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*Associate Vice President Graduate Studies and Research
Principal Investigator*

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Director

NISHA GURBUXANI

Academic/Research Coordinator

ANGELICA OCHOA

Administrative Coordinator

Faculty Mentors for the 2006-2007 Research Year

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CHARLES DARRAH

SHAVARI DIXIT

ANNE FOUNTAIN

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COLLEEN O'LEARY-KELLEY

ADRIAN RODRIGUEZ

PRESTON RUDY

ROMEY SABALIUS

SUSAN SNYCERSKI

ANNE MARIE TODD

Editor

NISHA GURBUXANI

McNair Photographer

CHRISTOPHE R GONZALES

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MARGARET SPELLINGS

United States Secretary of Education

LINDA BYRD-JOHNSON

Director of the Office of Federal Trio Programs

EILEEN BLAND

Program Officer

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The San Jose State University McNair Scholars Program is pleased to present the fourth SJSU McNair Scholars Research Journal. This journal represents the diverse and practical research experiences of the McNair Scholars during the 2006-2007 academic year.

I would like to congratulate the scholars for their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments in the summer research program. My sincere appreciation to the faculty mentors for their guidance, time, and commitment to the scholars, their research and the program. A particular word of thanks goes out to the families and extended support systems that made these outstanding presentations possible.

A special thanks to Colleen Brown, Interim AVP for Enrollment and Academic Services, President Don Kassing and Provost Carmen Sigler for their continuing support and encouragement given to both students and staff of this program.

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**Christopher M.
Gonzales Jr**

Major:
Psychology

Mentor:
Dr. Shavari Dixit

Non-Custodial Divorced
Fathers: A
Qualitative/Quantitative
Review on The
Relationship Between
Father/Child Contact and
Emotional Well-Being

Biography

Christopher Gonzales is a Junior majoring in Psychology. His research investigates the relationship between the emotional well-being of recently divorced fathers and the amount of contact they have with their children. Outside of his interest in research, Chris is passionate about photography and capturing life when he travels. Also, in the past he has held leadership roles through being a part of the executive board of United Sorority and Fraternity Council and Philanthropy Chair of Zeta Chi Epsilon. In addition, he enjoys being a Mentor of Community Partners for Youth and spending time with friends and family. Currently he is spending a semester studying abroad in Hong Kong. In the future he wants to get a Ph.D in Social work, with an emphasis in aging.

Non-Custodial Divorced Fathers: A Qualitative/Quantitative Review on the Relationship Between Father/Child Contact and Emotional Well- Being

ABSTRACT

One purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between non-custodial divorced fathers' (NCDF) emotional wellbeing and their child/father connectedness. Also, the study used a qualitative approach to investigate the other implications that may relate to their emotional wellbeing. The study used surveys and phone interviews to determine the relationship between the NCDF father/child connectedness and the NCDFs emotional state. The study also used the same method to unveil the underlying factors that affect the NCDF during and after divorce. The surveys included depression, self-esteem, and divorce adjustment scales to determine divorced father's emotional wellness. The demographic survey and phone interviews were used with the scales to cross-analyze the fathers' father/child connectedness and the influences that affect their relationship and their emotional wellbeing. Data were collected from 4 NCDF. Demographically, all fathers are Caucasian and between thirty years of age or over. The fathers were divorced as early as October 2000 while others are currently in the process. Findings indicated that anger and frustration towards the court seems to be a factor that contributes to the emotional distress of divorced fathers. NCDF feel that they are treated unfairly and are frustrated with the court's restrictions laid upon them. Implications and suggestions

were included for mental health professionals, legal professionals, and policy makers.

Introduction

Divorce is a serious issue for all members of the family. Often divorce ends with the children living with their mothers, and the non-custodial divorced fathers (NCDF) are left to face the many misconceptions and strain that reduce them to insignificant roles as fathers (Bokker, 2006a). Therefore NCDF have to face extra challenges to redevelop their relationship with their children (Bokker, 2006b; Nielson, 1999). The purpose of the study is to find the relationship between the NCDF's father/child contact and their emotional wellbeing. Additionally the study searches for the underlying factors that can contribute to the NCDF's father/child connectedness and their emotional wellbeing. In effect, the study can also be a review of relevant literature in this area of research to better understand the scope for future investigation.

The study used surveys and phone interviews to determine the relationship between the NCDF's father/child connectedness and the NCDF's emotional wellbeing. The study also used the same method to unveil the underlying factors that affect the NCDF during and after divorce. The surveys included depression, self-esteem, and divorce adjustment scales to determine divorced father's emotional wellbeing. The demographic survey and phone interviews were used with the scales to cross-analyze the fathers' father/child connectedness and the influences that affect their relationship and their emotional wellbeing.

Literature Review

Six journal articles were reviewed to direct the investigation. The journal articles mostly discussed the relationship of divorced fathers with their children.

Arditti (1992) in "Differences between fathers with joint custody and noncustodial fathers" interviewed 212 divorced fathers to find the differences between fathers with joint custody and fathers without custody of their children. The characteristics of joint custody were defined in two separate variations. The most common form of joint custody was joint legal custody, where both parents share parental rights and responsibilities. However the children usually stay with one parent. In joint custody, not just the parental rights and responsibilities were shared, but the children equally shared residences with both parents. Therefore, joint custody promotes greater contacts and closer relationships for both parents. However the most notable disadvantage is the continued parental conflict.

Arditti (1992) researched two groups of divorced fathers. They were either identified from their custodial status as joint custody or in sole custody of the mothers. Research has found that there were differences between the two groups in terms of father's involvement, parental conflict, and child support. The variables in the study used a modified shortened version of Adjustment to Separation and Divorce survey. In addition, other questions were added which relate to non-custodial fathers. For example Arditti (1992) also addressed non-custodial father's visitation problems. The results show that the primary predictor for custody status was the frequency of visitation. Other contributors that differentiated between the two groups were father's education, and satisfaction with their custody status. Arditti (1992) opened with how father involvement can affect the family system. Arditti (1992) stated that there was no relationship between father involvement and their

children's divorce adjustment. Also the result of the investigation revealed that there were no differences from both groups of fathers on amount of payment for child support.

Another research described the emotional status of divorced fathers in consideration of their custodial status. Bokker et al. (2006a) "The relationship between custodial Status and emotional well-being among recently divorced fathers" , investigated the relationship between emotional well-being and parental status of recently divorced fathers. In the study, Bokker et al. (2006a), clearly defines the differences between the different custody statuses:

Full custody, joint custody, and noncustody are the basic forms of parental status for divorced parents. The full custodial parent, with whom the children reside, retains the rights, and legal responsibilities for the children. Typically, the noncustodial parent , although legally responsible to provide financial assistance to help meet the needs of the children , forfeits all legal parental rights other than court mandated times for visitation with the children. As a rule, the noncustodial parent is awarded a standardized visitation schedule that involves every other weekend and alternating holiday visitation. Joint legal custody and joint physical custody are two forms of joint custody. Joint physical custody is the situation in which the children share residences with the divorced father and his former wife. Joint legal custody is the condition by which the divorced father and the former wife share in the decisions made for the welfare of the children and both parents have rights and legal responsibilities to the children. (p.84)

The sample of divorced fathers was from public records in two large counties in a Midwestern state. Surveys were used to

determine demographics along with three scales to measure the divorced father's emotional wellbeing. The three scales were the Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and The Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale. The research used multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA). The analysis of the data compared two groups. The first were Full custody and joint physical custody. The second group was non-custody and joint legal custody.

The research revealed that recently divorced fathers with full custody or with joint residential custody have less emotional distress than recently divorced fathers with joint legal custody and those with non-custody. Interestingly, the initiator status made a significant impact to the emotional wellbeing of recently divorced fathers compared to other demographic variables such as education and involvement in support groups. Bokker et al. (2006a) states that there may be other factors related and not related to divorce that can affect the divorced father's emotional wellbeing. However, the largest contributor of stress is the loss of their children, the feeling of guilt for not being involved in the day-to-day lives of their children. Bokker et al. (2006a) advises health professionals to be aware that many divorce fathers are angry at the legal system and have grief with the lost of their children. Also Counselors can help fathers facilitate through the transition of establishing their new father role and help fathers see that they are still important to their father's lives. Policy makers should address increasing time that non-custody and joint legal custody can spend with their children.

The two articles focus on the perspective of the relations of custody status and divorced fathers. Arditti (1992) identifies the different characteristics of joint custody and non-custodial divorced fathers. By differentiating the two custody statuses, it

allows Arditti (1992) to see the main relationships between the father's behavior and their custody status. In the other research Bokker et al. (2006a) focuses on how custody status affects the divorce father's emotional wellbeing and how it can correlate to their involvement with their children. Both research articles influence the demographic survey in terms of the awareness of the differences of custodial status and its significance.

The next two articles will focus on the details of the perception of divorced fathers. Nielson (1999) in "Demeaning, demoralizing, and disenfranchising divorced dads: A review of literature", discusses the social obstacles fathers face to maintain close relationships with their children. Examples like the "deadbeat dad" hurt the image of 75% of fathers who fully meet their financial obligations. Often fathers pay more than is legally required, such as their children's college fund which is not recorded at all. Nielson (1999) also discusses various societal misconceptions that fathers encounter, which impacts their emotional wellbeing and legal system's treatment of divorced fathers. The most notable misconception was the father's inferiority at child rearing. Generally society perceives the mother to be best fit for their children because mothers are naturally nurturing. In fact fathers are not inferior to mother's parenting style. Nielson (1999) states that fathers are different in their parenting style and important to their children's growth. Fathers are more likely to set limits when their children are out of line and give higher expectation for their children. Lastly the article discusses the characteristics of mothers who support Father-Child relationships. The most interesting characteristic is mother's marital status. Mothers are less supportive of father-child relationships if the mother is not married because mother becomes extremely dependent on the relationships with the children after the divorce. In conclusion, research states that fathers are constantly

harassed in demeaning ways; in turn make it difficult for fathers to create meaningful relationships with their children.

Another article which also looks at the perception and wellbeing of divorced fathers is the journal article, "The non-custodial father: His involvement in his children's lives and the connection between his role and the ex-wife's, child's, and father's perception of that role". In the study, Mandel and Sharlin (2006) investigates how the mother's, child's, and non-custodial father's perception on the father's involvement can influence the non-custodial father's actual involvement with their children. Mandel and Sharlin (2006) the research on literature on how Non-custodial fathers face a loss on emotional ties with their children after divorce. Visitations are often superficial and short. The most interesting claim was fathers who were able to differentiate their role as a father and a spouse were more likely to see their children. The method of the research investigates the non-custodial father's involvement by three variables, which are child-support payments, frequency/lengths of visits, and substance of visits. The sample included 102 divorce families in Israeli. The control group included 63 fathers from an intact family. The measures that were used was questionnaires that was design to find out the desired and actual child support, physical contact with the child, and the depth of the father-child contact from each member in the family. Most of the questionnaires were completed in the presence of an interviewer. The results were positive. The more expectations each family member has for the non-custodial father, the more actual involvement. With these conclusions, Mandel and Sharlin (2006) recommends to therapist and professionals that all family members must regard that non-custodial father's involvement in the child's life. Also they stress that legislation should allow tax reductions for non-custodial divorce fathers can enhance the father's involvement in the child's life.

Neilson investigates the social obstacles fathers face when they maintain a close relationship with their children. The social obstacles are broad compared to the research of Mandel and Sharlin (2006), which focuses specifically on each member expectation for the father's involvement. Both research articles were useful to give insight on the divorce father's perspective on the obstacles they face with maintaining a relationship with their children. Perhaps there can be a correlation with the father's emotional wellbeing to these obstacles, therefore, in the research the study implemented a qualitative section that ask fathers their sources of stress and the influences that affect their relationship with their children.

The last two articles focuses on the relationship between father/child contact and their emotional wellbeing. The article "Visitation frequency, child support payment, and father-child relationship postdivorce", Arditti and Kieth (1993) investigates if there is a relationship between the frequency of visitation, the quality of father-child contact and the amount of child support payment. They propose that understanding the dynamics of father involvement after the divorce is important because it relates to the children's and divorced father's emotional wellbeing, the father's preference for more involvement with their children, and the relationship of the father-child. The method of the research was done through surveys, which estimated the variables such as the father-child contact. The most notable results were the influences in the father's visitation quality. There was a strong relationship with frequency. However distance or closeness has no direct influence to visitation quality. Even more interestingly, child support also has no influence in visitation quality. Arditti and Kieth (1993) connect the results with joint custody. Their data have shown that there were lower amounts of child support. Although joint custody shows a negative effect on child support, Joint

custody also relates to the father's satisfaction, which in turn connects to higher payments and consistency to child support payments. In conclusion, joint custody may not have a negative impact to child support.

In the article "The relationship between father/child contact and emotional well-being among recently divorced fathers", Bokker et al. (2006b) investigates if recently divorced fathers' emotional wellbeing is impacted by the divorced father/child contact. The method of the research had chosen a sample from courthouse public records in a Midwestern state. The sample was categorized into two groups, which are fathers with high levels of contact and fathers with low levels of contact with their children. Coded packets were mailed to 223 recently divorced fathers and were asked two questions regarding their number of contact with their children. Also the survey included three measures to determine the fathers' emotional wellbeing. The three measures were the Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and The Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale. The data was analyzed by using MANOVA to measure the differences between the three dependent variables. The results found that there was a relationship that fathers who have a lower father/child contact has lower emotional wellbeing than fathers with high father/child contact. In summary the results indicate that emotional distress is related to the father's low involvement with their children. The data applies with other research that states that increase of father/child contact could benefit all members of the family, especially the children.

Arditti and Kieth (1993) research focuses on the relationship of child support, visitation frequency, and father/child relationship. Whereas Bokker et al. (2006b) investigates on the relationship between the divorced father's emotional wellbeing and his father/child contact. In all, Bokker et al. (2006b) adds to the

perspective on how these factors correlate. Together, both research share that the father's satisfaction with the amount of father/child contact can produce a positive force for the family system because it can give their children more parental support and less emotional distress. Bokker et al. (2006b) research influences the research to use the scales to measure emotional wellbeing. The work of Arditti and Kieth (1993) help bring more dimension into the research by involving questions regarding the quality and frequency the father's father/child contact.

Method

The sample consisted of participants who responded to fliers that were distributed within the San Jose area and a divorced fathers support group in Los Gatos. 6 responded to the survey, 4 completed the survey and phone interview. Demographically, all fathers are Caucasian and between thirty years of age or over. The fathers were divorced as early as between October 2000 while others are currently in the process.

Method

A packet was mailed to each divorce father. The packets contained instructions, a consent form, a demographic survey, three measures, and a paid return envelope. Once the survey was completed and mailed, the researcher called the divorced father for a phone interview to help elaborate more on the father's divorce situation and find out possible confounding factors.

Demographic Survey

The demographic survey consisted of 17 questions that were based on the father's general demographics such as age, also the quality and frequency of the divorced father's contact with their children. In addition, the survey included information that regarded the length of time the divorced father stayed with the mother.

Measures

The variables that were used to measure the divorced father's emotional wellbeing were self-esteem, depression, and divorce adjustment.

Measuring Self-Esteem. The study used a modified Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) was used to measure levels of self-esteem. The study used a modified version for the purposes of the ease and consistency for the participants. The RSE is the most widely used self esteem scale in research. RSE is a 10-item scale that uses a 5-point Likert scale to measure self-esteem. The scale ranges from 1 = strongly agree to 3 = neutral to 5 = strongly disagree. Lower scores on the RSE indicate higher levels of self-esteem.

Measuring Depression. The Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) Scale was used to determine levels of depression. CES-D scale is also a widely used scale. CES-D contains a 20-item scale, 4 point Likert scale to measure depression. The participants are asked how they felt within the last week. The responses range from: 0 =rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day) to 3 = most to all the time (5-7 days). Higher scores on the CES-D indicates higher levels of depression.

Measuring Divorce Adjustment. The Fisher Adjustment Scale (FDAS) was used to measure adjustment from a divorce. FDAS was designed for participants to measure the amount of adjustment in a divorce. It consists a 100-item, 5 point, Likert scale with a range of 1=almost always to 5=almost never. Lower scores on the FDAS indicate less divorce adjustment.

The purpose for the three scales to measure emotional wellbeing is to expand a previous investigation from Bokker et al. (2006b), which used a quantitative perspective in investigating their emotional wellbeing. In this study, it brings more dimension by including a qualitative phone interview with the quantitative survey.

Phone Interview. In the phone interview, divorced-fathers were asked open-ended questions that regarded the quality and frequency of their relationship with their children. The interview expands more to the influences that affects the divorce-father's relationship with their children. Also the divorced-father was asked a general question about their largest source of stress.

Results

Quantitative and Qualitative Results: Cross Analysis

The study analyzed four NCDF. The NCDF real names were replaced with pseudonyms. All NCDF were white males at the age of 30 and above. The quantitative survey displayed very similar results between the NCDF. The scales also showed similarities in terms of self esteem and divorce adjustment. However, their depression score varied significantly. Because the quantitative results displayed similar results between the fathers, the data analysis will integrate the quantitative results with the qualitative results.

Case 1: Bob. In the phone interview, Bob was under a unique custodial status because he has a job in California, the court allowed him to see his children 9 weeks of each year, typically during every summer of the year. His divorce situation was "somewhat" satisfying. He has a "very poor" relationship with his

child's mother. However, Bob felt that he played a critical role for his children. An example he shared was giving his Californian perspective to his children from Texas, this enabled him to give his children a different perspective of the world. Despite the "good" quality relationship with his children, Bob felt that he does not spend enough time with his children. The positive influences that affect his relationship with his children are the support of his family, his wife Beth, books, and support groups. The negative influences were his ex-wife's lies which block the opportunities to see his children. The environmental factors that affected his relationship with his children were distance and his job. Bob stated that his largest source of stress is financial issues. At the time of the interview, he was facing \$80,000 of expenses from the divorce.

Case 2: Ted. Ted had joint legal custody and was not satisfied with his divorce situation. According to the quantitative results, he is the most depressed. . It seems that his lack of recent contact relate to his high score for depression. He described his relationship with his children as "really strain". His ex-wife won't let him see his son because the court order is not complete despite the fact that the court states it is complete. He had no contact with his son for two weeks despite his visitation rights to see his son more than 4 times a month. In terms of quality, he had a poor relationship with his son. He described that his son does not want to see him. He felt that his role as a father is "very minimal" He felt disappointed relationship and wanted to have a more meaningful one. The influences that affect Ted's relationship with his son were the mother, the court system, his attitude, and his son's fear to lose his mother's love. Ted later elaborated more on how his attitude affects his relationship with his son. He is often worried and also afraid to get his son taken from him again. This causes Ted to be less open with his son. His largest source of stress

was being in the family court system. He feels he does not understand it. He felt that the court system idealized that mothers were better parents than fathers. Ted had no conversations about his son's problems nor moral values.

Case 3: Fred. Fred's relationship with his children was good yet, he felt "limited" because he can only see his children every other weekend and argued that there should be more equal time sharing. Fred had conversations to his children about moral values and his children's problems, but still he felt that his role as a father has been "reduced to an insignificant role". He had a poor relationship with the former wife and disagrees with her child-rearing. He stated that things could have been handled differently in terms to his son's success in school by offering better work habits. He said that the influences that affect his relationship with his children were his anger situation. However he is currently relearning how to deal with anger. His job situation and location is significant. If he was closer, he would have a better relationship. His largest source of stress is trouble with self-esteem. He had loss his wife, kids, house, and job. He has to start from scratch. His goal was to rebuild his self-esteem. He felt that even though he was arrested for violence he felt that his rights were overlooked in terms of his situation. He believes that there should be more equal time sharing.

