalism could take a number of directions. First, we wonder about the intersection of ingroup bias with

perceptions of crime severity. When the section of the Berlin Wall at Rice University was vandalized, one of most shocking and infuriating aspects of the situation was that the perpetrator was a Rice student. As a student body, we felt that some unspoken code of conduct had been violated, and were even more enraged than we would have been if the perpetrator had been an outsider. In this specific case, the ingroup status of the perpetrator added to the perceived severity of the crime, but further research is needed to determine whether this is a pattern seen across vandalism cases. Additionally, there are a variety of factors that influence ingroup bias and group dynamics, such as social cohesion, common values, and group size. Future research into vandalism and ingroup bias would benefit from an examination of these factors.

Another aspect of art vandalism that warrants further research is the difference in perceived severity based on the type of art. We wonder whether vandalism of more prestigious art forms (such as paintings or sculptures) is seen as more severe than vandalism against less respected art forms (such as street art or needlework). Additionally, does the reputation or notability of the artist make a difference? Does the location of the artwork (i.e. museum vs. private collection vs. public display)? Finally, how to people perceive work that walks the line between art and vandalism? For example, Banksy, an anonymous British street artist, is technically a vandal, but his work is also admired and respected by many. What factors affect whether spray paint is perceived as vandalism or as art? This question would be particularly interesting to consider in a global context, as there is

huge variation in cultures' attitudes towards public art and vandalism.

Tags on a Log Statue. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

Finally, more research is needed to explore the motivations behind art vandalism. This research would likely need to take a qualitative or case study approach, as quantitative measures can never fully capture the nature of criminal incidents. As Zimbardo (1970) has discussed extensively, there are a number of types of vandalism, each with a different set of common motivations. While art vandalism could fall into any of Zimbardo's categories, it has a unique propensity to be politically motivated. The spray paint on the Berlin Wall conveyed a distinctly political message, which contributed to the outrage surrounding the event. Additionally, many military organizations have used art vandalism as a weapon, deliberately targeting objects of historic or artistic significance in order to suppress cultural unity and resistance. The unique position of art vandalism makes it particularly conducive to interdisciplinary research, as it affects issues

within psychology, sociology, art history, and law. As a result, qualitative study is an important facet of future research in the field of art vandalism.

In short, there are a number of directions that future research into art vandalism could take, including studies focused on ingroup bias, type of art, and criminal motivations. Since art vandalism is a significant problem in many communities, this research is important in both academic and practical senses. We hope that our study can be beneficial in enhancing knowledge about art vandalism and in stimulating future research.

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Appendix

The following 12 vignettes are the scenarios to which subjects assigned monetary fines. The first four are of concern to the study, while the last eight are filler scenarios. They were presented in random order.

1. A person uses a knife to slash a piece of art, but it can be repaired to its original condition.
2. A person uses a knife to slash a historically significant piece of art, but it can be repaired to its original condition.
3. A person uses a knife to slash a piece of art beyond repair.
4. A person uses a knife to slash a historically significant piece of art beyond repair.
5. A factory worker takes home clothes from the assembly line without permission.
6. Rather than taking leftover food to a homeless shelter, a cook brings the food home.
7. An office worker regularly takes office supplies home.
8. A restaurant employee takes $50 in cash from the cash register while closing up shop.
9. A person is driving without a license.
10. A tired driver hits a storefront, breaking a window.
11. A driver knocks off the side mirror of a parked car and drives off.

12. A drunk driver hits a stop sign and knocks it down.

Policy Solution for the Brain Drain Issue in Latin America and the Low Percentage of Skilled Labor Emigration to the United States

Spencer Moffat

Much of the United States' immigration policy has not operated as a function of economic growth over the last 20 years due to the large amount of low-skilled emigration to the United States in comparison to the low percentage of highly-skilled workers immigrating to the United States. Human capital is a very important factor in increasing economic growth as the science and technology sectors depend on highly-skilled workers. Many workers choose to emigrate due to a low number of jobs with salaries that match their skills. The United States struggles to improve its human capital through the immigration system because underemployment occurs in which the skills of the workers do not match their job (Lozano-Ascencio, 2012).