Case 4: Todd. Todd, in the other hand, had an excellent relationship with the mother and is recently divorced (March 07). He felt that his relationship with his children was "poor". Todd described that his son does not trust him and afraid to lose his mother's love. Todd felt that he does not play a father figure for his son but, "some another guy who suppose to be his father". He felt that he does not spend time with his son enough and that the courts

treat him unfairly. Todd stated that everything he says is discounted. The influences that affect his relationship with his children were his experiences with the mother and the court. Todd's largest source of stress was not being a sufficient father, his alienation from his family, losing his properties, his aging, and having no medical insurance.

TABLE 1. Demographics: The NCDF correlationship with age and scales .

NCDF	Age	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	30-40	33	16	335
Ted	42	36	32	327
Fred	30-40	32	26	350
Todd	50+ (66)	32	18	346

TABLE 2. Demographics: The NCDF correlationship with amount of school and scales .

NCDF	Amount of school	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Grad School	33	16	335
Ted	College	36	32	327
Fred	Some College	32	26	350
Todd	College	32	18	346

TABLE 3. Demographics: The NCDF correlationship with Ethnicity and scales .

NCDF	Ethnicity	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	White	33	16	335
Ted	White	36	32	327
Fred	White	32	26	350
Todd	White	32	18	346

TABLE 4. Divorce Situation: The NCDF correlationship with Oldest child's age and scales .

NCDF	Ethnicity	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	6 to 12	33	16	335
Ted	6 to 12	36	32	327
Fred	6 to 12	32	26	350
Todd	6 to 12	32	18	346

TABLE 5. Divorce Situation: The NCDF correlationship with length father lived with child's mother and scales .

NCDF	Length	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	5 to 10 years	33	16	335
Ted	5 to 10 years	36	32	327
Fred	10 and more years	32	26	350
Todd	1 to 4 years	32	18	346

TABLE 6. Divorce Situation: The NCDF correlationship with quality relationship with mother and scales .

NCDF	Quality	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Very Poor	33	16	335
Ted	Very Poor	36	32	327
Fred	Poor	32	26	350
Todd	Excellent	32	18	346

TABLE 7. Divorce Situation: The NCDF correlationship with NCDF custodial status and scales .

NCDF	Custodial Status	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	JMC	33	16	335
Ted	Joint Legal	36	32	327
Fred	Joint Legal	32	26	350
Todd	Joint Legal	32	18	346

TABLE 8. Divorce Situation: The NCDF correlationship with NCDF custodial status satisfaction and scales .

NCDF	Satisfaction	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Somewhat	33	16	335
Ted	No	36	32	327
Fred	No	32	26	350
Todd	No	32	18	346

TABLE 9. Quantity spent with children: The NCDF correlationship with last face to face visit and scales .

NCDF	Last Visit	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Less than a week	33	16	335
Ted	Less than a month	36	32	327
Fred	Less than a month	32	26	350
Todd	Less than a week	32	18	346

Note. Bob's quantity with children cannot be fully described through this questionnaire because of custodial status.

TABLE 10. Quantity spent with children: The NCDF correlationship with average face to face visit (a month) and scales .

NCDF	Average face to face visit	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Every 2 Months	33	16	335
Ted	4+	36	32	327
Fred	2	32	26	350
Todd	4+	32	18	346

Note. Bob's quantity with children cannot be fully described through this questionnaire because of custodial status.

TABLE 11. Quantity spent with children: The NCDF correlationship with visitation rights (per month) and scales .

NCDF	Visitation rights	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	1	33	16	335
Ted	4+	36	32	327
Fred	4+	32	26	350
Todd	4+	32	18	346

Note. Bob's quantity with children cannot be fully described through this questionnaire because of custodial status.

TABLE 12. Quantity spent with children: The NCDF correlationship with total contacts last 7 days and scales .

NCDF	Total contacts last 7 days	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	5 and more	33	16	335
Ted	none	36	32	327
Fred	3 to 4	32	26	350
Todd	3 to 4	32	18	346

Note. Bob's quantity with children cannot be fully described through this questionnaire because of custodial status.

TABLE 13. Quantity spent with children: The NCDF correlation with total contacts 2 weeks ago and scales .

NCDF	Total contacts 2 weeks ago	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	5 and more	33	16	335
Ted	none	36	32	327
Fred	5 and more	32	26	350
Todd	none	32	18	346

Note. Bob's quantity with children cannot be fully described through this questionnaire because of custodial status.

TABLE 14. Quality with children: The NCDF correlation with conversations with children's problems and scales .

NCDF	Conversations	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Somewhat	33	16	335
Ted	No	36	32	327
Fred	Yes	32	26	350
Todd	Somewhat	32	18	346

TABLE 15. Quality with children: The NCDF correlation with conversations about moral values and scales .

NCDF	Total contacts 2 weeks ago	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Yes	33	16	335
Ted	No	36	32	327
Fred	Yes	32	26	350
Todd	Somewhat	32	18	346

TABLE 16. Quality with children: The NCDF correlation with degree of quality of relationship and scales .

NCDF	Total contacts 2 weeks ago	Self-esteem	Depression	Divorce adjustment
Bob	Good	33	16	335
Ted	Poor	36	32	327
Fred	Good	32	26	350
Todd	Poor	32	18	346

Discussion

A common theme that seems to contribute to the emotional distress of divorced fathers is their perception of the court system. The court system was often described as "unfair" which may relate to the divorced fathers poor satisfaction with their divorce statuses.

Father's Role Confusion and Court Limitations

The NCDF felt they were confused with their father role. They feel that their role as fathers has become a minimal influence

to their children (Bokker, 2006a; Bokker, 2006b; Nielson, 1999). Often they are left unsure to what they can or cannot do with their children because of their limited time restrictions. Also the time restrictions have made it very difficult for fathers to create a meaningful connection with their children. Divorced fathers seem to have a difficult time to transition their roles from fathers into a visitation father (Bokker 2006a; Bokker, 2006b). They often feel that this role prevents them from being a sufficient father for their children.

Father's Perception of the Court and Fear of Loss

Fear of lost is a very prevalent theme in the interviews. This common factor seems to contribute to the divorced father's relationship with their children. In the study, one NCDF describe that his anxiety to lose his son from the court system. He reports that the court system is bias and Idealize that mothers are better parents than fathers (Bokker, 2006a; Nielson, 1999). Also the NCDF describes the court system to be difficult to understand. Therefore the NCDF feels very self-conscious as a role as a father, and he is often worried to what to expect and fearful that he might lose his children if he makes a wrong decision. Both sides of the barrier of fear and lost has created a lot of strain to the NCDF father/child connectedness. One father described that his relationship is not to its full potential because his son is afraid to lose his mother's love if his son favors spending time with his father. In the study, it seems that the NCDF's emotional distress contributes to their lack of involvement with their children because they want to prevent the loss of their children (Bokker, 2006a; Bokker, 2006b).

Loss of Control Leads to Anger and Frustration

Anger and frustration towards the courts seems to be another factor that contributes to the emotional distress of divorced fathers. NCDF feel that they are treated unfairly and are frustrated with the court's restrictions laid upon them (Bokker, 2006a; Bokker, 2006b ; Nielson, 1999) . NCDF are irritated on now becoming unsure into how to be a visitation father with their children. NCDF are dealing over grief of their identity as a father. It upsets them because they feel that the loss means a lack of control over their lives and child rearing. In the study, one father is dealing with tremendous amount of frustration, he mentioned that he loss everything, his wife, kids, house, and job. He feels that this loss is unfair, and feels his rights were overlooked. His loss of control over what happens to him and his relationship with his children has damaged his self-esteem, and dealing with that loss of self-esteem has been a major source of stress for him.

Conclusion

The major weakness to the research was the lack of including fathers with full and joint custody. It would be helpful to cross-analyze the differences between fathers who have full and joint custody compared to non-custody and legal custody divorced fathers. Another major limitation is its lack of participants in the study. The study was only able to analyze 4 participants. Another limitation of the research was the lack of diversity in the sample which contains 100% Caucasians.

Professionals should be aware that working with divorced fathers faces much conflict with the court system (Bokker, 2006b; Nielson, 1999). It is important for counselors to help fathers identify, accept, and resolve their source of anger. Counselors also need to help divorced fathers in transitioning their roles from being residential fathers to visitation fathers (Bokker 2006b). Divorced

fathers deal with a lot of grief and loss issues because they feel that they have lost their children. Counselors should also address to the legal system an increase of the limited time given to the NCDF could spend with their children (Bokker 2006b).

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Tuyet Huynh

Major:
Anthropology

Mentor:
Dr. Chuck Darrah

Understanding Children's
Practices in an
Institutional Context

Biography

Tuyet Huynh is a senior majoring in Anthropology with an emphasis in the cultural Anthropology. She is currently volunteering as a teacher at a Vietnamese School teaching children the basic syntax and grammar structure. Her interests generally include learning about children and education. She plans to attend graduate school in either library science or child development.

Understanding Children's Practices in an Institutional Context

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to understand what messages the school as an institution conveys about other institutions to children

and how those messages affect students' practices at school. A qualitative ethnographic study on approximately seventy-five students in K-4th grade on children five-ten years old and the director, nine teachers, and teacher's assistants 18-65 years old was done at the Astar School program in San Jose, California. Field-notes were taken for over twenty days between June 25 and August 24, 2007 in about ninety-three hours on normal daily behaviors in classrooms, activity halls, black top, field and playgrounds outside, and bathrooms.

The results on Astar School include an analysis of how the school provides a set structure for students. Here, students are given choices which are controlled by the school institution and taught rules with the result of consequences or rewards. Appropriate behavior and how to mediate and solve problems can be seen in daily child-adult interactions. Encouragement, approval and attention are established with the use of certain tones of voice. Individualism is encouraged, protection and safety are important and an awareness of cleanliness and health are stressed. This institutional setting presents a mixture of ages and peer teachers that learn collaboration and group-work; indirectly their interactions also express influences of family.

Also, adult institutions are reflected in the Astar School through the use of language, messages on the ideal student, activities and environment of the school. Students receive acceptance if they conform. They also take in consistent direct messages such as courteousness and other complex messages indirectly. Here, imagination and creativity are encouraged within constraints. Children reflect those messages of societal norms through their behavior and thinking, but may not want to conform. Similar to adults, children are taught to conform in public, but may rebel certain rules privately.

Introduction

Schools are institutions whose goal is the education of young people. They achieve this goal through official curricula that are guided by state education standards and are implemented in classrooms. In this way, schools shape students and prepare them, and society, for the future. But schools also educate children in informal ways that may not be so obvious, but are also important. Children also bring to school experiences they have had outside of the school context. They share these experiences with each other when they interact and participate in daily activities. From peers and adult figures at school, the students learn the basics of what to know and how to act in different situations. For example, they may be taught how to be an individual in a variety of contexts by taking responsibility for their own work and learning when and how to ask for help when it is needed. Through this process, the norms of society are transmitted.

As someone who has taught children, I have been fascinated with how they come to learn about other institutions and the norms of society through participation in school. My experience has taught me that schools are based on expectations that children will grow up to become “normal” contributing citizens. By maintaining control, order, and establishing a set routine for the children, schools establish predictable, stable, and safe environments for learning. They teach rules of conduct and attitudes for success, as well as specific language skills and sensitivity about how to use them. There is often encouragement to be a “good” student, which means knowing when to moderate voice levels and how to listen, proper appearance and cleanliness, how to share, mediate and collaborate, and, of course, how to follow directions and rules. In addition, students are subject to a higher authority, such as the teacher, and the school enforces conformity to rules. When they are bad, students are reprimanded

or punished; a call may be made to the parents and privileges can be taken away.

Yet schools do not act apart from other institutions in society, and the purpose of this research is to understand school as an institution that reflects those other institutions and conveys messages about them to students. Ultimately, the study seeks to explore how the school environment prepares students for particular futures in a society. Specifically, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does the school reflect other institutions such as employers, government, healthcare, and family?
2. What messages do students receive in the school about those institutions?
3. How do those messages affect students' practices at school?

Literature Review

Many studies have ways children can be successfully acculturated into society through the use of the schooling institutions (Gingell and Brandon 2000; Tobin, Wu and Davidson 1989; Kalekin-Fishman 1991). Some discussions are normative in that they state the specific aspects of a culture that should be included in a school curriculum. Other studies have examined the actual quality of a school's methods and the roles of teachers, students, and peer groups as participants in acculturating students (Brown and Hirst 2007; Candela 2005; Helwig and Kim 1999; Thorne 1993; 2005).

Studies at St. Timothy's, an American preschool, showed that the parents and staff "believe that to be a friend, a group participant, a member of society, a citizen in a democracy, children need to be taught to express their wants, needs, and feelings" (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson 1989: 151). St. Timothy's education

system sends messages to students that relate to liberty, self-reliance and independence, constraints, individualism, and equality and fraternity (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson 1989: 137-148). The school encourages the use of words to solve problems and to exert discipline. Children are limited in the use of their words because of the constraints teachers place on them. Imagination and creativity are “channeled and encouraged,” which motivates students during instruction (Tobin, Wu, Davidson 1989: 157-160; 2005). Play adds to children’s social and cognitive development since it “offers children a way to discover who they are and who they can be,” and an understanding of the American justice system (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson 1989: 158, 164-167). The concept of morality is transmitted, although specific values vary in different schools and locations (Candela 2005: 324; Gingell and Brandon 2000; Tobin, Wu, and Davidson 1989).

In contrast to Tobin, Wu, and Davidson’s (1989) view of children being prepared by the education system for particular futures as “adults in the making,” Thorne emphasizes that children are “social actors in a range of institutions” (1993: 3). We are told, “kids are competent social actors who take an active role in shaping their daily lives...This view breaks the assumption that children’s daily actions are mostly trivial, worthy of notice only when they seem cute or irritating; that children need to be actively managed or controlled; that children are relatively passive recipients of adult training and socialization” (Thorne 1993: 12-13).

There is consensus that a goal of school is to provide students with “intellectual tools that allow them to lead satisfying lives” (Gingell and Brandon 2000: 419), although ideas about those lives may be diverse. Both adults and children impact the school institution (Candela 2005; Thorne 1993). Teachers are typically seen to play the main role in constructing school culture, but

students also contribute to the co-authorship of institutional practices (Candela 2005: 322). According to Antonia Candela, “authorship is understood as a collective responsibility for the shape and content of messages that shifts from individual speakers to particular types of participants’ frameworks” (2005: 325). This idea is evident when students participating in classroom activities have the responsibility to complete their own work, choose words and actions to complete assignments well, and be a guide of ideas for other students. Candela concludes, “Students’ participation in co-authoring institutional practice places them in a hierarchical position as knowledgeable and responsible participants in classroom activities, displaying control and power in classroom interaction” (2005: 332).

The question then is what shapes the daily practices of children in the institutional setting of school and how do those practices prepare and exclude students from succeeding in particular future settings they will encounter.

Methods

Population and Site

The Astar School program in San Jose, California was chosen as the location for this qualitative research project. I contacted the school’s director and received permission to observe and participate in school activities. The school is located in a middle class neighborhood and offers summer, afterschool, and home-school programs for children 2-12 years old. The Astar School has areas such as the three main classrooms I studied, spare classrooms for other activities, an activities hall, black top, field and three playgrounds outside, and bathrooms. The equipment for class is well-maintained and fits the age levels: chairs and tables were lower and smaller in K-1st grade than in 2nd-4th grade. The

walls are decorated with mottos on hygiene, good school behavior, and art displays. The room is colorful, with cabinets and shelves full of needed materials.

Every week there were approximately seventy-five students in grades K-4, but I focused my observations on about sixty-three of them. The children were between the ages of 5-10 years old. Individual grades were flexibly grouped together. At first, kindergarten through first grade, and second through fourth grades, were lumped together. When more students were enrolled, it became K-1st grade, 2nd grade, and 3rd-4th grade. Each class could not exceed 40 students. The school had flexible sessions every Monday for new students. Some students were registered for three weeks, four weeks, eight weeks or more. Students that were enrolled in the enrichment programs left at certain times throughout the day for those classes. Those enrichment programs included Chinese, music, judo, and cooking. The students were being prepared in the summer for the coming school year.

The director, nine teachers, and teacher's assistants were included in the study. Their ages ranged from 18-65 years old. The classes consisted of main teachers, teachers, teacher assistants, and enrichment teachers. The main teachers currently teach in a school district during the regular school year. The teachers are currently employed by the school and help take over the classroom when the main teachers are not there. They drift in and out of classrooms. The teacher assistants stay with the main teachers and currently have associate or Bachelor of Art degrees, or are working towards their B.A. degree. The enrichment teachers only have a small number of students for short periods of time.

Data Collection

Field jottings were taken on white legal pads and on three-by-five inch flip notebooks. Consent forms approved by the San Jose State Institutional Review Board were handed out to the parents, the director, and the teachers. Worksheets, pictures drawn by students, and a second grade “tipi art project” were collected from the classes. Jottings were converted into complete field notes using a standard word processing program.

The research was conducted over twenty days between June 25 and August 24, 2007. Ethnographic participant-observation was done in approximately ninety-three hours, where teachers and students behaved normally without any direct influence from the researcher. Each school day ran from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with extended care from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Some students had half day (8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.) and others had full day (8:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.) schedules. Monday through Thursday there was a set schedule, but times were flexible and activities sometimes changed. Fridays had a different schedule that included swimming and movies.

Field jottings were taken during the students’ and teachers’ activities. I varied my locations in the classrooms while taking notes and I also sat at the students’ tables with them as they were doing activities and then verified with the teachers what I had just observed. Almost everything was recorded, such as the setting, appearance of students and teachers, activities, conversation, sounds, and expressions. The data collected consisted of field jottings that I later developed into notes; interactions described from memory; student worksheets; and literature related to the study.

In the beginning, the students did not acknowledge me except for occasional glances. As my presence increased, some students began asking me about my project and even engaged in

short conversations with me. The teachers were helpful in supplying me with the information I needed and made me feel welcome. The students became comfortable with my presence at the Astar School and would often recognize and want me to join in their activities. I was referred to by the students and teachers as Miss Nancy, and my help was requested on numerous occasions by both the teachers and students. After pseudonyms were given to the school and the participants, the data was analyzed using qualitative methods. Categories emerged from the data analysis and were then linked to the literature review.

Life at Astar School

Structure

The school environment provides a set structure, order, and routine for students. The students are to line up when they go outside and when they come back inside. There is order in the teacher's environment. They have lessons planned ahead of time and link it with the guidelines the school presents and each class have the same teachers teaching the same set of students. Places for things are labeled, such as "shelf", "soap", "paper towel". Every day, on each class's board, is written the theme for the week such as "About Me", "Our Country", and "Magic, Clowns, and Circus Life", the date, and the schedule for the day. The school maintains a stable and predictable environment that may give students a feeling of comfort. This set structure, order, and routine may also teach students that society is structured in that almost everything is planned and time is essential. The classroom is structured more for being a "good" child and certain active "free play" is only permitted outdoors. What they do is up to them and because they are outside, they are louder and more active. They are also taught how to read time, count money, use probability and use the calendar.

Control and Choice

There is choice within set limits in the school institution. Tobin, Wu, and Davidson (1989) addressed this freedom and constraint with a balanced approach of play and structured activities. Control is constantly maintained by the school in its rules and schedules, and in the teacher's and staff's enforcement of those rules and schedules. The teachers have control over what lessons are taught and what rules the students are to follow. The students are sometimes given a choice to do certain things, such as during free play, yet even here they are only given limited activities. This is a generally restricted choice.

The second to fourth grade classrooms have several computers. The computers are only used for critical thinking programs and games. The students have a choice of playing the games during free time, but those games are chosen by the school as educational. No student computers have internet access except for the teachers' computer located in the third to fourth grade classroom. The students are free to choose the game to play from those provided.

Although the teacher is the main voice of control, the latter can go back and forth between the student and the teacher. Students are aware of what is allowed and they work around constraints when they clash with what they want. For example, in the kindergarten to first grade class, two first grade students chose to sit near each other during an art activity. Mrs. Sara says, "Missy, you're not sitting near Summer" (another girl). Summer says to Mrs. Sara, as she points to me, "That girl is going to sit between us." Mrs. Sara replies, "Oh." Then she goes about her business and I take that as a yes and sit down between Missy and Summer.

In this case, the girls chose to sit near each other, but because the teacher knew they would be disruptive she wanted them to sit separately. The girls used the closest outlet they could find to remain where they were, the student researcher. The teacher might have assumed that because I am an adult, I would keep them on task. In this way, both parties are happy. The students had a choice of being together, but they were able to keep that choice within the teacher's restrictions.

Sometimes during free time, children create games and activities that are out of the limited choices that the teachers provide. When this happens, as long as the students are not too rough, they can continue with the activity. The teacher then announces a rule that, if violated, will have consequences. For example, Mrs. Monica tells Reginald to stop his game. He is rolling a golf ball across the whiteboard dry marker holder from one side to the other. Reginald stands on the left side with the golf ball and another student is standing on the right side with an eraser. They push what they have at the same time and items smash in the middle, creating a loud noise. Mrs. Monica tells Reginald that the game is too rough. He whines and says, "No...I don't want to play foosball." She tells him, "If you play rough, I'll take the ball from you." Eventually, another student begins playing the same game and she takes the golf ball away.

Rules, Consequences, and Rewards

Students are taught to listen, follow directions and, most importantly, to follow the rules. The school has a general set of rules, but each class also has their own set. When those rules are broken or the student refuses to do as they are told, consequences follow. These serve as disciplining methods to control student behavior. There are students who seem to test the limits of the teacher's patience by seemingly persisting in what they are doing

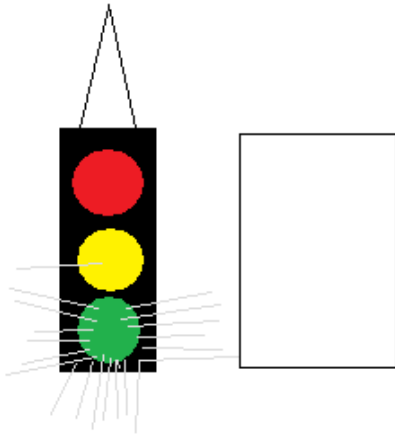
without getting into trouble. When patience runs out, the freedom of the student is taken away. Usually, a warning takes place and if there are constant warnings, other action is taken. Depending on the class, restrictions range from free time or recess being taken away, to high levels of consequences which include being taken to the office or telling parents. Consequences and rewards both act as motivations for students on-task behaviors.

The teachers call the students first name or whole name to catch their attention and hold it. This is part of disciplining because when a name is called out with an especially stern voice, eyes go to the named student. Everyone knows that someone is in trouble or that they will be in trouble if they do not stop and listen. The main teacher and the teacher's aide both keep students on task, but teacher's aides are usually sterner and they tend to more often be the enforcers of the rules. This may be because the main teachers are the ones that are busy teaching and on the side the teacher's aides are aware of those that are not listening and following directions.

In the third to fourth grade class, the teachers have a variety of ways to catch a student's attention and of disciplining them when rules are broken. Mrs. Mary and Miss Holly, second to fourth grade teachers, take away free time or they make the students write lines as a consequence. In the following situation, Mrs. Mary is teaching and trying to get the students attention. Mrs. Mary looks around and asks, "Have you read it two times?" She claps three times and says, "Ok, we're going to practice our attention." When a student comes up to her, she says, "Not right now, we're practicing. Not right now. We're going to practice our inside voice. I want everybody to listen. I want everybody to stop. (Student's name), I gave everybody a warning. I need you to write some lines (to a student): 'I will not talk when the teacher is talking'. You need to stop talking and follow along." She then

looks in a different direction, “Nice and loud sweetie. Very good, thank you.”

She explains to the students why they have to listen, and when they do not, she warns them. The students that follow directions receive praise. This tends to enforce the rules because generally students want to please the teacher and be good students. Mrs. Mary and Miss Heather also use a red, yellow, and green traffic light method of disciplining the children into following the rules in Figure 1. In the traffic light method, there are 19 white spoon clips that clip on the green and one clipped on the yellow section. To the right of the traffic light is a sheet of paper. It explains what the traffic light is for.



(Figure 1)

This light method is used to keep students on task. The teachers tell the students that if they do not do what is told, they will be “going on the yellow,” which means that the consequences get heavier as they move from green to yellow to red. On the sheet of paper to the right of the traffic light are two underlined headings—behavior and signal. Below the headings, the rules for

this method states, “*If you go on the yellow, you will write 20 times. (I will not...)” The next consequence states, “**If you go on the red, you will write a letter to your parent/guardian about the situation and bring it back signed.” At the end are cheerful words that smooth out the sting of the consequences, “Let’s work together to make our class happy, safe, and successful.”

Once rules are followed, the students are praised and are allowed certain freedoms and privileges. Those freedoms and privileges are inclusion in all class and school activities. In Mrs. Mary’s second to third grade class, students are given table points for whoever’s sitting down. Mrs. Monica’s second grade class gets stars next to their names on the board and they receive small trinkets as gifts if they get enough stars. Such rewards are usually enough to keep students motivated to be good. Mrs. Sara and Mrs. Vanessa’s kindergarten to first grade class tend to use praise more often than the older grades. At the same time the rule is being applied and manners are being taught.

In the next example, the kindergarten-1st graders are all told to be on task in a pleasant tone and they are rewarded with praise. Mrs. Sara tells the class, “Quiet. Criss-cross apple sauce. How about if we have active listening?” Her hands go to the sides of her eyes. The pinkie side is facing the class and she moves it from her eyes forward and then back again. “Half of you go and push all chairs in. Cynthia, go and push.” A boy asked to get a name tag. “Excuse me,” she says to Summer, “Summer, be good.” She tells me, “Look at them work so hard. (student’s name), can you go organize the name tags for me? (Student’s name), go help organize the names. Wow, Lucas, you’re very organized.” She then asked someone to volunteer to pick up paper and pencil. A few children raise their hands. A boy and Delmar are crawling under and around desks to pick up papers. Mrs. Sara and Ms. Vanessa tell them that they have done well.

Behavior

The children are taught common courtesy to those around them and to their surroundings, as well as the appropriate behavior for different contexts. In the classroom, they must pay attention. The use of bad language is discouraged and students are reprimanded when they are caught. To be polite and say “Thank you” and “You’re welcome” can be heard every day. They are to share and work together. This acceptable behavior is repeated constantly throughout every day. The rules and consequences are then applied to push the students toward practicing good behavior. Sometimes, the students act as the teachers of appropriate behavior to other students. Consider the following ordinary exchange in Mrs. Mary and Miss Heather’s second to fourth grade class. Mrs. Mary proceeds to call roll and students reply with a “here”. When a student is disruptive, she says, “I want you to sit down and be quiet and stop wasting our time.” She then continues with the roll. “I still hear too much talking. Girls in the back.” Miss Heather says, “I still hear too much talking. You’re wasting your recess time.” The classroom gets quiet almost instantly. Miss Heather calls out a student’s name. Mrs. Mary says at the same time, “OK! Sorry,” while looking at Miss Heather, “there’s too much talking in here...I need this table (i.e. the students at table #5) to stand up and line up (they are told to line up at the opening doorway). Ok, this table (# 3) line up. Can you push in your chair please?” Her tone suggests that it is not a question. Mrs. Mary says, “I can take half the class out and you three tables can sit here.” The room is quiet. Miss Heather says, “When we’re in line we’re quiet.” She calls out a first name then a second name. Mrs. Mary begins to tap some students on their right shoulders and says, “Perfect, perfect...good, good, good.” The students follow Mrs. Mary. Miss Heather says,

“Is green play for the next...I’ve said this several times already. When we are in line, we are quiet.”

Modifying the student’s voice level for certain activities is emphasized to keep to students on task. They are told to be quiet or to use their “indoor voice” when the noise level rises past the teacher’s voice. This teaches the students to adjust their voice depending on the situation, just as it teaches them to identify situations. Being quiet when the teacher or others are presenting is a rule and is considered rude if not followed. Students are not to be rowdy or too rough when inside. Techniques are used to achieve that quiet atmosphere. For instance, Mrs. Monica and Miss Rosalind’s second grade class encourages calm and quiet activity. A basket weaving activity is then done to encourage this calm focused behavior. The teachers commented that quietness enables the day to go on smoothly and activities are then completed as planned. Learning to be quiet at the right time can also be an important skill. To show the importance of being quiet, a specific time is scheduled for silence. In the kindergarten to first grade class, students are told to put their heads down and be quiet for a few minutes during “quiet time” right after lunch. In the second to fourth grade classes, the students have silent reading time. This time allows the teachers to rest and the students to calm down.

There is something fascinating about the foosball table to some of the children: they love to play during free time. The game permits interaction between students from different grades, and conversations and activity are noisy. The teachers do not seem to understand why the children are so interested in that game. The students have methods and tricks to play the game. The table is heavily used: the tops of the soccer players heads are missing and some parts are taped on. The tubes at the bottom sometimes would fall out. Even the kindergarteners knew how to put the tube back.

The students like to play this game because it is fun and it pulls them into the excitement of the moment. Older players help educate the younger ones on what not to do. The game promotes competitiveness, but also friendship. The foosball table allows the students to express excitement loudly.

There is an attraction to the loudness of foosball, especially since the children are usually told to be quiet. In one exchange, Alex (fourth grader) is playing and says, "Why, why god, I'm gonna do this till I learn my punishment." Reginald, a third grader, yells out, "Hit the ball already!" Josh, a Kindergartener, is playing with Reginald. Lucas, a first grader, is watching them play foosball. A girl from 5-8th grade is playing in a team with Alex. Reginald says three times, "Ding dong the witch is dead. Ow, my stop watch." Then Josh takes the ball and hides it behind his back. The ball he is holding is a larger cotton filled ball. Josh was going to put it on the table and then, imitating an adult, Alex says, "Noo, Josh: bad boy, bad boy." Shifting back to being a child, he says, "Ok, whatever." Josh takes the ball and hides it behind his back. He goes back to playing foosball with them. Josh yells, "I hate you!" as he smiles. They all laugh. They all spin the handle bars and Alex drops the large cotton ball onto the table and it bounces up and off the table. They all laugh with their mouths wide open. The toy cotton-filled ball bounces up and down. Josh laughs loudly and is delighted as he watches. Josh drops the ball back in to block the goal area, then he snatches it up again and laughs joyfully.

Mediators and Problem Solvers

The teachers and staff at Astar School are the primary mediators of problems between students, who know to go to authority figures for help. Adults solve the problems by telling the

students to share and be nice to each other. Sharing is used as a primary technique to solve problems.

One day, for example, children in the kindergarten to first grade class fought about toys and the situation resolved itself without much interference. One student yelled, "Excuse me, you have to share." A boy pulled a brown lunchbox full of plastic food from Summer, a girl in the class. She had her hand in it and was pulling it toward herself while the boy was trying to close the box as he pulled it away. Another girl was also trying to pull the box. Another different girl behind them then fell onto large bean bags when she was accidentally pushed backwards. She looked up and then she started to play again. Finally, the boy got the box and Ms. Ariscela arrived and admonished him to play nice.

Teachers, such as Mrs. Mary and Ms. Ariscela, often emphasize to their classes the importance of involving adults in disputes between students. For example, Mrs. Mary addresses the class and says in a serious tone, "I've been hearing very upsetting things...on the playground. First the language...those words will not be used here...parents....I will not tolerate it. No warning: you will immediately get...speak with parents.....If there's an argument, go to one of the teachers...tell the teacher. Don't handle it by yourself."

At other times, teachers explain the problem to the student and encourage them to solve it together. Two girls in the kindergarten-first grade class are fighting, for example, about who gets to wear the pink play dress. Ms. Ariscela tells one of the girls that, "after she finishes wearing it, then she will give it to you. Ok?" The girl turns to her classmate and asks, "When will you be done?" "She'll let you know," replied Ms. Annette. Here the teacher has provided a model for how the girls can work together and she leaves expecting they will work it out together.

Occasionally, teachers are too distracted by other situations and some problems do not get resolved. When that occurs, the problem may escalate in intensity until it cannot be ignored, or it works itself out while the students become distracted by other activities. Alternatively, students (often older ones) are also mediators to each other. When small arguments arise, some students would step in and say something that lightens the mood: the disputants shift focus to other topics.

Encouragement, Approval and Attention

Teachers give positive encouragement to students during activities. Praise is given for good artwork and following directions. When the students are encouraged in a positive manner, they seem happy and confident with their work. The students ask for that approval and attention when they show off their work to their teachers. When they feel they have done something wrong, students would look at the nearest authority figure to see if they would get in trouble or not. The teacher also uses questioning to engage students in the reading or another activity to encourage involvement.

The teachers' attention varies with students. Young students tend to perform more for the teachers, seemingly placing more importance on gaining their approval, or at least their acknowledgement. The teachers tend to pay most attention to the young, cute students. Such kindergarten and first graders received more hugs and attention than the other students, at least based on my observations. This pattern is confirmed by other research. A study done on third grade children states:

When comparing mean levels of global classroom and teacher features across years, third-grade classrooms showed more teacher detachment and over control, although lower overall negative

climate and teacher sensitivity than first grades. Third-grade classrooms appeared less emotionally supportive than first-grade classrooms, and teachers were somewhat less engaged with third graders (NICHD 2005: 317).

Tone of Voice

The sound of a teacher's voice when they are telling students to listen is serious, but not angry. There is no angry yelling at the students, but a stern tone of voice is used when calling on the student's names to get their attention. When the teacher uses that stern voice and calls the students' names, he or she means business. The students respond more when this tone is used. Another tone is also used, but it is used on the kindergarten to first grade students and sometimes on the second to fourth grade students. The tone is more caring and more like they are speaking to an small child. It may be a simpler way of speaking to the children to encourage them.

Individual

Individuality is encouraged in the Astar summer school program. Each student has their own cubby (shelf space) for their own things. Supplies are sufficient for everyone; they only share when there are not enough to go around.

Students are explicitly rewarded for working alone and being productive, as indicated in the following exchange between first-grader Jack and Mrs. Sara. Mrs. Sara asks Jack, "Why are you sitting over there?" He is sitting at the square table in the front of the backpack area. Ms. Dana then tells Mrs. Sara, "He chose to sit there. He chose to sit there so he could work. Good choice." Jack overheard the confirmation of his good decision making. Jack

says, as he holds up his bright green bucks, “Summer, now a bunch of people have this. I made a good choice.”

Protection and Safety

The routine that the school goes through shows that the protection and safety of the children is important. Every day when parents drop off or pick up their children, they sign in and out. The school also has emergency information cards for each student that also keeps teachers aware of students’ allergies and what they can or cannot eat. The students are always in the presence of a teacher or other school employees; they are never left alone. Even when they need to go to the bathroom, the children are brought there by a teacher. This monitoring permeates the school. A student says, “I want to go watch judo.” Mrs. Monica says, “You can’t. What if you wander off while he’s teaching? The judo teacher can’t watch you: he’s teaching.”

The school also had a police officer teach the children about how to protect themselves and follow the rules of their parents. They were told to yell “No!” and run away if a stranger tells them to come closer. Students know that they are to ask permission before leaving the room. If a problem arises and an injury occurs, it is recorded and parents are informed when they pick up their children. When children know the rules they can warn and discourage each other from dangerous behaviors. Barrie Thorne (1993: 27) writes about the importance of children’s safety:

Schools are physically set up to maximize the surveillance of students, with few private spaces and a staff who continually watch with eyes that mix benign pedagogical goals, occasional affection, and the wish to control. Kids sometimes resist this surveillance, and I wanted to observe and document their more autonomous collective moments. But in

the very act of documenting their autonomy, I undermined it, for my gaze remained, at its core and in its ultimate knowing purpose, that of a more powerful adult.

Cleanliness and Health

The school promotes awareness of allergies, and the importance of hygiene and cleanliness. Students are instructed that they must clean up after themselves after any activity. Teachers show that doing so is part of courtesy to others. And by participating, they also identify themselves as responsible individuals. Some teachers also tell their students to wash their hands with soap before and after eating, and after playing. Teachers and staff use gloves when handling any food and they wipe the tables with a mixture of bleach and water at the end of the day to kill the bacteria. Many signs with images are posted on each wall of the three classrooms promoting hygiene. Messages such as “Health Alert: Coughing Spread Germs. Protect Yourself and Others” and “Germ Free Zone” are presented.

Age Mixture and Peers

At different times throughout the day, students from different age-graded classrooms are brought into contact with each other. Special events, recess time, and free play after school provide the students with opportunities to perform activities with students other than classmates. When they do mix, older students help out the younger ones and teach them what is right and what is wrong. This teaches them collaboration and how to be involved in a large social setting.

The special events give students an opportunity to work together and create shows that teach them about how to present themselves in front of a crowd. Through these different

interactions, they learn to be involved with their peers and establish a sense of a community. The teachers along with the students are also interacting with other teachers and students in other grades establishing a connection that links the whole school together within a community where everyone knows everyone.

The students are also separated by age and grade for other activities, such as math and critical thinking. At those times, they are given assignments according to their grade level. In the classroom, students are assigned to sit at tables with peers of their own age and grade. During play time, students with the same age and grade tend to gravitate towards each other with occasionally breaking of the boundaries by some students.

Family

Their families influence the students indirectly. The students usually do not mention their parents or their families, but teachers may. Some play activities in the classroom, such as the dress-up and puppet show area, has clothes and shoes for them to wear. Here they play and pretend to play house or to just dress up in grown-up clothes and walk around. The students may take what they learn at home and apply it to school activities. The first graders play house and show that to them a family includes a mother, father, and the children. Consider this typical interaction among students. Missy is walking around in red, adult high heeled shoes that she got from the dress-up area; they are too big for her. She is also holding a doll baby. Summer says, "Cute, can I see the clothes?" One of them says "Mommy." Summer is in pink grown up heels. Delmar, Missy, and Summer are the only three that are playing at the play area when Ms. Vanessa tells the three, "Hey! This is a second time. One more time and you're all three sitting down." Missy cries out to Delmar, "Stop! You're going to suffocate the baby! Everybody get away!" Ms. Vanessa says in a

disapproving tone, "Missy." Missy says "Please" to the person she yelled at and Ms. Vanessa thanks her. Summer calls to Missy, "Mommy that's out of my money. You're the worst Delmar. Mom, can you divorce him?" They look like they are playing house. Summer is taking money out from her bag and says to Missy, "We already have enchiladas and some French fries." Summer and Delmar then hug a preschool boy that walked by.

The puppet show and dress-up area have clothes and puppets representing different jobs, such as firemen or policemen. This play gives children visible reminders of jobs and the students play dress-up and imitate adult life, as it looks to them. Parents and guardians are encouraged by the school to hang out and participate with their children. For many hours of their day, students are at school and they only see their parents a couple of hours before and after school and on the weekends.