One way in which the United States has attempted to improve its human capital is through the H1B visa program. This program was introduced through the 1990 Immigration Act in order to match skilled workers emigrating to the United States with jobs that require specific knowledge in a field and an advanced degree in that field of study. As part of the process, all visa requests must be sponsored by a potential employer and an application needs to be submitted with evidence that the foreign worker will not harm labor conditions in the United States (Facchini and

Lodigiani, 2014). Despite the implementation of the H1B visa program in 1990, a mismatch between employers and skilled workers exists in high numbers. According to Luciana Gandini and Fernando Lozano-Ascencio in a journal article titled *Skilled-Worker Mobility and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Between Brain Drain and Brain Waste*, 57 percent of Latin American and Caribbean born skilled workers living in the United States were in jobs that require little to no qualifications at all (Facchini and Lodigiani, 2014). The fiscal impact on the United States of supporting foreign-born low-skilled laborers leads to an economic loss for the United States. According to a study by Smith and Edmonston (1997), immigrants that did not complete high school created a net economic loss for the government. Specifically, they cost the government $89,000. On the other hand, immigrants that did complete high school and may have gone on to attain a bachelor's degree and beyond contribute $105,000 in net gain for the government.

Low-skilled immigrants who come to the United States put more fiscal strain on the government than undocumented people who illegally come to the United States due to the inability of undocumented immigrants to use government transfer programs such as welfare and social security (Orrenius and Zavodny, 2012). Increased numbers of skilled migrants that arrived in the United States between 1990 and 2007 made economic and sustainable development quite difficult for Latin American countries during that period. Latin America and the Caribbean underwent a three percent increase as an exporter in skilled labor from 16

to 19 percent out of the total number of skilled migrants that immigrated to OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries between 1990 and 2007. In numerical terms, there was a three million increase in skilled workers from Latin America from 1990 to 2007 (Lozano-Ascencio and Gandini, 2012). The results of that period have lingering effects today on development in Latin America. Remittances have become a seemingly impossible policy phenomenon to solve as remittances sent back to Latin America lead to economic dependency. On the other hand, the money that skilled migrants make in the United States and send back to Latin America in the form of remittances leads to a lost economic opportunity for the United States. Implementing policies that increase the total volume of skilled migration to the United States from Latin America will mitigate the negative economic impact of remittances being sent abroad by skilled workers from Latin America.

Construction Worker. Photo by Ginny Jeon.

The United States' current system in place to attract highly skilled

migrants is the H1B visa program where skilled workers apply to work in the United States after being sponsored by a specific company or 501(c)(3). In comparison, most Latin American nations have almost no policies in place that incentivize skilled workers to stay. There are a group of Caribbean nations who have taken the initiative to improve the collective human capital of the region. In the Caribbean, there is an organization known as CARICOM (Caribbean Community) that launched the Caribbean Single Market and Economy in 2005. This initiative allows for the free movement of highly-skilled professionals in the CARICOM region (Repositorio, 2012). As part of this policy proposal that will be outlined in greater detail, I propose that an economic partnership should be formed between the United States and a group of Latin American nations that have the sole purpose of uniting to improve the utilization of human capital in Latin America and the United States.

In order to improve the human capital of the United States and the potential Latin American nations involved in the partnership, an independent organization would need to be formed as an entity operating under the partnership. This entity would oversee the free movement of skilled professionals between Latin America and the United States. The implementation of an international body to oversee the movement of skilled professionals would lead to an increased utilization of the skilled workers. Thus, more highly skilled workers would choose to come to the United States if there was a decrease in the mismatch between some highly skilled workers' qualifications and their jobs. A policy that decreases the

number of skilled workers that are matched with a job that does match their qualifications will lead to wage increases for skilled migrants. It will thus incentivize an even greater number of skilled migrants from Latin America to come to the United States. An implementation of this policy would also decrease remittances in the long run that are sent back to Latin America from the United States. The decrease in remittances would allow for economic growth in all countries involved since economic dependence on remittances would be mitigated and money flowing out of the United States would be lessened.

The free movement of highly skilled workers would incentivize highly-skilled workers from Latin America to come to the United States since there would be fewer barriers in the immigration process. One barrier involved for highly skilled migrants in this proposed policy change would be that they would have to submit an application to join the proposed free movement zone of highly-skilled workers between Latin America and the United States. If accepted, they would be allowed to freely participate in the free movement zone between the United States and the Latin American nations involved. A free movement zone of skilled professionals would encourage more immigration to the United States by skilled migrants and more emigration from the United States to Latin America. By lessening the number of barriers involved in the process for highly skilled workers to emigrate to the United States, a high