Conclusion

Astar School, like other schools, has as its goal the preparation of children for the world of adulthood. As such, it reflects the institutions of adulthood through the specific language used by the teachers, how they define "do's and don'ts," the activities and atmosphere of the school, and messages about good or ideal students. These messages are transmitted by everyone who participates in the school, including the director, teachers, staff, and even parents. Students may gain acceptance by listening to and following the messages; acceptance from teachers and peer groups is important to many of the students observed at Astar School. Some messages students receive in the school about those institutions are consistent. For example, certain behaviors are uniformly encouraged, such as being courteous, outgoing and pleasant in manners; understanding how to compartmentalize

attention and switch attention to different activities on and off; and how to be calm and enjoy the quality of quiet.

Messages about other institutions are, however, complex and enculturation is far from simple and direct. Structure and order is promulgated, and behavior is controlled, but so too are imagination and creativity. Of course, a larger lesson may be that imagination and creativity may be boundless, but in fact it is expressed within constraints. As rules and structures are incorporated in all aspects of activity, the child's behavior and thinking reflects those messages. Yet the children do not simply conform, for they may want to break away from constraint and control. The issue may be less one of being "good," than of testing the limits of being "bad" while still receiving favorable attention from adults. In effect, students are enculturated to be conformists in public, while they may privately be rebels who chafe at rules they do not value. In this way, school may partially prepare students for the institutions of adulthood not through its official curricula, but by enculturating students into both values and rules, and how to continue to create performances that are publicly acceptable, but that conceal private rebelliousness. Such performances are, of course, routine for adults who themselves test limits within the institutions that are so necessary for everyday life.

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Claudia Maria Lopez

Major:
Sociology/Criminology
Minor: Legal Studies

Mentor:
Dr. Natalie Boero

“I’m Just Your Typical Anti-Stereotype Female...”: An Exploration of Females Living on the Streets of San Francisco.

Biography

Claudia Maria Lopez is a Senior majoring in Sociology with an emphasis in Criminology with a minor in Legal Studies. Her qualitative study examines the lives of female street youth living on the streets of San Francisco, who are also a part of a punk-inspired subculture. Claudia found that these females use their lifestyle as a way to reject conventional society’s norms on gender and home so that they can breakdown sexist stereotypes about women, and as a way to cope with homelessness. Claudia is an avid volunteer in the San Jose community, focusing her attention on teaching English literacy to immigrants in the Bay Area. Claudia enjoys photography, writing, taking her dog on hikes, and learning life lessons from her 3-year old daughter. Claudia will be graduating in May 2008 and will be pursuing her PhD in Sociology with a focus on gender and its intersection with race and class at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her dream is to become a professor at the university level and conduct research that will positively impact the social policies which affect lives of women.

***“I’m Just Your Typical Anti-Stereotype Female...”*: An
Exploration of Females Living on the Streets of San
Francisco**

ABSTRACT

The female perspective is often left out of studies that deal with homeless youth, except when discussing teenage runaways or sex workers. This perspective posits females as lacking any agency and as victims of circumstance. In this qualitative study of four females who are part of a punk-inspired subculture and who live on the streets of San Francisco, a different viewpoint to the typical view of females and their lives on the streets is conveyed. Through participant observations and in-depth interviews it was found that these females exercise a great deal of agency in their lives and use their lifestyle as a way to openly reject conventional society’s norms on the social construction of gender and home, which view women as the subordinate half in the dichotomous relationship of gender. Through this research three important themes were found: First, that these youth exercise an immense amount of agency over their lives; second, the importance of social networks and coping skills for their survival; and third, the reconstructed meaning of gender for the empowerment of females living on the streets.

At times home is nowhere. At times one knows only extreme estrangement and alienation. Then home is no longer just one place. It is locations. Home is that place which enables and promotes varied and ever-changing perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference.

(bell hooks 1991:148)

That's where the heart and homes at right there! That's where home base is...the touch, the flavor that's not like anywhere, any place but here. That's where my home is, that's where my home will always be. No matter where I go in the country, no matter where I go in the future, around the world, who I meet...no matter where, [home will] always be San Francisco.

(Ruby, age 20, on living on the streets of San Francisco)

The idea that people who are unaccommodated can still view the streets as their “home” contradicts the standpoint of those in conventional society. In the above quotes from bell hooks (1991) and an interviewee, we are shown that home is not always perceived as a defined space but can be a setting that many would view with fear and repulsion (Wardhaugh 1999). Dominant females are also considered a contradiction to gendered social norms, due to the fact that females are usually perceived as the subordinate half in the dichotomous relationship of gender.

In this paper I argue that the standpoint which poses homeless female youth as passive victims is one-dimensional and does not grant these women any agency at all. Rather, they are stereotypes of the dominant culture which associates females with domesticity and assumes that they are submissive victims of circumstance. In the following paper I will suggest that female street youth who are a part of a punk-influenced subculture reject the social norms of gender and home to both breakdown sexist stereotypes about women and to cope with homelessness.

Through this research three important themes are found: First, that there is an immense amount of agency exercised by these youth; second, the importance of social networks and coping skills for survival; and third, the reconstructed meaning of gender for the empowerment of females living on the streets. These themes are important to remember when looking at previous work on female

street youth, which portrays these youth as helpless and lacking agency.

Definitions of Homeless Youth

Due to the ever-changing definition of what it means to be homeless, it is difficult to count and define where and what a homeless youth is (Ruddick 1996). For the purposes of this paper, I will use Greene, Ennett and Ringwalt's (1997) definition of homeless youth, or "street youth," as "youth who have spent at least one night in a youth or adult shelter, an improvised shelter (e.g., an abandoned building, a public place, or a subway or other underground location), on the streets or in the home of a stranger" (Greene, Ennett and Ringwalt 1997:230).

Although there is work written about transient males freely living on the streets, there is not much research on females and their exercise of agency. Much of the work done on females that do show agency in social settings such as the street are in studies of female gang members (Pfeffer 1997; Davis 2000). Besides this viewpoint, the female perspective is frequently left out of studies (Pfeffer 1997) and only talked about as being "deviant" when discussing street youth (Wardhaugh 1999). Other theories on female street youth posits women as passive victims. These theories assume that female's entry into street life is solely due to either being a runaway, a youth under the age of 18 that is leaving their home to escape a dysfunctional or abusive home life (Karabanow 2004; Lundy 1995); or a "throwaway," a child who is "told to leave home by parents" and/or are never searched for by their parents after the child leaves home (Chesney-Lind and Shelden 2004:40). The reasons why females might become homeless are many: sexual and physical abuse, poverty, neglect, mental illness, family strain or rebellion (Hyde 2005; Karabanow 2004; Lundy 1995; Chesney-Lind and Shelden 2004).

Other theories on homeless females that deal with issues of survival show females having to use “survival sex” as a means for obtaining resources such as food and shelter (Chesney-Lind and Shelden 2004). These theories assume that women do not exercise any agency and stereotypes them as a weak and submissive gender; a contradiction to that which is male. Although some youth do leave home as runaways and “throwaways,” and become sex workers for survival, this can not be assumed for all females who are homeless. The reasons why and how females live and survive on the streets are as diverse and different as each person on the street (Adalf and Zdanowicz 1999; Kipke and Unger 1997).

The Dichotomous Relationship of Gender

Historically, transient males are often seen as “boys-being-boys,” their lifestyle accepted as part of the ‘adventurous’ nature of being male (Pfeffer 1997). On the other hand, a transient female is seen as something “unnatural” (Myers 1942), as a social contradiction (Wardhaugh 1999). As Myers (1942) writes, a transient female is someone who can not control their emotions, is stubborn, and asserts their independence by running away “in the hope of finding some adoring man who will propose matrimony and give her a home of her own” (p. 191). This biased perspective denies females any agency and creates the dichotomous relationship between males and females, which stereotypes males as the rational, independent, and in-control gender, while females are viewed as the opposite: the irrational, submissive, out-of-control gender that needs to be dominated (Benjamin 1988).

This is why the homeless female is viewed with such fascination and repulsion: she contradicts society’s ideas on gendered places, which links females with the ‘home,’ (Pfeffer 1997; Wardhaugh 1999). As Wardhaugh (1999) states, “The unaccommodated woman is the deviant “Other.” The fact of her

existence outwith the social and spatial boundaries of home, family and domesticity threatens to undermine the construction of the home as a source of identity and as a foundation of social order” (Wardhaugh 1999:106). The rejection of a defined space as ‘home’ coupled with dominant and assertive attitudes of the females in this study creates a discord in the social order, which is both confusing and frightening to those who subscribe to the conventional standpoint of spatial and gender norms.

Females, Social Networks and Survival

The social networks of females in punk-influenced groups are considered more than just a group of friends; these networks also influence their lifestyle choices and shape their thought processes. In this subculture, identified as “gutter punk,” the members live a lifestyle which rejects conventional society and conforming to traditional social norms. Ferrell (2001) describes the lifestyle of both females and males in the subculture:

While many of them embrace the particular stylistic or musical codes of the larger punk movement, they define themselves more by their willingness and ability to live on their own terms, and find among themselves the ability to survive on the margins. Traveling around the country by freight train or Greyhound bus, squatting together in abandoned buildings, hanging out on the streets, gutter punks practice DIY and antiauthoritarian politics of punk with a remarkable sense of purpose, and defiantly take these politics to extremes not always embraced by others (p. 46).

This standpoint is important in understanding the unconventional lives and perspectives of the females in this study.

Moreover, due to these youths rejection of society, the importance of their own community as a support system is vital for their survival. Their street “family” helps teach new street youth about acquiring resources, learning social structure and street culture, and understanding how to act; this is especially important for females (Bender et al. 2007; Kidd 2003). These *peer* networks consist of others in the homeless community, friends, family and partners, which Rowe and Wolch (1990) refer to as one component of the “homeless social network”; the other component being the *homed* networks, which consists of social services, outreaches, and help networks, such as rehab clinics for those with substance abuse issues (Rowe and Wolch 1990).

Another essential tool for survival is the use of various coping “techniques” to deal with the emotional and mental stress of street life (Kidd 2003). Most homeless youth use coping activities that center on the use of substances such as alcohol and marijuana (Kidd 2003; Greene, Ennett and Ringwalt 1997). In addition to indulging in substances as a coping strategy, females often use violence to “deal” with personal and inter-personal issues (Ness 2004). Although early literature on females state that aggressiveness in girls is an “abomination to feminine nature” (Lombroso and Ferraro 1985), recent data shows that females use fighting as a way to be given respect, fear, and reputation (Ness 2004; Chesney-Lind and Shelden 2004). Studies show that females are more apt to fight without restraint and with violent intensity, usually much more than males (Chesney-Lind and Shelden 2004; Ness 2004). This behavior is part of the social norms in the “gutter punk” lifestyle. The violent norms of a group is discussed in Wolfgang and Ferracuti’s (1982) theory on the “subculture of violence,” which says that “the norms shared by a group of people sometimes define violence as an appropriate response to certain circumstances” (Conklin 2007:164). The

acceptance of violent behavior as a part of a subculture's social norms breeds tolerance towards fighting amongst females; the act of fighting for females in this community is not viewed as masculine behavior, but as a facet of their femininity (Ness 2004).

The purpose of this study is twofold: to understand the lifestyle of homeless females living in a punk-influenced lifestyle, and to explore the changing constructions of gender within different social settings. The importance of this study is to both understand the experience of female homeless youth who freely live their lifestyle, and to suggest that these females are not victims of circumstance, but youths who use their lifestyle as a form of resistance to victimization. This is important because it can help shape and create social programs that will utilize the strengths that these females have acquired while on the streets as a catalyst for possibly exiting street life.

Methods

Four in-depth interviews were conducted. The sample consists of females between the ages of 18 and 26 years old. The females live transiently and currently resided on the streets of San Francisco when asked to participate in this study. Of the sample, one female is Caucasian, one is of mixed descent, Hispanic and Native American, and two are African American. This mix is especially surprising due to the fact that the majority of street youth in a punk-influenced subculture tend to be Caucasian.

All participants are part of a punk-influenced subculture and reside in parks, squats, or abandoned houses. All but one respondent has a boyfriend, who is also a part of the punk-influenced subculture. The females are easily distinguished from other street youth due to their appearance, which generally consists of self-sewn and altered clothing, combat boots, chains, dread-locked hair, dyed mohawks, facial piercings, and tattoos. These

females pride themselves on their appearance and assertive attitudes, and use them as a way to shock and gain respect.

The participants travel throughout the United States; which they accomplished through hitchhiking, “jumping” freight trains, using buses, or traveling by car; in essence, their modes of transportation are whatever is available or offered. When first encountered the respondents come off as aggressive and violent, but as the interviews and observations are conducted, it is revealed that they are intelligent and wise individuals who are acutely aware of their decisions, environment, and social positions as females.

The female respondents in this study are selected on the basis of age, living situation and membership in a punk-influenced subculture. Participants selected are over 18 and under 30 years old. Due to the focus of the study on the female experience, filtering females under the age of 18 is important so that issues of being runaways or “throwaway” youths can be avoided. By using participant observations and an informant, females selected are known to be currently living on the streets and are a part of the punk-influenced subculture.

Females who are “gutter punks” are chosen for three reasons: first, to understand the experience of being a female on the street from the perspective of someone whose lifestyle and appearance contradict the social norms of gender; second, to understand the roles that these females play in their everyday life; and third, to explore the meanings of what it means to be *female* and *feminine* in a male-dominated and threatening environment in which they have chosen to be embedded.

Snowball Sampling is done on the streets and in the parks of San Francisco. Recruitment is kept informal so that the research is viewed as non-invasive. Due to the fact that the participants have no immediate access to phones or e-mail, reliance on outreach centers and an informant is necessary to relay messages to

potential respondents. To ensure that respondents come to the interviews, compensation of a hotel room and train fare is offered to those who participate.

Due to my inability to travel back and forth to San Francisco, interviews are conducted in the South Bay, about an hour from San Francisco. While the distance is first thought to be difficult, it ends up being a productive method of research. Due to the community-based lifestyle that these females lead it would be expected that other members of the group are able to stay in the hotel room too. Because this is where the interviews are being conducted, their presence would be invasive and would not permit for the collection of quality data. Having participants travel out of San Francisco allows a controlled environment where the interviews are conducted. Also, it gives the respondents a change of pace from their day-to-day patterns which allows them to see the interviews in a positive light. In addition, by bringing the respondents to the research, they are given a glimpse of the researcher's life, which creates a bond that allows for a freer flow of ideas on both sides.

One-on-one interviews are conducted with each participant, lasting between 45 minutes to 2 hours. Questions covered their background and personal history, families, entry into street life, lifestyle, substance use, coping skills, sexual relations, homelessness, social networks, and future plans. Focus is on their experience as a female, and how they view gender norms and associated roles. Interviews are audio-recorded with permission from the participants and self-transcribed.

Results

Three themes emerge from the collected data: the use of a transient lifestyle as an exercise of agency; the use of social networks and coping skills for survival; and the social re-

construction of gender according to the social settings and rules of street life.

Agency

Conventional society may wonder why anyone, especially a female, would freely choose to live on the streets. For the females in this study, their lifestyle is an exercise of agency which allows them freedom through the rejection of the norms in conventional life. Typically, a person may consider lacking money as a lack of options, but for these youth the lack of money and accommodation is an avenue for independence. By not being bound by the responsibilities of a traditional lifestyle, these females feel that they have greater options. These options permit them to travel where they want to, when they want to, and how they want to. Their transient lives are not viewed as an absence of agency but rather as a form of exercising agency in their lives. In essence, their movement is an action that empowers, rather than restricts them. Each respondent expresses the belief that their way of life allows them to live without the confinements of adhering to the guidelines of authority and responsibilities. Ruby (age 20) expresses this when asked about the best element of her lifestyle :

Being able to go your own direction without somebody telling you no or stop...being able to get up and go...Some people say it's running away, I say it's hopping up and living your life...

Overall the participants regard conforming to the standards of conventional society as a dreary existence and view their own lives as liberation from the “establishment.” In saying that, the participants also feel that in the future they would like to leave the lifestyle but do not have any real plans to do so now. They also

believe that if they wanted to change their situation they could, and therefore are confident in their own abilities and skills to re-create themselves. In addition to using their lifestyle to exercise agency in their lives, these youths also use various tools for survival on the Streets.

Survival, Social Networks and Coping Skills

These females use two main tools for survival and sustenance in their lives: social networks and coping skills. Having strong social networks, both within street groups and outreach programs, are essential for the survival of female transient youth. The social networks help female street youth become familiar with basic survival skills, such as where to camp, how to gain of food resources, how to acquire money, and most importantly, how to behave within the street social structure. The main rule in being a part of a street “family” is the significance of the reciprocity within the social circle. This means that everything is “kicked down,” or shared equally within the group. With everyone having a “hustle,” or a way to gain resources, such as money, food, alcohol or marijuana, the chances of surviving comfortably becomes higher. While this community-based living is a plus when everyone is pulling their weight, those who fail to contribute to the “family” are shunned from the group. Diana (age 24) explains this concept of community-based living:

Somebody has a weed hustle, somebody else recycles...it's like, reciprocal, you know? We help each other out. Sometimes we avoid people outside the circle, you know? We're like, get away dude, you get an F! You're not doing good [with contributing]! You're not helping, you know? We're like reciprocating, we're family...

A significant dynamic within this social network is the relationships between females. This relationship is distinguished from the female-male relationship because of three factors: first, there are more males than females on the street, especially within the “gutter punk” lifestyle. Second, according to the respondents, it is difficult to find a “down home-girl,” or a female who can handle themselves correctly according to street and social rules. Third, due to the unique experience of females on the streets, it is key to have a female as a “partner” because females have a greater sense of loyalty to each other than males.

In addition, female street youth also use social and outreach programs as a form of survival. The access to services in the San Francisco area is accredited with being a reliant source of help for certain needs, such as feminine products and birth control. These community service centers are also used as message centers for receiving mail and phone calls, and for using internet and receiving legal aid. All participants view the helpful and abundant social services and programs as a reason for staying in San Francisco; the main reason being their strong social network and acceptance of their punk-influenced subculture in the San Francisco community.

Along with social networks, the use of coping skills is employed to handle day-to-day issues of street life. One of the main coping strategies is the use of alcohol and marijuana. The use of alcohol is viewed as key part of daily activity. Alcohol takes priority over food when monetary resources are low. The main reason is that it is a form of “dealing” with the hardships and reality of being homeless. As Lily (age 22) explains:

The streets can be fuckin’ cool, the streets can be real mean...It can finally bring you down and you can be so frustrated you feel like crying but you still gotta like, hold your shit together. It a question of like, yeah, what am I

doing out here?...So that's where I think the alcohol comes in...Just drink some booze and forget about it.

While alcohol is the primary substance of choice for the participants in this study, marijuana is also a frequently used substance for handling the stresses of street life. While marijuana is legally classified as a drug, this group considers it in a distinctly different category than hard drugs, such as heroin and methamphetamine. Although hard drugs are prevalent in the homeless community, their use within this particular social circle is regarded as unacceptable. Smoking marijuana is viewed as a source of relaxation and pleasure, and is also used as a form of making acquaintance and resolving conflict.

Another coping strategy used by these female street youth is the use of fighting to gain respect and reputation. While most of the interviewees express their dislike for having to fight, they also state that fighting is a frequent and necessary part of street life. As females they feel that they have to not only be ready to fight other females but males as well. This is due to the fact that males often view females on the street as weak and will try to exploit, degrade and sexually, verbally or physically assault them. Due to this fact, these females feel the need to have to use violence to get the respect they want.

This sentiment is shared by Ruby (age 20):

And being, as chicks on the streets? Yeah, we smash dudes! We straight up smash them because they try to come up in our face and think that we're weak on the streets and they just look at us and just think that they can pick on us. But they don't know that there's like, me and 3 other girls around the corner that will just come and just boot you in your mouth...

While violence is disliked, the females proudly tell stories of fights they have been in and show off scars as marks of reputation and high-ranking social status. This again reveals why social networks are important; the threat of violence is another way for these youth to “watch each others back.”

Through their social networks and strategies for coping with street life, these youth are able to re-construct definitions of what it means to be female so that they can deal with issues of gender stereotyping and homelessness.

The Social Re-Construction of Gender

The concept of a social re-construction of gender helps female street youth cope with negative stereotypes about females and issues of homelessness. This re-construction includes the roles and dynamics that are employed by the female respondents to demonstrate that they are not the stereotypical female. The term “alpha-female” is used by each respondent to express the type of roles and attitude that they believe they must utilize to be able to survive and be respected on the streets. Participants state that being “too girly” or “feminine” is looked down upon and is not a way that they feel they need to conform to. Most of the girls claim to be tomboys, but a few said that they occasionally like to “dress up” and respect those who take pride in being female.

These females also take pride in feeling that they are smarter than most of the males on the street. Due to having to take extra precautions against being exploited, assaulted, or dominated, they believe that they have an edge on life, which makes them stronger and more skilled survivors on the street. Sandra (age 26) explains this idea:

Females in that park are really smart, its not even funny. You know, I hear guys talk about them like, "Oh, girls are stupid!" and I'm like, oh, you have no idea, no idea! Because the females there have to put up with guys who are supposed to be their friends, plus the guys who are trying to fuck with them, plus having to have your gear, plus having to camp [on the streets]...they have no idea.

Although these females apply a more dominant and aggressive attitude to deal with negative stereotypes about being females on the street, they also use people's assumptions about females as an advantage to get what they want. When asked if she had ever used her femininity to get what she wanted, Sandra (age 26) exclaims:

Oh yeah! Yeah...its like, using someone's assumption of you against them. That's all it is, you know?

This is a common sentiment among each respondent. The respondents feel that if they are going to be looked down upon for being female they might as well profit from the labels that are forced upon them. When asked if being a female on the streets made it harder or easier on them, they all said that although they get discriminated against more, being a female on the street was easier than being a male. This is due to the fact that people do not view females as threatening and are more apt to help them with resources such as food, money and social services. Therefore, being female, regardless of acting against feminine gender norms to gain respect on the street, still allows respondents to benefit because of traditional gender norms and stereotypes held by society.

Discussion

The concept of a social construction of gender is defined as the process of gender formation through socialization (Lorber 1994). From birth we “learn” the patterns of how to “do” gender through our interactions with our parents and others in society (Lorber 1994). Lorber (1994) explains that gender is a social institution which stratifies females and males into unequal categories, placing males into dominate positions and females in submissive positions in society.

In this paper I suggest that female transient youth in a punk-influenced subculture use their lifestyle as a way to reject the conventional constructions of gender and establish new constructs of what it means to be female by incorporating unconventional patterns of behavior and appearance. Lacking a defined space as ‘home’ is another way that these females have restructured the typical social constructions of gender, which posits women in subordinate and domestic positions (Pfeffer 1997; Wardhaugh 1999). The idea that these females choose to freely live their lives as unaccommodated women contradicts the traditional social order, and is seen as threatening to those who subscribe to the dominant culture’s standpoint on spatial and gender norms (Wardhaugh 1999).

Through this research three themes emerge: agency, survival, and the re-construction of gender. Contrary to earlier studies on female street youth, females in this way of life exercise an enormous amount of agency than previously thought. The absence of monetary resources are seen as a liberation which allows these females the opportunity to live and travel transiently. Although each participant states that their life gives them freedom, they also express that their lives are difficult and dangerous, which

can be viewed as confining by social norms, but in these context it is viewed as an assertion of their independence.

A second theme that is discovered through the data is the use of two main tools for survival and sustenance: social networks and coping skills. Social networks are essential to the survival of female youth in the “gutter punk” lifestyle (Ferrell 2001). These social networks are primarily comprised of other members of the punk-influenced subculture and the social and outreach programs in the area. The street “family” is an essential tool for survival because they help teach street culture and rules, while also being a source of resources and protection (Bender et al. 2007). This network is vital in shaping and influencing these females’ perspectives and way of life.

Another part of the “homeless social network” is the *homed* network, which consists of social and outreach programs (Rowe and Wolch 1990). My data shows that female street youth rely on the services of the outreaches in the areas where they frequent, citing them as resource centers for feminine products, birth control, and for receiving phone messages and mail.

In addition to utilizing social networks for survival, these youths also employ coping skills. The use of alcohol and marijuana are part of everyday life and are used as a coping strategy for dealing with homelessness (Kidd 2003; Greene, Ennett and Ringwalt 1997). Due to the everyday use of alcohol and marijuana, it can be concluded that many street youth suffer from substance abuse and addiction. Also, due to the fact that alcohol and marijuana is viewed as going “hand in hand” with homelessness, I believe that substance abuse can be another variable that keeps these females in the lives that they lead.

One other technique that is used to cope with street life is fighting. The outlook of the “gutter punk” lifestyle breeds an aggressiveness that views violence as a necessary part of everyday

life. I found Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1982) theory to be true of this subculture, which viewed violence as a necessary part of everyday life. As a respondent put it:

It's a different lifestyle on the streets, the hard fuckin' nitty gritty... boxing to death sometimes cuz it's like, survival... and its almost like putting two rabid dogs in a cage, especially when your homeless cuz its like, that's all you have and your not going to lose it, you know? Your gonna fight for it...

(Ruby, age 20)

The acceptance of violence and fighting in this subculture as a group norm not only makes the lives of these females dangerous but also makes them dangerous individuals. The use of fighting as a form of social control is the direct cause of physical and mental harm, as well as a cause for arrest.

The third theme that emerges from the research is the idea of a re-construction of gender. By disregarding the social norms which trains females to "expect and accept spatial limitations" (Pfeffer 1997:47), these females feel that they are better equipped to handle the difficulties of sexist stereotypes and homelessness. By rejecting discriminating gender labels while also utilizing the labels, these females use assumptions about females to get what they want. As the anti-stereotypical female, these "gutter punk" youth show an intelligent sense of the world around them by their use of the "best of both worlds."

In this paper I argued that the point of view which poses homeless female youth as passive victims is one-dimensional and does not grant these women any agency at all. These stereotypes of the dominant culture which associates females with domesticity

and submissiveness are assumptions that lead to a greater stratification between males and females. This study is important because it explores the lives of female street youth, which allows for greater insight into the lives and perspectives of these women. This data can help structure social and outreach policies and programs so that the use of the strengths that these females have acquired while on the streets can be applied as a catalyst for possibly exiting street life.

Future Research

Further research on this topic is needed so that a greater sample of this population can be gathered for a fuller perspective on the female homeless experience. Also, the intersection of gender, race and class should be explored as elements that contribute to the homeless experience, and possibly, as factors in entry into street life. At the same time, it is important to look at the point-of-view of homeless males living in this punk-influence subculture so that their perspective on females and gender can be taken into account. In addition, the views of females outside of San Francisco should be studied due to the fact that San Francisco is unique in its historical acceptance of radical politics and lifestyles. The examination of females in other part of California and the country would allow for the collection of data which would relate to the importance of society's acceptance of the homeless community and its effect on the experience of female homeless youth. Lastly, the results of these studies will allow a better understanding of the strengths of female street youth; the findings of which can be used as a foundation for developing social and outreach policies and programs for homeless youth.

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Antonia Mendoza

Major:
Communication Studies

Mentor:
**Dr. Adrian
Rodriguez**

Social Impact of
Environmental Racism
in the Outsourcing of
E-waste in Africa and
Asia

Biography

I was born in my beautiful country Mexico, but I've been living in the United States since I was a newborn. My maternal grandfather came to the U.S. in 1947 and was part of the first generation of Mexican migrant workers who were issue American working visas in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. As with my grandparents, my parents also migrated into the U.S. looking for a better life for their family. I'm very proud of being the granddaughter and daughter of migrant workers who came to this country to work in the only thing they knew how and did best, farming. My mother, a single mother of five children, has always emphasized the importance of having a college education. Today, with her love and support, three of her five children are college graduates. I am a single mother of a wonderful and smart 13-year-old and a senior at San Jose State University and graduating in spring 2008 with a B.A. in Communication Studies. I plan to pursue a graduate education and hope to be the greatest motivation and inspiration to my son.

Social Impact of Environmental Racism in the Outsourcing of E-waste in Africa and Asia

ABSTRACT

Environmental racism describes a society's intentional policies or actions that seek to dispose of its most harmful waste in areas populated by ethnic minorities or other disenfranchised groups. For centuries, minority groups and the poor in the United States have been the victims of hazardous waste disposal schemes, resulting in a disproportionately large number of Latinos and African-Americans living within two miles of one of more than 400 waste sites across the nation. Today, environmental racism plays an important role in the outsourcing of electronic waste (e-waste) into developing countries. Asia and Africa are quickly becoming the developed world's illegal dumping ground of choice for e-waste. Technology's rapid growth and the Western world's demand for the latest technology gadgets have caused 50 million tons of e-waste to be imported into developing countries each year—computers, fax machines, cell phones, and other electronic equipment.

In the United States, activists are working to limit the flow of e-waste to developing countries through international agreements, such as the Basel Convention Treaty, and voluntary e-waste export reduction efforts. However, large e-waste producers, like the United States, have not signed the treaty. Due to the lack of domestic and international laws or regulations, people in Asia and Africa continue to be the victims of the consequences of unregulated exposure to e-waste. The United Nations has called for Western countries to end the illegal dumping of e-waste into developing countries. It

remains to be seen whether Western nations will fulfill and honor their international and moral obligations.

Introduction

Environmental racism refers to the practice of discriminating against disenfranchised communities, such as ethnic minorities and the poor, by excluding and alienating them from any environmental policy making. It pertains to both actions and inactions by governments, institutions, or industries which result in a negative environmental impact, whether intentionally or unintentionally, that harms individuals, groups, or communities based on race or socioeconomic status.

Currently in the United States, both minority groups and the poor continue to be victims of a new type of environmental racism from the disposal of electronic waste (e-waste). Minority communities, such as African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans, disproportionately live near or in hazardous environmental areas compared to the majority of the population of European descent.

Most of the e-waste being outsourced into developing countries is done illegally or by falsifying documents or by bribing officials. Although the demand for e-waste by e-waste brokers from developing countries is increasing at an astonishing rate, most of the e-waste shipped to developing countries is junk. The developing country's most vulnerable citizens tend to be the children and the poor who dismantle by hand the e-waste for less than \$2.00 per day. This electronic equipment, when dumped, leaches lead, mercury, and cadmium into the soil; when burned, it releases carcinogenic dioxins and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons into the environment.

In order to resolve the current dilemma with e-waste, it's important to acknowledge that environmental racism plays a

major role when disposing of e-waste. Through an ethnographic study of scholarly and news articles, this essay seeks to illuminate the impact of outsourcing e-waste to Africa and Asia and how environmental racism plays a major role in the outsourcing decision making process.

The Effects of E-waste on the Environment

Each computer monitor contains four to eight pounds of lead, which is a nerve-damaging component. These computer monitors are not reused, but are instead thrown along China's village roadsides, leaching into their ground water. In order for Chinese families to generate any type of income, they have to sort and burn cables and wires to separate recyclable metals like aluminum, steel, and copper from its surrounding plastic. Others team up to extract metals from circuit boards. To completely remove the metals from the circuit boards, they either heat up the metals on coal-fired grills or bathe them in acid. After the extraction of the metals is complete, the remaining materials get dumped into their rivers.

Water Pollution

In 2002, the World Health Organization found lead levels in drinking water that were 2,400 times higher than its recommended limits. In Africa, the Zambezi River, whose fresh water is vital and consumed by people from eight southern African countries, is facing a similar ecological disaster. The toxic pollution from the constant dumping of e-waste into the river poses a serious problem to aquatic life. In some parts of the river's basin, toxins have devastated the wildlife, causing a loss to biodiversity. The Congo, Nile, and Limpopo Rivers are also suffering the consequences of e-waste dumping. For example, deadly outbreaks caused by the consumption of fish

infected with toxins along the Zambezi River serve as proof that not only is e-waste affecting the consumption levels of fresh drinking water by Africa's citizens, but that fish, Africa's main resource of food, has now become a serious health risk to those who depend on it for survival. These epidemical toxins have surfaced in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Angola, Namibia, Malawi, and Tanzania.

Land Pollution

When e-waste is disposed in landfills, it becomes a conglomeration of plastic and steel casings, circuit boards, glass tubes, wires, resistors, capacitors, and other assorted parts and materials. The toxic chemicals found in electronics products leach into the land over time or are released into the atmosphere, which impacts nearby communities and the environment. These electronic components contain heavy metals and other hazardous substances that contaminate the soil and groundwater. Some of these heavy metals include lead, cadmium, and mercury, which are toxic and can cause cancer. In developing countries, most of these toxic chemicals are found in people's backyards. These poisonous compounds infiltrate their air, water, soil, plants, and the food people grow and consume daily. This issue poses a social problem for developing countries because the people's health is at risk every time they eat or drink their water due to the toxins the water contains.

Air Pollution

In e-waste recycling centers in developing nations, discarded components are dipped into open pits of acid and heated over grills fueled with coal blocks to extract precious metals, such as gold, but in the process releasing other toxic

metals into the atmosphere. The plastics found in e-waste contain brominated flame retardants which when heated, releases dioxins and furans that are the most toxic substances known to humankind. They are invisible and have no smell or taste. For example, Ping'an Peng from the Guangzhou Institute of Geochemistry (China) argues that Guiyu's, a center of e-waste recycling, air quality was 12-18 times worse than those in Chendian, a town 9 kilometers from Guiyu, and 37-133 times worse than those in Guangzhou, which is 50 km from the nearest e-waste site. The researchers concluded that dioxin pollution is spreading to nearby areas ("E-waste recycling spews dioxins into the air," 2007). The release of these heavy metals and toxic fumes into the atmosphere causes respiratory and skin problems to those exposed to it.

Outsourcing of E-Waste

Outsourcing is a contract between one company or person with another company or person to do a particular function. The process of outsourcing has four stages: 1) strategic thinking, to develop the organization's philosophy about the role of outsourcing in its activities; 2) evaluation and selection, to decide on the appropriate outsourcing projects and potential locations for the work to be done and service providers to do it; 3) contract development, to work out the legal, pricing and service level agreement (SLA) terms; and 4) outsourcing management or governance, to refine the ongoing working relationship between the client and outsourcing service providers.

Due to the rapid growth and demand for newer or more advanced technology on a global scale, outsourcing e-waste by developed countries into developing countries is a cheap and convenient manner to dispose of "obsolete" or "out-dated"

electronic equipment. By disposing of e-waste into developing countries that lack or have inadequate regulations to dispose of toxic or hazardous waste, developed countries save millions of dollars annually. However, this savings comes at the expense of the environment of developing countries and the health of their citizens.

Outsourcing is one of the main methods used to transfer low-cost production processes to regions like China, India, and Mexico in order to obtain cost-effective product production. However, aside from cheaper labor, the main factors driving outsourcing in these regions are the lack of environment protection and the desperate need for foreign investment due to the high levels of poverty. A recent study by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) concluded that tens-of-thousands of computers and other equipment were outsourced to developing countries as a donation to the poor.

African and Asian borders continue to be threatened by illegal shipping and dumping of these hazardous e-waste materials because international regulatory or enforcement systems are not implemented. For example, in the Ivory Coast, a country in Africa, a Dutch company unloaded several hundred tons of dangerous chemicals and toxic waste at fifteen different sites in the capital of Abidjan, killing ten people and causing more than 100,000 people to seek medical treatment during the open-air dumping. Experts calculate that between 25 to 75 percent of the e-waste entering Africa is done through the Mombasa, Lagos and Dar es Salaam ports in Mozambique, Nigeria and Tanzania. A 2005 report conducted by the European Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), concluded that 75 % of the containers they had inspected during their investigative period contained some illegal waste, including e-scrap. Their report

also concluded that about 48% of the cargo documentation is illegal. The demand and use of electronic equipment worldwide will continue to increase, and developing countries, such as those in Africa and Asia, will continue to be affected by unregulated international laws on outsourcing of e-waste. It is crucial to analyze how outsourcing e-waste affects these two regions' social well-being and how developed countries continue to pollute and destroy Africa's and Asia's dream towards becoming a pollution-free society.

Toxic Outsourcing to Developing Nations

Greenpeace's Toxic Campaign Report shows that items such as junked computers, cell phones, copiers, monitors, iPods and many other electronic devices are piling up at the rate of up to 50 million tons a year. This type of electronic equipment becomes obsolete within two years and the resulting e-waste contains hazardous and non-recyclable materials. It is estimated that a billion cell phones and at least 130 million computers are sold every year, half of them in the United States. With America's landfills already stressed and unable to cope with current demand, it is inevitable that the U.S. will be looking elsewhere to dispose of the billion cell phones and 130 million computers that American consumers will be replacing with newer models.

The United States generates more e-waste than any other nation in the world and is responsible for about 4.6 million tons of e-waste; some waste is recycled. In 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that about 220 million tons of old computers and other technology hardware are trashed annually in the U.S., but, as their most recent study showed, only about 11 percent of computers were recycled. Each year about 14 to 20 million personal computers are discarded in the

U.S. alone, and environmentalists predict that this number will triple by 2010. The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition estimated that about 50 to 80 percent of the e-waste collected for recycling is shipped to China, India, or Pakistan. In the U.S. alone, it's estimated that up to 20 million personal computers end up as obsolete (non-recyclable) e-waste annually, while e-waste output is expected to triple by developing countries. At this point, the U.S. doesn't have any federal regulations or legislation enforcing or addressing e-waste disposal.

In fact, some states within the U.S. support the outsourcing of e-waste to developing countries despite its dangerous effects on the environment and human health. In California, the outsourcing of e-waste is a growing industry and supported by the state, which pays to recycle and gives e-waste buyers the right to sell the rest to brokers. The state of California pays local recyclers to collect e-waste, such as computer monitors, TVs, and laptops, using the \$6 to \$10 Advance Recycling Fee that is collected by retailers on electronic sales. Once these electronic devices reach their maximum level of recycling, they are sold to brokers, who then turn around and ship them to the world's poorest countries, where people earn about two dollars a day to break apart the e-waste by hand and recover whatever can be sold. Ted Smith, the founder of the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition (SVTC) and coordinator of the International Campaign for Responsible Technology, agrees that this business is profitable for both the seller and buyer of e-waste. Smith argues that when you return e-waste to your service provider, they export and sell it for about \$30.00...they make a second profit, and when the phones die they become e-waste over there (as cited in Solomon, 2007, para.6). For example, the U.S. classifies e-waste as special wastes; therefore, they can legally contract an overseas

recycling facility, such as China. The illegal dumping of e-waste products not only generates piles of toxic waste, but they are also being exported overseas to countries such as Latin America, Africa, and Asia. A report conducted by the BBC concluded that developed countries export 80 percent of the world's e-waste into Asia, of which 90 percent goes to China.