Another aspect of this proposed policy is that each Latin American country involved in the partnership would be required to contribute the

equivalent 0.35 percent of its GDP to spending on training programs. Proposing a policy where spending on training programs increases by a percentage of GDP instead of a specific amount shows that the policy is not biased against smaller countries in Latin America. Smaller countries in Latin America tend to spend a greater percentage of its GDP on training programs compared to larger countries. For example, Costa Rica contributes the second highest percentage of its GDP to public spending on training programs according to an OECD statistics in a report titled "Latin American Economic Outlook 2017" (Latin American Outlook, 2017). Due to the lack of satisfactory education in the mathematics and sciences in most Latin American nations, there is a less than sufficient number of skilled migrants arriving in the United States from Latin America that are qualified to work in the engineering and technology fields. The lack of mathematical skills in Latin American nations is evident as more than half of the students aged fifteen lack basic math skills. Additionally, "Latin American students perform almost 80 points lower than OECD students in reading and 90 points lower in science. Costa Rica, the best performer of the region in reading, ranks in the bottom 20 countries and scores 55 points [less] than the OECD average."

Dropout rates for tertiary education in Latin American nations has also proven to be quite problematic. Of the population in the age range from 15-64, only 41 percent of that population began some type of tertiary education. Of that 41 percent, only 14 percent on average completed tertiary education across Latin America.[1] Another necessary aspect of the

1   Ibid

partnership between Latin America and the United States would have to be an agreement that all Latin American countries involved would have to agree to an increase in its public spending on education as a percentage of its GDP. The increase would not be a specified amount, but the agreement would be founded on the unified principle that education is essential to improving economic development and human capital.

Constructing. Photo by Ginny Jeon.

One Latin American nation that should be used as a model for all other nations attempting to improve their systems of education is Peru. A U.S census done in 2000 discovered that 53 percent of those in the United States that were born in Peru had some form of college education. That number differs vastly from other Latin American nations that experience a relatively large number of people emigrating. According to that same census, data shows that only 14 percent of people in the United States that were born in Mexico had some form of college education. The small percentage of college-educated immigrants from Mexico in the United

States directly correlates to the over 40 percent of immigrants from Mexico that occupy unskilled jobs in the United States, according to statistics from 2002 (Canales and Perez, 2007). Part of this can be attributed to the mismatch that occurs between a worker's qualifications and the job they occupy, but the main contributing factor is the small percentage of college-educated immigrants in the United States from Mexico. The only country to have a larger percentage of college-educated people living in the United States than Peru was Argentina who boasts that 59 percent of its people living in the United States have a college education (Ayumi and Pren, 2010). Since improving education is one of the only ways to improve human capital in the long run, it is necessary that all Latin American nations make a consistent and unified effort to improve their education systems. On the other side of the agenda, the United States must make a concerted effort to analyze the mismatch that so frequently occurs between a foreign-born person's skills and the job that they occupy. If wages are improved for these qualified workers from Latin America, the increasing number of skilled migrants to the United States from Latin America will increase at an even greater rate.

If the United States also wishes to improve the percentage of highly-skilled workers that immigrate to the United States, a specific ratio of highly-skilled workers from Latin America to low-skilled workers from Latin America should be implemented. By having a specific percentage of highly-skilled workers that cannot go below a certain percentage, it would be a new direction for U.S. immigration policy as emphasis would be

enforced using the immigration system as a tool to improve human capital.

With the various costs involved for the United States in a proposed policy like this, it is essential to clearly outline in detail how the various programs and policies will be funded. Since the free movement of highly-skilled workers between Latin America and the United States would replace the H1B visa program to a large extent, a specific percentage of that allocated money would have to go toward establishing a free movement zone for highly-skilled professionals between Latin America and the United States. The money used in funding the bureaucratic processes of the H1B visa program comes from the budget allocated to the Department of Labor since the program is a subset policy of the Department of Labor. However, the H1B visa program would not become obsolete. The H1B visa program would still need to be utilized in order for companies to attract highly-skilled migrant workers from other parts of the world outside of Latin America.

There are potential disadvantages to any policy that would partially replace the H1B visa program as there has been a relatively small increase in the total number of skilled migrants immigrating to the United States from Latin America. In 1990, Latin America exported only 1.9 million skilled migrants. In 2007, that same number increased to 4.9 million. Mexico increased its numbers in terms of exporting skilled labor as it saw a 270 percent increase in skilled labor emigrating (Lozano-Ascencio and Gandini, 2012). With the substantial increases in skilled migrants from Mexico, there is a risk involved in implementing a new

policy that could potentially lead to a slowdown in the number of skilled migrants emigrating from Latin America to the United States. However, it is essential that the United States prioritizes admitting more skilled immigrants to the United States than low-skilled migrants. A conciliatory approach that leads to a relatively high percentage of low-skilled foreign-born workers admitted places a greater strain on the social services that are provided by the United States government.