China is a top consumer of e-waste due to its high demand for aluminum, copper, steel and plastics, which China's own industry uses to produce the products it exports worldwide. For example, Chinese workers dismantle computer monitors to reclaim copper bands, receiving \$1.50 per day for their work. In this way, China alone receives an estimated 36 million metric tons of global e-waste every year. Westervelt, a Toxics Research Analyst with Seattle's Basel Action Network, argues that unless you've been in some of these 80,000-square-foot warehouses that are oceans of monitors, CPUs, keyboards, cables, printers and fax machines, it is kind of hard to imagine how large this problem is (as cited in Solomon, 2007, para.14). In the near future, the global trash landfills will be hit with zillions of American computers and televisions as Americans replace their old computers that are unable to run Microsoft's new Vista operating system and as they replace their analog TVs because of the upcoming 2009 mandatory conversion to digital TVs.

One of the problems developing countries such as Africa face is that there is no national law requiring companies to take back and recycle their computers. In Nigeria, e-waste is increasing at an astonishing rate. Each year, about 50 million tons of used and old PCs make their way into Nigeria's landfills. This second-hand computer business is leading Nigeria into an environmental disaster.

The exponential growth and demand for second-hand industries makes possible the illegal importation of e-waste into Nigerian borders. As a result, the country is facing many challenges trying to patrol its borders because most of the e-waste coming into Nigeria is not tested or certified as a functioning item. For example, in Port Apapa, in Lagos, one warehouse complex handles every month about 40 container loads of e-waste. Nigerian Environment Ministry Ogungbuyi argues that e-waste is easy to disguise in custom documents because e-waste is registered as “shipped for re-use (as cited in Carney, 2006, para.10). The process of tracking e-waste coming into the country is a much larger problem because more than 500 tons of the e-waste that arrives daily doesn't have the proper or clear documentation to track the importation of e-waste products. Most of the time, e-waste gets transported in the cars coming into the country to be sold in the second-hand business. Puckett, NGO of the Basel Action Network, argues that it is easy for exporters to offload their e-waste and avoid paying a fee, thus, making a profit. Exporters are able to exploit the re-use category in custom documents by claiming that it is working equipment to help the poor (as cited in Carney, 2006, para. 11). In Lagos, computer recycling facilities aren't available; therefore, e-waste is found around the city in huge mountain piles. By scavenging one mountain pile of e-waste, children can earn up to \$2 a day.

In 2004, 183 million computers were purchased worldwide and, by now, most of them are obsolete. Exporting companies and developed countries continue to export e-waste seeking cheap labor and taking advantage of non-existent or non-enforced environmental laws. The illegal dumping of e-waste continues to affect developing countries, but international agreements for safer e-waste recycling procedures are actively

contributing to monitor or stop the outsourcing of e-waste. As a result, the United Nations urges Western countries to stop outsourcing e-waste into developing countries. It is estimated that with the increase of e-waste in the next decades and environmental laws failing to enforce them, hazardous shipments will continue to land on Latin America, Asia, and Nigeria's borders.

Laws and Regulations

The Basel Convention is an international environmental treaty that was adopted in 1989 and came into force in 1992. The Treaty's purpose is to regulate and control the trans-boundary transportation and disposal of hazardous wastes. In 1994, the Basel Convention labeled e-waste as hazardous waste due to its toxic material components. Currently, the Basel Convention needs twenty-five additional nations to ratify the treaty in order for the Basel Convention to force Western nations that have signed but not ratified the treaty to comply with international e-waste laws. In addition, several amendments still require additional signatures: the London Protocol needs ten other nations so it may be implemented, seven for the Rotterdam Convention and sixteen for the Stockholm Convention.

But international businesses and their governments are grouping to oppose the compliance of the Basel Convention and its amendments. Australia, Canada, the International Council on Metals and the Environment (ICME), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the United Nations Center for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have formed a non-signatory group to oppose any efforts in implementing the Basel Convention. They claim the Basel Convention allows advanced countries that belong to the Organization of Economic

Cooperation and Development (OECD) to regulate and decide which hazardous materials are considered safe for exportation. Thus, the power given to the OECD would impose unacceptable restrictions on free trade and compromises the position of countries importing potentially hazardous materials. They also claim the Basel Convention lacks a long-term solution for the disposal of e-waste materials. Other countries that have abstained from signing the treaty are Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and the Philippines. Japan has signed only one of the protocols.

The United States until this point has refused to sign the Basel Convention. The states of Arkansas, California, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Washington have no existing regulations concerning the disposal of e-waste. In 1989, Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition (SVTC) discovered that IBM's facility in San Jose, California was the top discharger of ozone level-destroying chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) in the United States. Indeed, California's AB2901, the Cell Phone Recycling Act of 2004, became effective only on July 1, 2006. AB2901 forces retailers selling mobile phones within California to help its consumers pay for the disposal of their old cell phones at no charge, regardless if they bought it in-store, catalog, or as an online transaction. But the greatest problem at this point is that there is no national law that regulates e-waste. As a result, California, Maine, Maryland and Washington State either pay its collectors or make its producers pay to recycle products.

China ratified the complete Basel Convention treaty and has begun to ban imported electronic components that contain the main six heavy metals and toxic chemicals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, beryllium, brominated flame retardants, polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs), polybrominated diphenylethers (PBDEs) and tetrabromobisphenol-A (TBBPA

or TBBA). China's Waste Electrical and Electronics Equipment (WEEE) program was introduced as a governmental initiative to combat e-waste problems. The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) is one of China's top economic planning bodies, and it is taking the appropriate measures to stop the outsourcing of e-waste. Despite China's efforts against the outsourcing of e-waste into their landfills, they lack the legal framework that is able to enforce the embargo. China also faces possible retaliation action from the World Trade Organization, if China pursues to deny international imports based on environmental grounds.

Following the Basel Convention, the Basel Action Network began an "Electronics Recycler's Pledge of the True Stewardship," which certifies that their e-waste recycling members are responsible for properly recycling and disposing of their e-waste and toxic ingredients. Despite global efforts to impose international e-waste legal repercussions, at this point, only three e-waste recyclers have signed it: ECS Refining, GreenCitizen and Zak Enterprises.

For many decades, developed countries have been dumping e-waste into Third World countries, but despite the environmental and health hazards associated with e-waste, the outsourcing of e-waste has become a source of livelihood and income for the poor. To many governments, the outsourcing of e-waste into their countries is valued revenue that keeps the tens of thousands of unskilled and unemployed workers employed.

Poverty

Unfortunately, poverty remains one of the most lasting barriers to barring the importation of toxic e-waste into developing countries. With few resources or foreign

investment, many nations are forced to use their impoverished population as a source of cheap labor to recycle toxic materials from e-waste, regardless of the severe consequences to the environment and health of their citizens.

Health Effects

Electronic products are made with toxic ingredients like PVC, mercury, lead and cadmium. In very low doses, mercury has the potential to damage various organs like the brain, kidneys, and fetus development. In children, mercury toxins are transferred through breast feeding. When mercury is released into the atmosphere, it bio-accumulates in the food chain, mainly in fish. Mercury levels in fish are the major route of exposure for the general public. Lead causes brain damage in children and has been banned from many consumer products. For example, high levels of lead in children affect their IQ and the development of the nervous system. Cadmium is found in electronic components such as SMD chip resistors, infra-red detectors, and semi-conductor chips. Cadmium compounds are highly toxic and their health risk on the human body is irreversible. These toxic compounds accumulate in the body, especially in the kidneys. They cause birth defects, infant mortality, cancer and respiratory problems. For example, barium is a soft silvery-white metal used in computers front panels of a CRT to protect users from radiation. Short-term exposure to barium causes the brain to swell, muscle weakness, damage to the liver, heart and spleen. Another example is black toner pigment, a toner's main ingredient; its inhalation and acute exposure leads to respiratory track infections. Other health risk factors associated with e-waste chemicals include damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, blood system, and the endocrine system.

Cheap Labor

Most high-tech products are obsolete within two years. When the latest technology is available here in the United States at a cheaper price, a human price is paid. Children and women in the Third World are getting paid wages below poverty levels and working in factories under dangerous conditions similar to the textile mills during the 19th century to dispose of this obsolete equipment.

E-waste warehouses employ the countries' poorest citizens, who with bare hands strip down computers and extract component parts to be re-used in machines or later sold on the streets. Electronic recycling is an unregulated industry in Third World countries.

In cities like Guiyu, wealthy countries save millions of dollars by not paying the high cost to properly recycle e-waste. For example, it is estimated that adults earn less than \$2 a day. Despite people's health risk and low pay, in the last two decades incomes have risen considerably along with their quality of life. Although Guiyu's environment has taken a toll, the locals, who before made a living by scavenging garbage for re-sale, are now considered middle class. For example, many of the locals now live in newly built three or four story buildings, instead of the traditional single story home. Inside their newly built homes, the locals use the ground floor as a scrap-sorting workshop and now employ migrant workers to dismantle toxic e-waste.

Child Labor

E-waste is distributed into small workshops and dismantled by children who do not wear safety glasses, gloves, or masks. The child workforce is estimated at approximately 100,000. These children are unaware of the hazardous health

risk that e-waste poses. E-waste is dismantled in workshops, yards, and in the open countryside, where children take apart old computers, monitors, printers, video and DVD players, photocopying machines, telephones and phone chargers, music speakers, car batteries and microwave ovens. The burning of plastics and wires in acid works to extract the gold found inside the e-waste. For many children, finding something to eat or selling something that will pay for food, by far outweighs e-waste's health hazard. For example, about three million Kenyan minors engage in child labor; they work under hazardous conditions earning less than \$2 a day. International Labor Organization (ILO) blames Africa's increasing levels of poverty. By 2015, Africa's child labor statistics is expected to rise by more than 100 million new cases. Africa has the highest incidence of child labor; children ages 5-12 currently work.

Conclusion

Environmental racism will continue to take a toll on the world's poorest citizens leading them to further discrimination by the illegal dumping of e-waste by developed countries. If national and international laws and regulations don't come into force, countries like Asia and Africa will continue to pay the high price of e-waste; risking their health and environment. Each year about 14 to 20 million personal computers are discarded in the United States alone, and environmentalists predict that this number will triple by 2010. In the U.S. alone, it is estimated that up to 20 million personal computers end up as obsolete (non-recyclable) e-waste annually, while e-waste output is expected to triple by developing countries.

Developing countries not only lack the financial support to overcome the effects of environmental racism, but they currently don't have a dedicated legislation dealing with e-waste

issues. Trying to impose any e-waste law or regulation is a complicated process because such laws need to be examined at a domestic, national, and international level. The juxtaposition amongst the different political branches and their uniform approach further complicates e-waste issues. The expansion of global trade and growing demand and growth of the latest technology gig are significant contributing factors. Developing countries have become the worlds dumping ground for e-waste that the industrial world has outgrown.

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Nura Omer

Major:
Biology, concentration
Systems Physiology

Minor: Chemistry

Mentor:
Dr. Brook David

Synthesis and Properties
of Novel Verdazyl and
Nitroxide Free Radicals

Biography

Nura Omer is a Junior completing a degree in Biology with concentration in Systems Physiology and a minor in Chemistry. Currently, she works as a chemistry tutor in a Learning Assistance Center in San Jose State University. One of her deep interests is to conduct research in the many fields necessary for the health sciences, including anatomy, biochemistry, molecular biology, developmental biology, genetics, immunology, and biological and medical informatics. She is planning to attend graduate school and or medical school to study a field involving health sciences as soon as she completes her undergraduate education.

Radical-Radical Interaction

Synthesis of hydroxyl amines and their reduction to a nitroxide radical, 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl, in order to eventually learn more details about the radical-radical interactions such as measure the triplet-singlet gap.

Introduction

Radicals are atoms or molecules with an unpaired electron. Accordingly, diradicals are atoms or molecules having two unpaired electrons. However, metals that possess unpaired electrons are not generally considered to be radicals. A radical is indicated by a dot placed in the upper right superscript to the chemical symbol.⁹

Radicals can be used as catalysts in the oxidation of alcohols to carbonyl compounds³. They can serve as antioxidants and are used in polymer synthesis.³ Moreover, radicals play important roles as biological intermediates, and have biomedical application such as the betterment of MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scans.⁹ Dinitoxide radical is useful when used as spin labels for it is extremely sensitive to motion and polarity⁸ and as substrates when studying the chemistry of unpaired electron spins.¹⁰ By studying the interaction of free radicals with other molecules, these radicals may be used to measure and examine other chemical systems. Moreover, dinitroxides are likely to be used as sensitive probes for membrane structure studies.⁸

Chemists are interested in studying diradicals because of the interaction between unpaired electrons. This can be used as the

basis for understanding bonding and magnetism at a molecular level. Understanding this interaction can also be used in devising new magnetic molecules.⁹

A simple model can be used to describe the radical-radical interaction in a diradical. When two orbitals interact they can give rise to a bonding and antibonding orbital. According to the position electrons are placed in these orbitals various ground and excited electronic states are obtained. For example, if we have two electrons to arrange in the bonding/antibonding orbitals, (i.e. a diradical) four states can be obtained:

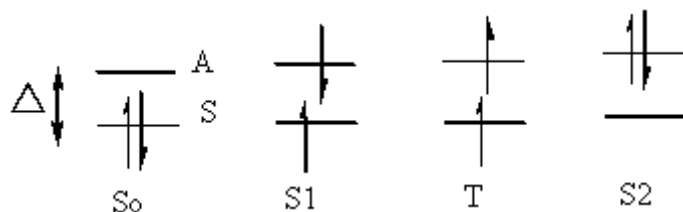


Figure 1. Four states of electron arrangement in a simple diradicals model

Delta (Δ) is the relative energy difference between in the bonding and antibonding orbitals; however, to obtain the overall energy we must include the pairing energy (P), the energy related to the pairing of electrons. Energy is required to pair electrons because as electrons pair up they are forced to come within close proximity of each other which results in repulsion. Thus, energy is required to overcome the repulsion force. The energy levels are, to a first approximation.

$$E(S_0) = P$$

$$E(S_1) = \Delta + P$$

$$E(T) = \Delta$$

$$E(S_2) = 2\Delta + P$$

S_0 , S_1 , S_2 are singlet (spin paired) states and T is a triplet state. In most organic molecules, $\Delta \gg P$. The order of the orbitals from the highest energy levels to the lowest energy is then $S_2 > S_1 > T > S_0$. However, if the pairing energy happens to be larger than the Δ energy, as the case is with some diradicals, then the order of the orbitals from the highest energy levels to the lowest energy would be $S_2 > S_1 > S_0 > T$.



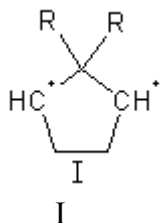
Figure 2. Orientation of orbitals

Proximity and overlap contribute to relative energy difference and the pairing energy. When orbitals are in close proximity there is strong overlap (Fig 2A), $\Delta \gg P$, resulting in normal bonding. If orbitals are stretched further apart from each other (Fig 2B), orbital overlap (Δ) is small and but the physical proximities of the electrons is also small (contributes to P) and the order of the energy states does not change. When orbitals are twisted (fig 2C), small orbital overlap (Δ) and significant physical proximity of the electrons (P) are afforded, gaining $P > \Delta$ and a triplet ground state (i.e. $S_2 > S_1 > S_0 > T$). We are interested in structures that lead to cases such as 2C and how much the perturbation is required to transform 2A to 2C.

Many studies have been conducted to examine the properties of radicals using techniques such as molecular orbital theory along with electron spin resonance (ESR), UV-VIS and cyclic voltammetry.³ For instance, Goldberg and his colleagues used *ab initio* electronic structure theory to examine singlet-triplet energy gaps in localized 1,3 biradicals.⁴ They were able to understand the balance between through space and through bond interactions through the analysis of the molecular orbital and generalized valence bond wave functions. If the through space and

through bond interactions have similar magnitude, then the diradicals would have a triplet ground state. However, if one of the effects is of a significantly larger magnitude than the other, a singlet ground state is expected.^{4,7}

	a	b
R	-O(CH ₂) ₂ O-	OH



Abe and co-workers studied singlet-triplet energy gaps in the diradicals **Ia** and **Ib**.¹ They found that the singlet-triplet energy gap in these diradicals is dependent on the R substituents. Furthermore, the diradicals exhibit an intense absorption band in the visible region as a result of the S₀-S₁ transition.

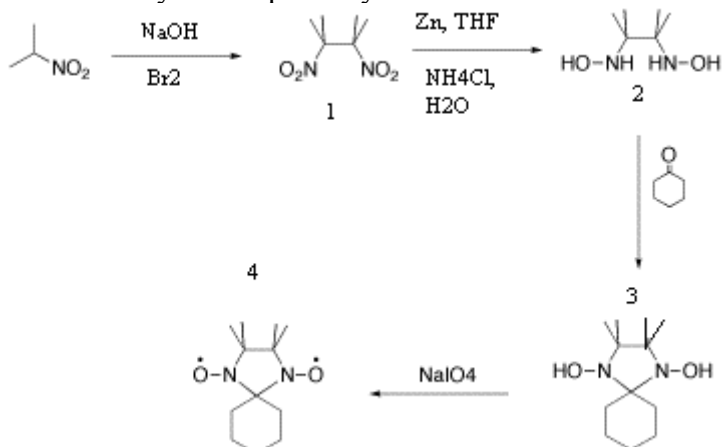
Though the unpaired electron is partially responsible for the reactivity of radicals, not all radicals are highly reactive. The truth is that, some radicals are stable enough to be isolated, examples include nitroxides, nitronyl nitroxides, verdazyls, triarylmethyls, hydrazyls and thiazyls.⁵

Fremy's salt is an inorganic nitroxide discovered over 150 years ago. The first organic nitroxide is (2,4-diamino-5,5-dimethylimidazolidin-1-yl)oxidanyl was discovered at the beginning of the 20th century.⁵ Dinitroxides are also known. 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl is a dinitroxide linked by an SP³ carbon. It is particularly interesting because it is expected to show a high spin ground state, since other

biradicals linked by an sp^3 carbon are known to exhibit high spin ground states (triplet).¹¹ This dinitroxide radical, an orange crystalline material, was synthesized by Keana and co-workers.¹⁰ They found that the ESR spectrum of this dinitroxide radical showed dipolar splitting, $2D = 1606$ G and a half field transition at 1563G. Ultra Violet spectroscopy showed a maximum at 235nm and a molar extinction coefficient of 4420.¹⁰ Dipolar splitting (D) is inversely proportional to electron-electron distance(r). Hence, the large splitting indicates the electrons are in close proximity. However, Keana and his team did not measure the singlet- triplet gap of **(4)**. Moreover, detailed UV-VIS analysis has not yet been conducted and the electrochemistry has not been studied. We hope to complete the characterization of **(4)** and relate our results to other radicals linked by an sp^3 carbon.

We will synthesize and study the diradical, 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl **(4)**. Initially new reaction steps were used in effort to develop a simpler synthesis of this diradical. Keana's original synthesis of **(4)** is lengthy requiring 9 steps.

The initial synthetic pathway used is outlined in scheme 1.



The reaction steps included synthesizing 2,3-Dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane (**1**), 2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (**2**), 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl (**3**), and 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,1-dioxy (**4**). (**1**) can be obtained through the oxidation of 2-nitropropane. (**2**) is synthesized by the reaction of zinc, ammonium chloride and dimethyldinitrobutane in tetrahydrofuran. Then the condensation of (**2**) with cyclohexanone should form (**3**), which can be oxidized with sodium periodate to give the (**4**), the final radical.

Electron spin resonance (ESR), UV-VIS, and electrochemistry of our (**4**) will be used to investigate the diradical character. In the ESR spectrum we may observe a signal due to a triplet state, which indicates the presence of unpaired electrons

with the same spin. A lack of signal in the ESR spectrum indicates the presence of a singlet state, where electrons paired or unpaired have opposite spins. By measuring concentration of the triplet state we will determine the magnitude of the equilibrium constant (K), which in turn will be used to calculate the Gibbs energy change (ΔG). Moreover, measuring concentration of triplet state as a function of temperature will determine the magnitude of the enthalpy (ΔH) and entropy change (ΔS).

In the UV-VIS spectrum, because of the radical-radical interaction, an additional S_0-S_1 transition can be observed in diradicals that is not present in the corresponding monoradical. We are going to search for the lowest energy UV-VIS transition of dinitroxide (**4**), and compare it to the UV-VIS of the mononitroxide radical. The intensity of this transition correlates to the overlap of radical orbitals.

Electrochemistry can also be used to probe the radical-radical interaction. Nitroxides typically undergo one electron oxidation-reduction (figure 3). A large difference in the oxidation or reaction potential of neighboring nitroxides indicate significant interaction within the nitroxides and vice versa. Thus, electron spin resonance (ESR), UV-VIS, and electrochemistry of our diradical/derivative radical should help us learn more about the behavior of SP^3 linked dinitroxides and radicals in general.

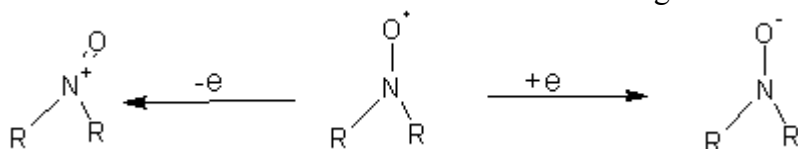


Figure 3. Reduction-oxidation of nitroxides.

Results and Discussion

Synthesis of 2,3-Dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane (1)

(1) was successfully synthesized by the method of Zhao. The reaction produced 17.04g (50 % yield) of white precipitate, (1).

Synthesis of a Hydroxylamine

2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (2)

Three methods were used to make (2), but only one method of the three other methods afforded (2). This method was done by refluxing of 2,3-dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane (1), NH_4Cl and Zn dust in aqueous THF (tetrahydrofuran) for 3-4 hours and stirring overnight. Filtering the mixture afforded 0.5417g (9% yield) of white crystals, (2). A paper by Ovcharenko and coworkers, confirms that this procedure does afford (2), but it does in small amounts. It further suggests a more efficient method of synthesizing (2).

The second method involved the reaction of (1) in a suspension of NH_4Cl , ethanol and water with Zn powder slowly for six hours. TLC analysis was conducted to verify the complete reaction of (1). Then filtered solids were washed with aqueous ethanol and the clear filtrate was acidified with concentrated HCl. The clear filtrate was then evaporated under reduced pressure and the slightly brownish liquid residue with crystals was collected. This residue was made basic by adding K_2CO_3 and was extracted with twice as much dichloromethane. The extracts were then evaporated under reduced pressure to give 2.50g (42 % yield) of white powder, however this was not (2) based on Infrared spectroscopy (IR peaks at 1536, 1340, and $3028\text{-}2867\text{cm}^{-1}$) and melting point analysis (melting point $160\text{-}1680^\circ\text{C}$, which is well above the literature melting point of (2), $157\text{-}159^\circ\text{C}$).¹⁴

The third method amalgamated aluminum as a reactant. However, the product a white solid is not necessarily (2) because IR analysis (peaks at 1546 and 1342 cm^{-1}), repeatedly showed the failure of the nitro group from being completely reduced.

2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl (3)

(2) in ethanol was used to attempt to make (3) by reacting it with cyclohexanone. GC MS analysis (at 300 °C for 25 minutes) of the product obtained by refluxing the mixture of (2) and cyclohexanone, did not show a peak with the molecular weight of (3), 228. This condensation is a delicate process, which may need careful manipulation to successfully make (3).

1,1-dimethoxycyclohexane

In an alternative method, cyclohexanone, trimethylorthoformate and HCl were mixed overnight in hopes of obtaining an acetal/1,1-dimethoxycyclohexane and methyl formate. GC-MS analysis showed components with molecular weight 144 (dimethoxycyclohexane), 112, and 97 (cyclohexanone). Since a mixture of products is afforded by this method, it is not a favorable method.

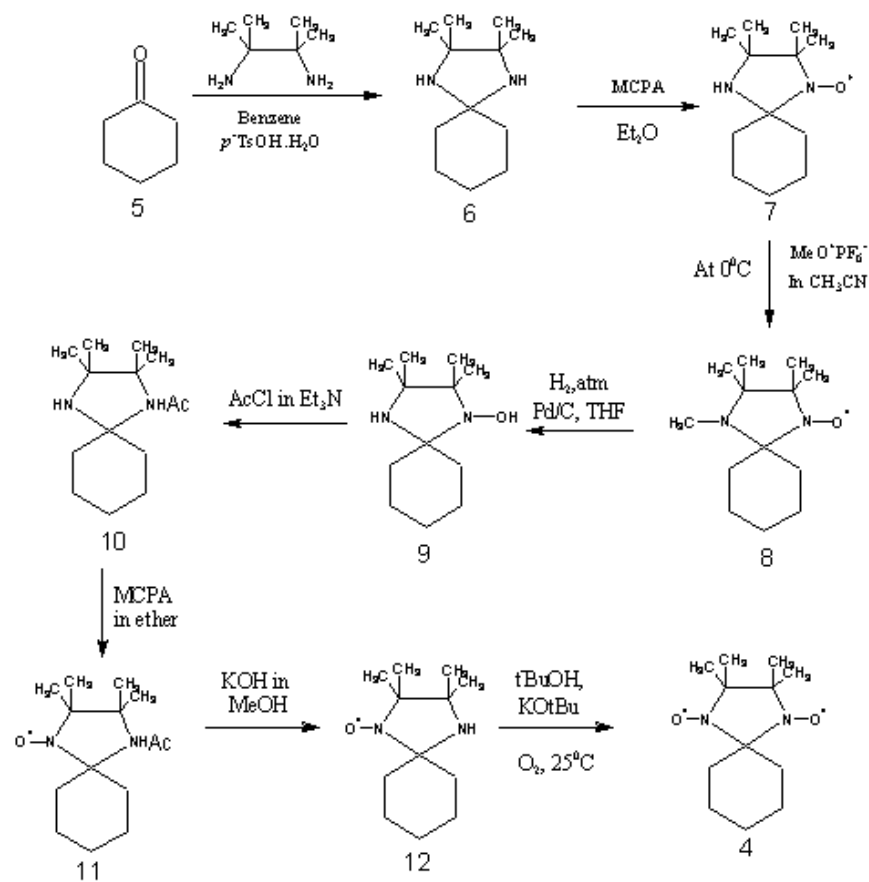
2,2-dimethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl

In another attempt, 1ml of 2,2-dimethoxypropane was reacted with 0.1g of (2), a grain of p-toluenesulfonic acid, and 5ml of THF (to bring the mixture to a solution) and stirred overnight. GC-MS spectra showed no product corresponding to the molecular weight of 2,2-dimethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl, (mw=188), our anticipated product. The ¹³C NMR spectra lacked the representation of one of the methyl groups 2,2-dimethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl, that is instead of 4 types of carbons 3 showed. NMR, GC-MS and IR spectra indicated that none of the methods used above to make 2,2-

pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl (**3**) and or 2,2-dimethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl were effective.

Returning to Keana's synthesis of (**4**) we tried modifying the procedure, where 2,3-Diamino-2,3-dimethylbutane was used to make (**3**). An adapted version of Keana's procedure was used, where toluene, (**2**), cyclohexanone, and toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate were refluxed together. The ^{13}C NMR analysis conducted on the matter obtained through Keana's adapted procedure indicates that it has 5 types of carbons unlike (**3**), which has 6 types of carbons. For clarity, GC-MS was conducted and supported that (**3**) was not made (molecular weight of 228 was not indicated in the spectra). It was clear that the condensation of (**2**) in ethanol with cyclohexanone to produce (**3**) is a delicate process¹², which we have not had much success with. Instead, we returned to use Keana's procedure exactly to eventually make (**4**), the diradical we want to learn more about. The condensation of (**2**) with cyclohexanone, resulted in the complete disappearance of cyclohexanone and the formation of a crude. We plan to examine the identity of our crude. For the meantime, we decided to begin synthesizing the 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline (**6**) through Keana's approach, which is outlined in scheme 2 below.

Keana's approach is outlined in Scheme 2 below



So far, we have made (6) and confirmed its structure by GC-MS and NMR. We have also synthesized a crude sample of (7). One problem Keana has was the inability to further oxidize (7) with MCPBA. Recent reports¹⁵ suggest dimethyl-dioxirane may be a suitable oxidant for this transformation, yielding is directly from (7). Consequently, we plan to use this reagent, in addition to following Keana's route in our quest for (4).

Experimental section

2,3-Dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane(1)¹⁴. 34.56g of liquid 2-nitropropane was added to 15.7g of NaOH in 65ml of water and chilled to -7 ° C. To the resulting solution 10 ml of bromine was added drop wise for 50 minutes while stirring thoroughly. In addition, 128ml of ethanol was added while stirring. The mixture of bromine, sodium hydroxide, 2-nitropropane and ethanol was then refluxed 84 ° C at first then at 30 ° C for three hours, followed by verification of the complete reaction 2-nitropropane using TLC (ethyl acetate/petroleum, 2:1). The reaction mixture was added to 400 ml of iced water and the whole mixture was vacuum filtrated to give white precipitate, 2,3-dinitro-2,3-dimethylbutane (1) (17.04g, 50% yield, lit.¹⁴ mp 110-112 ° C. IR (cm⁻¹: 2869-2953 (C-H), 1537 (C-NO₂), 1377 and 1454 (-CH₃), 1131 (C-N), ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): δ 1.5-1.9 (m, 11H), ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): δ 20.0, 91.0)).

2,3-Bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (2)⁶. 7.0g of 2,3-dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane was dissolved enough in THF(tetrahydrofuran)to get it into solution. To the solution 4g of NH₄Cl dissolved in 5 ml water was added. Finally, 16.0g of Zn dust was added and the mixture was refluxed for 3-4 hours while being stirred. The mixture continued to be stirred overnight.

Eventually, the mixture was vacuum filtrated and washed with THF to give white crystals (0.5417g, 9% yield, mp 149-157 ° C. IR (cm⁻¹: 2869-3030 (C-H) and 3250 (O-H), 1373-1477 (-CH₃), 1144 (C-N) ¹³C NMR (CDCL₃): δ 20.0, 63.0)).

2,3-Bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (2)¹³. 5ml of 3% aqueous HgCl₂ solution was added to 0.230g of Al foil and the mixture was stirred for 20 minutes at 25 ° C. The residual solid was then picked by forceps and dipped in water three times and in mercury(II) chloride, HgCl₂, three times. The amalgamated aluminum was covered in 10ml THF and cooled to 0 ° C. To this were added 1ml of water and a solution made by dissolving 0.299g of 2,3-dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane -2,3-dinitrobutane in 12.5ml of THF. The solution mixture was stirred for 20 minutes at 0 ° C and then filtered on celite. The filtrate was then evaporated resulting in white powder. (0.16g. IR (cm⁻¹: 1546 and 1342 cm⁻¹ (C-H), 1546 and 1342 (C-NO₂), 1370 and 1450 (-CH₃), 1131 (C-N))). [Thus, Not an effective way to make 2,3-bis (hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane, refer to results and discussion section]

2,3-Bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (4)¹⁴. 7.0g of 2,3-dimethylbutane, 4.05g of NH₄Cl, 40ml of ethanol and 40ml of water were stirred together at 0C. To this mixture, 16.05g of Zn powder were slowly added for three hours while being stirred. The mixture was stirred for another 3 hours. TLC analysis was conducted to verify the complete reaction of 2,3-dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane. The reaction mixture was then vacuum filtered and the filtered solids were washed with aqueous ethanol about 5 times and clear filtrate was obtained. The filtrate was acidified (PH=2) with concentrated hydrochloric acid. The clear filtrate was then evaporated under reduced pressure and the slightly brownish liquid residue with crystals was collected. This residue was made basic by

adding potassium carbonate and was extracted with twice as much dichloromethane. The extracts were then evaporated under reduced pressure to give 2.50g of 2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane (**2**), white powder. (2.50g, 42% yield, lit.¹⁴ mp 157-159 ° C. mp 160-168 ° C IR (cm⁻¹: 3028-2867 (C-H), 1536 (C-NO₂), 1340 and 1455 (-CH₃), 1131 (C-N), ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): δ 1.8 (s, 9H), 2.2 (s, 1H), 5.1 (s, 1.5H) ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): δ 23.0, 91.0,104.0). [Not an effective way to make 2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane, refer to results and discussion section]

2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl(3) . 60ml of toluene, 4.43ml of 2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane, 3.74g of cyclohexanone, and 15mg of toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate were placed in a 100-ml flask and fitted with a Dean Stark water separator containing anhydrous potassium carbonate. The solution mixture was refluxed for 65 hours, followed by fractional distillation to obtain our anticipated product, 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1,3-bis hydroxyl. [Not an effective way to make 2,3-bis(hydroxylamino)-2,3-dimethylbutane, refer to results and discussion section] (0.13g, 32.5% yield. IR (cm⁻¹: 3248 (O-H), 2977 (C-H), 1600 (N-H), 1372 and 1456 (-CH₃), 1146 (C-N), ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): δ 0.9-1.4 (m), 2.3 (s), 3.9 (d), 4.8 (s), 5.3 (s), 5.8 (s), 7.4 (s), ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): δ 24.0, 26.0, 42.0, 63.0,104.0).

2,3-Diamino-2,3-dimethylbutane⁶. 17.6g of 2,3-dimethyl-2,3-dinitrobutane was added to 150 ml of concentrated HCl. Then 100g of Sn granules were added in small amounts, followed by three hours of refluxing. The clear layer, once cooled was extracted with diethylether. Adding 60g of NaOH to the aqueous phase afforded a hot basic mixture full of gray sticky residue. The sticky

residue was removed through filtration and washed with a little methylene chloride. The organic layer of the filtrate was then extracted with methylene chloride (4×50ml), the solvent distilled off and dried with pentane. Colorless solid, 2,3-Diamino-2,3-dimethylbutane, was obtained. (2.5g, 21.5% yield. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): δ 0.9-1.2 (s, 12H), 1.4 (s, 4H), ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): δ 26.0, 54.0).

2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline⁸. 60ml of benzene, 4.43ml of 2,3-diamino-2,3-dimethylbutane, 3.74g of cyclohexanone, and 15mg of toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate were placed in a 100-ml flask and fitted with a Dean Stark water separator that has anhydrous potassium carbonate. The solution mixture was refluxed for 45 hours, fractional distillation was used to obtain our anticipated product, 2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline, a colorless oil (0.55g, 7.3% yield, lit.⁸ mp 122 °C (18mm). GC MS: 196).

2,2-Pentamethylene-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1-oxyl (7)⁸. A solution made of 6.236g MCPA and 62.36ml ether to be added drop wise overnight to a mixture of 35.6 ml ether and 4.0g imizadoline crystals at 0C while stirring. The solution was then washed three times with a total volume of 200 g water mixed with 20g of 10% Na₂CO₃ and died with K₂CO₃. The ether was then evaporated, leaving behind oxidized imizadoline. The oxidized imizadoline along with CHCl₃ were eluted through silica gel affording brownish matter after evaporating off chloroform.

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George Ophelia

Major:
English Literature

Mentor:
Dr. Allison Heisch

Reservation Blues: A
Novel of Historical
Legacies

Biography

George Ophelia is a Senior majoring in English Literature. George’s interest in literature has led her to research the historical content in a variety of literary works: Mark Twain’s Huckleberry Finn, Toni Morrison’s Song of Solomon, and Alpha Behn’s Oroonoko to name a few. George plans to first receive a Master of Library and Information Science, followed by a Ph.D. in United States history. George plans to combine the two fields and work as a reference librarian in historical and archival research.

Reservation Blues: A Novel of Historical Legacies

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the major themes Sherman Alexie addresses in his 1995 novel *Reservation Blues*: how, when, and why the Spokane Indians were placed on reservations; what treaties are and how they were not honored; how the history of

Indians in the nineteenth century affects Indians in the twentieth century. Sherman Alexie, a Coeur d'Alene/Spokane Indian, sets his novel on the Spokane reservation, and his central characters are members of an Indian band, Coyote Springs. While the band's career in the music industry is short-lived, it is through their dreams, journal writing, and story telling that the near genocide of the Spokane Indians emerges. Alexie uses the names of actual historical figures, such as George Armstrong Custer and Sheridan Wright, two men who were generals in the Indian Wars. The past historical events that the generals participated in are explored, as well as how the "generals" in the story perpetuate the pseudo-Indian cultural, rather than physical, genocide. The essay explores why claiming to be Indian or part Indian has become popular, even while, in a double irony, the Indian who is thus co-opted is not Indian, but a fake stereotype. Finally, this essay identifies the factual references from the nineteenth century that Alexie weaves into the consciousness and subconsciousness of his characters and also the historical parallels between the Spokane Indians and other Indian Nations.

Introduction

Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Blues* is ironically funny, scathingly biting, sarcastic and wry, but there is nothing funny about the day-to-day struggle of the Spokane Indians living on the reservation. Alexie writes about unemployment, alcoholism, family abandonment, and internal tribal conflict. While these are important issues, what Alexie most wants his readers to think and know about is the history of the Spokane Indians placed on reservations. Through the lives of his characters Alexie presents snippets of historical facts and legends. If one reads *Reservation Blues* and knows nothing of Indian Wars, broken treaties and the

history of how Indians were forced to live on reservations, the novel is just fiction.

Reading *Reservations Blues* raises fundamental questions about Indian history. Who were some of the key figures forcing Indians to sign treaties that ultimately were not honored by the U.S? What issues are common to both early and current histories of the way the U.S. deals with Indian Nations? What did the concept of reservations really mean for the Indians? Which Indian Nations refused to sign treaties and what was the end result? What myths or stereotypes draw contemporary Americans into wanting to be Indian? These are the questions I asked myself while reading *Reservation Blues*, and that I have answered in this essay. The devices Alexie uses to address these issues are his character's dreams and their journal writing which corresponds to historical events of the past.

Sherman Alexie and his novel

Alexie compares the tragedies and histories that take place on his reservation to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. Alexie explains that "[e]very theme, every story, every tragedy that exists in literature takes place in my little community. [. . .] It's a powerful place. I'm never going to run out of stories."¹ Alexie's community is the town of Wellpinit, on the Spokane Indian Reservation near Spokane, Washington. He is a Coeur d'Alene/Spokane Indian. He was born and raised on the reservation and attended tribal school until the age of thirteen. Later, his parents transferred him to an all-white high school in Reardon, Washington. His parents believed Alexie would succeed better in mainstream America if he attended school off the reservation. After high school, and for a number of years, Alexie worked odd jobs before he received his bachelor's degree in American Studies from Washington State University in 1991.

It was while in college that Alexie for the first time was exposed to the writing of Indian literature. Alexie had no intention of becoming a writer; however, he was encouraged by one of his instructors to pursue a career in writing. Alexie took his instructor's advice, and by 1993 he had published three books of poetry. Alexie went on to write more books of poetry, two novels, three collections of short stories, and his most recent work, a semi-autobiographical young adult novel, entitled *The Absolutely True*

Diary of a Part-Time Indian.