Thus, it is essential that the United States further mandate diplomatic ties and establish more bilateral free agreements with various Latin American nations in order to set a precedent for a zone that allows for the free movement of skilled professionals between Latin America and the United States. Implementing a replacement to the H1B visa program would catalyze the immigration of highly-skilled labor to the United States, which would lead to the improvement of human capital in the United States. Latin American nations would be incentivized to join this partnership, despite the costs they would have to incur to improve their education systems, for a variety of reasons. Valuable work experience gained in the United States would provide these highly skilled workers returning to their nation in Latin America with past exposure to different types of technologies and methods in their respective industry. The benefits and a mitigated number of barriers involved in the immigration process for highly-skilled workers would improve the human capital of all countries involved, while also emphasizing the need for the United States' immigration system to work as a function of improving the United States'

economy.

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Examining Causes for Racial Disparities in Pediatric Asthma

Zoe Parker

Approximately 25 million Americans, including over 6 million children, suffer from asthma. Chronic and incurable, asthma is a disease characterized by periodic episodes of bronchial tube inflammation and tightening that in turn cause coughing, wheezing, and breathlessness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2017). Though some research has proposed a genetic influence on an individual's likelihood to suffer from asthma, it is difficult or even impossible to disentangle the impacts of biology and circumstance on those afflicted with the disease (Silvers and Lang 2012). It is well-established that airborne allergens, including but not limited to atmospheric ozone, smog, mold, tobacco smoke, and cockroach droppings can act as "triggers" that intensify the severity of asthma symptoms (Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, hereafter referred to as AAHA, 2005). Increased exposure to outdoor allergens and proportionally smaller bronchial airways put children at risk for comparatively more severe asthma symptoms than adults. As a result, children use a disproportionate number of asthma-related health care services. According to a report published by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, as compared to adults, asthma sufferers under the age of 18 account for double the amount of hospitalizations, emergency department visits, and physicians' office visits. Additionally, among children, the burden of asthma is not shared equally among racial and

ethnic groups; black children are twice as likely as white children to be hospitalized for asthma, and 4.5 times more likely to suffer asthma-related mortality. Black children also exhibit asthma-related school absenteeism at a rate 4 times higher than that of white children (AAHA 2005). These statistics point to a clear racial disparity in both asthma prevalence and asthma complications.

In recent years, advances in both quick-relief and long-term asthma control medications have improved the quality of life among asthma-afflicted children. Quick-relief medications, such as short-acting beta agonists that dilate tightened airways during an asthma attack, allow asthmatic children to immediately de-escalate the symptoms of an attack; long-term anti-inflammatory drugs help lower the frequency of trigger events (AAFA 2005). It is likely that these kinds of medical treatments are contributing to the leveling off, or even declining, of childhood asthma rates in the United States. A National Center for Health Statistics study published in the medical journal *Pediatrics* found that childhood asthma rates plateaued from the year 2009 to 2013 and have seemed to slowly decline since then. However, despite overall lower levels of prevalence, asthma rates have continued to increase among children in low-income households, and disparities in asthma prevalence between white and minority children have persisted (Akinbami, Simon, and Rossen 2015). These findings serve as a troubling reminder that despite advances in asthma management, low-income and minority children are still at heightened risk for asthma and its associated consequences, including

school absenteeism and most seriously, mortality. The disproportionate impact of asthma on low-income and minority children prompts an examination of the complex web of risk factors causing the disparity – genetic susceptibility, environmental exposure, socioeconomic status, geographic residence, and access to and quality of medical care will all be examined here.

Sacred Heart Ambulance. Photo by Yvonne Carrillo.

It should be noted that in most published childhood asthma data, Hispanic children exhibit prevalence and mortality rates similar to those of white children. However, the ethnicity "Hispanic" encompasses a large variety of subpopulations such as Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Dominican, among which asthma prevalence and mortality rates vary. For instance, asthma mortality rates among Mexican-Americans are typically lower than those of whites, while asthma mortality rates among Puerto-Ricans are over three times that of whites (Akinbami et al. 2012). The pan-ethnic categorization of Hispanics neglects the wide variability between

subpopulations, rendering data on Hispanic asthma trends suboptimal. Since there is very little published asthma data on minorities besides blacks and Hispanics (including Asians, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Pacific Islanders, and people of multiracial identity), the discussion in this paper will primarily focus on childhood asthma disparities between black and white children, only including Hispanic data when it is provided grouped with data on black children.

An individual's likelihood of being asthmatic is a result of both genetic and environmental contributions. While environmental factors may trigger asthma symptoms, genetics impose an initial influence on asthma susceptibility (White et al. 2016). Previous research has shown the pathogenesis of asthma to be polygenic; over 100 genes have been associated with asthma susceptibility (Meng and Rosenwasser 2010). Additionally, studies of twins have estimated heritability as high as 70% (Silvers and Lang 2012). However, it is important to note that in 96% of genome-wide association studies investigating asthma, research was performed on populations comprised of only white individuals (White et al. 2016). The exclusion of minority racial groups from genetic studies of asthma is troubling for two primary reasons. First, according to White (2015:392), genetic studies of asthma in non-white populations point to the presence of "ethnic-specific loci not identified in other populations." Secondly, genetic factors may contribute to disparities in response to asthma-control medication among racial and ethnic groups. For example, bronchodilator medication albuterol is less effective in black individuals,

due to a variation in the beta-2 receptor that is common in black people, but not in whites (AAFA 2005). Lack of understanding of minority-specific disease etiology ultimately results in suboptimal treatment for minority asthma patients in comparison to white patients.

The second component of asthma is exposure to environmental allergens and irritants. Frequency and duration of exposure to triggers may influence both asthma development and severity. Triggers may include outdoor air pollutants (e.g., atmospheric ozone, aerosols, and smog) as well as indoor and residential allergens (e.g., dust mites, pet dander, cockroach allergen, and tobacco smoke). Likelihood of exposure to outdoor air pollutants is correlated with proximity to an urban center, and exposure to indoor allergens is correlated with generally poorer housing quality.

As indicated by the rising rates of asthma among low-income children, socioeconomic status may intensify or increase the likelihood of a child's exposure to particular risk factors. Because family income also determines a child's geographic residence as well as the quality of the child's living conditions, it is appropriate to discuss income and residence together. In the late 1990s, The National Cooperative Inner-City Asthma Study (NCICAS) investigated the intersection of urban residence, poverty, and childhood asthma prevalence. The results of the study showed that the population of asthmatic children was almost entirely black or Hispanic, coming from families that generated annual income of less than $15,000, the majority of whom lived in poorly-maintained apartments or row houses with evidence of cockroach infestation (Gergen 1998). Though

nearly two decades in the past, the NCICAS still reflects the confluence of income and residence on asthma prevalence. Though the majority of black people now live outside of urban centers, albeit at lower rates than white people, black children are still four times more likely than white children to be impoverished (PBS 2013; Pew Research Center 2015). Comparatively higher rates of poverty may be associated with lower housing quality and increased exposure to residential allergens.

As mentioned previously, black children display higher rates of asthma-related hospitalization than white children. This pattern of high usage of emergency care, as opposed to regular periodic usage of primary-care physicians, may be indicative of underuse of asthma-control medication, lack of access to care, and low quality of care. A 1994 study of black and Hispanic children admitted to an urban hospital for asthma attacks found that only 27% of the children regularly used a long-term asthma control medication (AAFA 2005). Subsequent community-based studies found similar levels of underuse, for both short and long-term asthma drugs. This underuse of medication also reflects black and Hispanic children's lower usage rates of asthma-control medications compared to white-children. For example, a 2002 community-based study found that black children were less likely than white children to use three different types of asthma-control drugs (Ortega et al. 2002). Like hospitalization rates, high rates of medication underuse among asthmatic black children are entangled with access to and quality of care. Some research shows that physicians under-prescribe asthma medications for black and Hispanic

children and provide lower levels of follow-up care after an asthma-related hospitalization compared to white children. (AAFA 2005).

In conclusion, racial disparities in asthma prevalence and severity may be rooted in differences in genetic susceptibility but are compounded by environmental and socioeconomic factors. Poverty is strongly correlated to increased exposure to asthma triggers from living in urban centers and poor-quality housing, and black children are more likely than white children to be impoverished. Furthermore, black children are more likely than white children to experience asthma-related hospitalizations that may be caused by lower access to and quality of asthma care. The underuse of both short and long-term asthma control medications among black and Hispanic children is also a marker of access to and quality of care. Going forward, racial disparities in asthma may be reduced by more comprehensive genetic research on black and Hispanic populations. The results of this research will hopefully result in better understanding of asthma etiology on minority populations, which will allow medical professionals to provide higher-quality care. Continued emigration from urban centers and decreases in childhood poverty will likely be associated with lower exposure to asthma triggers and possibly lower rates of childhood asthma among black and Hispanic children, and in the overall population.

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