Since most of Alexie's stories takes place on the Spokane Indian Reservation, in a 2007 interview, Dave Welch asked how reservations have changed from his childhood to the present. First, Alexie said that he believes "reservations were created as concentration camps. They were created so Indians would be shipped there to die. I really think that's still their purpose: to kill." One big change he says, is that "seventy percent of natives live off the reservation." However, he points out that those who still live on the reservation are not as isolated as he was growing up. He credits this to satellite television and casinos. Although casinos create jobs and more money, Alexie says, "there's still a distinct lack of education; there are still the same social problems."ⁱⁱ

When asked why many of his characters are orphans or missing a parent, Alexie answered with one word: "Displacement." He goes on to explain that displacement is "a constant theme of any colonial literature. That's what I write." He further explains that he never knew his grandparents "because they had died for various colonial reasons." He continues, "after so many generations of being colonized, it's not about murder anymore. It's about the symbolic murder and the legacy of murder."ⁱⁱⁱ Alexie addresses

these legacies: war, displacement and assimilation throughout *Reservation Blues*.

Alexie doesn't write to be liked. He says:

I've come to the realization that many people have been reading literary fiction for the same reason they read mainstream fiction: for entertainment and a form of escape. I don't want to write books that provide people with that. I want books that challenge, anger, and possibly offend.^{iv}

In *Reservation Blues* Alexie holds nothing back in describing how the Spokane Indians live on the reservation in the twentieth century and how they were relegated to live on the reservation in the nineteenth century. His characters live in the present, while their dreams and journal writings are infused with the past.

There is nothing nostalgic about living on the reservation. Spokane Indians do not live in teepees, nor do they subsist off the land. Instead, Alexie gives readers the Spokane's reality of living in partially-built HUD housing "because the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) cut off the building money halfway through construction."^v There are so few jobs on the reservation that most have no money to buy food, so they "wait to receive commodity food on the first of each month."^{vi} There are those few who can afford to shop at the Trading Post, which Alexie describes as "one of the few lucrative businesses on the reservation," where they can purchase Diet Pepsi, Spam, Wonderbread, instant coffee, microwave burritos, beer, a "cornucopia of various carbohydrates, none of them complex."^{vii} What power and influence the Tribal Council has and asserts is in building monuments. The Council "looked to build more, because they received government grants to do exactly that."^{viii}

The main characters in *Reservation Blues*, Thomas Builds-the-Fire, Victor Joseph, Junior Polatkin, and Chess and Checkers Warm Water are in their early thirties. Thomas is the only one who has a parent, his father, although he is often drunk and absent. The others have been orphans for as long as they can remember, either through death or abandonment. The only time they think of their parents is in their dreams, which always seem to take place in taverns.

Thomas, Victor, Junior and the Warm Water sisters form an Indian band, Coyote Springs. For various reasons they all dream of fame and fortune. They are courted by three figures who are looking to promote an all Indian band. The names of the record producers correspond to historical figures: George Armstrong Custer, George Wright, and Philip Sheridan who were major actors in the Indian Wars. However, in the end Coyote Springs are not “Indian enough” and are passed over for two white women, Betty and Veronica, in whom Cavalry Records will invest time and money to make look like Indians.

Alexie also addresses the issue of those who claim to be an Indian for its beneficial purposes. For example, Alexie describes Tribal Police Officer Wilson “a white man who hated to live on the reservation,” but “claimed a little bit of Indian blood and had used it to get the job.” Officer Wilson’s co-worker, Officer Williams, who is “certifiably one-quarter Spokane Indian”^{ix} also took advantage of landing a job on the reservation.

James Cox points out that Alexie has given his characters “a narrative construction or reconstruction of a Native American-identified self that counters a racist historical context and the conquest narratives that are often sustained by the ubiquitous white man’s Indian.”^x In other words, Alexie doesn’t let his readers feel sorry for the characters in his novel. While readers feel their anger, they also understand their fight and right to exist.

We do not think of alcoholism, death or parental abandonment as legacies. Nor do we count disease, war and broken treaties. But in *Reservation Blues*, Alexie illustrates over and over that when that is all you have, you hang on to it for dear life. Legacies.

When, why, and how the Spokanes were placed on reservations

The truth is, the Indians never had any real title to the soil; they had not half as good a claim to it....The settler and the pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages.

President Theodore Roosevelt^{xi}

While there is a faded welcoming sign for would-be visitors to “WELLPINIT, POPULATION: VARIABLE,” Alexie writes that “[i]n the one hundred and eleven years since the creation of the Spokane Indian Reservation in 1881, not one person, Indian or otherwise, had ever arrived there by accident. Wellpinit, the only town on the reservation, did not exist on most maps.”^{xii} From this point *Reservation Blues* unfolds and takes readers into the heart of the reservation and into the lives of the Spokanes who live there now. The concept of reservations historically meant two things: assimilate or disappear. Indians were to blend into white society or not to exist at all.

Parties of white men had come from the cold side and the warm side to establish this barrier in the land of the Indians without consulting them.^{xiii} These words were spoken by a Spokane chief in the latter half of the 1850s. Until this time Canadians and Westerners had come as fur trappers and to establish trading posts. In exchange for the fur Indians brought them, they traded guns, ammunitions, blankets and horses. While some traders came only to trade, there were those who came to set up permanent residence

because, as they told the Spokanes, their land now belonged to the United States and they had a father who was now their president.

America and Americans were expanding their boundaries. Add to this the discovery of gold in the Washington area; they came by the dozens to stake a claim in the Northwest. They brought with them both religion and whiskey: many “rationalize[ed] that the red man, by accepting the white man’s religion[,] would accept the rest of his culture.” Others believed “whiskey and civilization are doing their work quickly and surely amongst them, in twenty years time they will be a matter of history.”^{xiv} Both religion and whiskey produced the effect that the settlers wanted, but even together religion and whiskey did not work fast enough for the surveyors of the Pacific Railroad.

Issac Stevens, governor, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and a surveyor for the northernmost Pacific railroad had found a prime location, the home of the Spokanes, for the thoroughfare of the Pacific Coast Railway. Issac recommended to his superiors that “the aboriginal inhabitants [be] placed on reservations.”^{xv} Negotiations between Stevens and Spokane chiefs to move to reservations, along with other Indian Nations who encompassed the over three million acres in Washington, did not go well. Stevens and those under his command returned for further negotiations, but they did not come alone. They came with the United States Cavalry and its commander, Col. George Wright. In 1858, under Wright’s command there were close to 700 artillery men, and they carried with them the newest technological combat artillery. Although the Spokanes were outnumbered and outgunned, they believed they still had an advantage. The territory was theirs, and they knew it inside and out. They positioned themselves on a hill overlooking Wright and his men as they marched further into the Spokane’s home area. What the Cavalry saw when they looked up was that:

[E]very spot on the plain below was filled with warriors in pines on the edge of the lakes, and ravines and gullies, on opposite hillsides, swarming over the plain on fleet horses. They formed a swaying mass, brandishing Hudson's Bay muskets, bows and arrows, lances, hurling shouts of defiance.... Horses and riders were painted and decked out in skins, trinkets, and fantastic embellishments. White paint was smeared with crimson in fantastic figures. Gaudy colored beads and fringes hung from their bridles.^{xvi}

And both sides charged.

The Spokanes and other Indian Nations were outnumbered, outgunned, and outmaneuvered. After five days of battle, Wright had lost no men, and only one was wounded. The Spokane carried away their dead, so there is no recorded estimate of their loss.^{xvii} The Spokane lost all hope of winning the battle, and signaled to Wright that they wished to cease fire and resume negotiation. Wright agreed to meet, but negotiating was not on his agenda. Instead, he gave the Indians an ultimatum:

[Y]ou have been badly whipped; you have lost several chiefs and many warriors killed or wounded. I have not lost a man or animal; I have a large force, and you Spokanes, Coeur d'Alenes, Pelouses, and Pen d'Oreilles may unite, and I can defeat you as badly as before. I did not come into this country to ask you to make peace; I come here to fight. Now when you are tired of the war, and ask for peace, I will tell you what you must do: You must come to me with your arms, with your women and children, and everything you have, and lay them at my feet; you must put your faith in me and trust to my mercy. If you do this, I shall then dictate the terms upon which I will grant you peace. If you

do not do this, war will be made on you this year and next, and until your nation shall be exterminated.^{xviii}

The Indians capitulated. However, Wright wasn't through with waging war and getting his message across. He set out to travel the mountainous country, seeking out the places Indians lived. He destroyed all Indian encampments, their livestock, and what business trading posts they had established. The most devastating blow came when Wright found a herd of wild horses. He believed that if he let the horses remain free, the Indians would regain strength and use the horses to their advantage. It is important to know that killing horses was a crime, but Wright did not want to take any chances of retaliation.^{xix} Wright killed the horses, over seven hundred of them. Wright labeled the site Horse Slaughter Camp. The Spokanes call it Wright's Boneyard. Throughout *Reservation Blues*, Alexie writes, "And the horses screamed" whenever something tragic is about to happen.

Over a hundred and thirty years has passed since Wright made his speech. However, his words can still be heard by Thomas Builds-the-Fire when he writes in his journal: The Reservation's Ten Commandments as given by the United States of America to the Spokane Indians.^{xx} Thomas gives Wright's speech an update in words and ideas, but the message is still the same. Thomas begins most of the Commandments with what the Spokanes shall not do as an Indian nation. However, the Commandments end with what the government can and will do to the Indians. For example, Commandment number six, Thomas writes: [y]ou shall not murder, but I will bring FBI and CIA agents to your reservations and into your homes, and the most intelligent, vocal, and angriest members of your tribes will vanish quietly."^{xxi} This commandment in particular is a fact: any time Indians retaliated against whites in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the cavalry was assigned to kill

the Indian chiefs who were the most vocal against white settlers, and who had the most influence on younger men in their Nation.

Thomas's *Commandments* also addresses an earlier scene in *Reservation Blues*. Before Thomas writes his *Commandments*, his father, Samuel Builds-the-Fire dreamt that he and Lester FallsApart were playing basketball against six Tribal Cops. Alexie calls Samuel's scoring a basket a "rattle-the-foundations, ratify-a-treaty, abolish-income-tax, close-the-uranium-mines monster dunk."^{xxii} In addition, every time Samuel makes a basket it is in retaliation "for all those Indian scouts who helped the U.S. Cavalry." Samuel scoring a basket is also a positive score "for Leonard Peltier, too," he says. Peltier, a Chippewa-Lakota is serving two life sentences in a federal prison. He was a leader in the American Indian Movement, and in 1975 was accused and convicted of the murder of two FBI agents.^{xxiii} Thomas's *Commandments* and Samuel's dream are Alexie's wry way of writing historical facts and legacies into the novel.

While Wright lay down his wrath on the Spokane Indians, General's Philip Sheridan and George Armstrong Custer were waging war with the Sioux Nation. Sheridan and Custer fought the Sioux, Cheyennes and Comanches to force them back onto reservations. It was the same story: white settlers wanted more land; wagon roads, railroads, and telegraphs were coming through. The United States was to have its way again, making previously signed treaties void and demanding signatures for newer treaties.

In the 1860s, before hordes of white settlers came to claim land in the Great Plains—Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana—the United States government had signed treaties that divided territories respectively between settlers and various populations of the Sioux Nation: Cheyennes, Arapahos, Kiowas, Comanches, Prairie Apaches, Oglala, Minneconjou, and Hunkpapas. But white settlers violated the

treaties, hungering for more land, especially when gold was discovered in the sacred Black Hills in South Dakota. The Sioux Nation retaliated by raiding and killing whites who were violating the treaties. Generals Sheridan and Custer were ordered in to provide for the safety of white settlers and for railroad and telegraph line workers. They were also ordered to renegotiate the previous treaties, which would give whites access to more land, while the Sioux would be placed on smaller reservations, more segregated from the white population.

Dee Brown writes in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* that Sheridan's orders to Custer were "to destroy their villages and ponies, to kill or hang all warriors, and bring back all women and children."^{xxiv} Brown goes on to say that Custer's job in separating the warriors from the women and children was "too slow and dangerous for the cavalymen; they found it much more efficient and safe to kill indiscriminately."^{xxv} Sheridan didn't take his orders to Custer to separate the warriors, women and children too seriously either. Both men continuously killed indiscriminately and destroyed all valuable property that the Indians left behind when fleeing for their safety. Sheridan's and Custer's destruction left the Sioux with no food, clothing, or shelter, and very few warriors. The remaining chiefs had no choice but to surrender in order to protect their women and children. When Tosawi, chief of the Comanches surrendered, and upon meeting Sheridan announced that he was, "Tosawi, good Indian," Sheridan replied "[t]he only good Indians I ever saw were dead."^{xxvi} At Sheridan's orders the remaining Indians were relegated to live on a small portion of the land in the state of Nebraska and accept handouts at the whim of their government representative.

The Black Hills were given to the Sioux Nation because, as Brown writes, "the Great Father considered the hills worthless." But to the Sioux Nation the Black Hills were "the center of the

world, the place of gods and holy mountains, where warriors went to speak with the Great Spirit and await visions.”^{xxvii} Regardless of what the Great Father thought of the Black Hills—worthless—and what the Sioux considered the Black Hills to be—sacred—when gold was discovered in the Black Hills, the white settlers fought to claim the shiny yellow substance.

Many historians consider the war for the Black Hills one of the last of the Indian Wars. Although it was not the last, it was a triumphant victory for the Sioux Nation. It was where Custer and the Seventh Cavalry met their fate. It was where the largest Indian force came together and slaughtered their opponents. J.S. Radagaugh sums it up best when he writes in his essay *Custer Explores the Black Hills 1874*: “In that year General George Armstrong Custer set the stage for the most famous Indian massacre in American military annals. His reward for invading the Black Hills in 1874 was annihilation of his entire immediate command.”^{xxviii} After the battle of 1874 and what has been famously called “Custer’s Last Stand,” government officials treated all Indians as prisoners of war. Chiefs of other Indian Nations were either arrested or hunted down and killed, and were always reported as resisting arrest.

What if the Sioux Nation or any Indian Nation had never signed a treaty? Imagine what would have happened? Alexie did, and he did it through the dreams of Thomas and Junior.

In Thomas’s dream, he is a Sioux. He, along with the “entire Sioux Nation,” watch “three cowboys string telegraph wire across the Great Plains.” When these cowboys are confronted by the Sioux, they announce “We come in friendship.” However, in Thomas’s dream the Sioux have never seen a cowboy, nor are they familiar with the power of telegraph wire. Again, the cowboys announce “We come in friendship.” Three brave Sioux believe the cowboys, dismount their horses and grab the telegraph wire. The

cowboys crank the generator and “[t]hose three Indians danced crazily, unable to release the wire, and the rest of the Sioux Nation rode off in a superstitious panic.”^{xxix}

In Junior’s dream “[h]e rode a horse along the rise of the Columbia River, leading a large group of warriors.” Junior and his warriors can hear the Cavalry bugles, but cannot see the Cavalry. Shots are fired, the warriors and horses are shot down, and only Junior is standing. When the soldiers appear they arrest Junior for “the murder of eighteen settlers this past year,” and he is to be hanged as his punishment.” However, Junior’s life can be spared if he signs a blank sheet of parchment, and he is handed a pen to sign his name. Only, in Junior’s dream he throws the pen away. And as the pen revolves through the air “the sun rose and set; snow fell and melted. Salmon leapt twenty feet above the surface of the Columbia River.”^{xxx}

Although Thomas’s and Junior’s dreams are separate, they both signify what many Indian chiefs and the people of their Nation believed: had they never seen white men, things would be as before and that their way of life would not be so disrupted. They also believed that if they ignored the white men, they would eventually go away. Many Indian chiefs and warriors such as, Red Cloud, Roman Nose, White Horse, Bull Bear, and other Dog Soldier chiefs scoffed at treaties and refused to sign them. In knowing about other Indian Nations that had signed the treaties, they also “understood [what] was in the treaty and what was actually written therein after Congress ratified it were like two horses whose colorations did not match.”^{xxxi} And just as in Junior’s dream, many of these chiefs and warriors met their fate in death as a result.

It's Popular to be Indian, enit?

And my hair is blonde/But I'm Indian in my bones/And my skin is white/But I'm Indian in my bones/And it don't matter who you are/You can be Indian in your bones.^{xxxvii}

Sherman Alexie, *Reservation Blues*

Throughout *Reservation Blues*, the band members of Coyote Springs live in a constant remembrance of how they and their ancestors were relegated to live on the reservation and the historical atrocities that put them there. Unlike their ancestors, the band members of Coyote Springs live with another creeping fact: that in the twentieth century it is popular to be Indian. Claiming Indian ancestry is a popular phenomenon that Alexie does not ignore.

Early in the novel, when Thomas Builds-the-Fire, Victor and Junior rehearsed as a band without a name, Alexie writes that:

The gossip about the band spread from reservation to reservation. All kinds of Indians showed up: Yakama, Lummi, Mokah, Snohomish, Coeur d'Alene. Thomas and his band had developed a small following before they ever played a gig. Indians talked about the band at powwows and feasts, at softball tournaments and education conferences.^{xxxiii}

Eventually the band calls themselves Coyote Springs, and Chess and Checkers Warm Water, two Flathead Indian sisters, join the band. For the time being, the guys rehearse in Irene's Grocery Store, which had been condemned and boarded up for years. They rehearse cover songs that were most popular to them: Buddy Holly, the Sex Pistols, Simon and Garfunkel, Aretha Franklin, and all the recordings of Hank Williams "because that's what their fathers

sang when drunk.”^{xxxiv} While the guys remain a local reservation band, white strangers began to appear on the reservation to hear them play. However, Alexie writes that those white strangers were “expecting to hear some ancient Indian wisdom” chant. Two white strangers in particular, Betty and Veronica, appeared and “showed up at every rehearsal.” Alexie describes them as both having long blonde hair and wearing “too much Indian jewelry.”^{xxxv}

Coyote Springs had mysteriously achieved overnight popularity without ever leaving the reservation. And just as mysteriously, they came to the attention of Cavalry Records and record producers, Phil Sheridan and George Wright. After hearing the band rehearse a few songs, Sheridan and Wright fax the Cavalry Records president and CEO, Mr. Armstrong. In part they tell Armstrong that Chess and Checkers are beautiful and they both have “that exotic animalistic women thing.” They go on to say that:

Overall, this band looks and sounds Indian. They all have dark skin. Chess and Checkers, and Junior all have long hair. Thomas has a big nose, and Victor has many scars. We’re looking at some genuine crossover appeal. We can really dress this group up, give them war paint, feathers, etc., and really play up the Indian angle. I think this band could prove to be very lucrative for Cavalry Records.^{xxxvi}

Janine Richardson points out in her essay “Magic and Memory” that Alexie’s use of the three most prominent historical figures from the nineteenth century, General’s George Wright, Philip Sheridan and George Custer, is very much like an unresolved war that has seeped into the “waking lives” of Coyote Springs. As readers we have to keep in mind that these three historical figures “led many a bloody, genocidal campaign against the Indians.” However, in the twentieth century “they are out to co-opt Indians

and make them a commodity for the mass market,” she says.^{xxxvii} To dress Indians up as Indians is at best absurd, but what Alexie is addressing here is America’s infatuation with the Indian culture. The stereotyping of the members of Coyote Springs is an example of the misrepresentation that makes being an Indian popular.

It is hard to pinpoint when being or becoming an Indian achieved popularity. John Miller’s article, “Honest Injun”, in the National Review writes that “between 1960 and 2000, the number of Americans claiming Indian ancestry on their census forms jumped by a factor of six. Neither birthrates nor counting methodologies can account for this explosive growth.”^{xxxviii} Miller goes on to speculate that this jump in the census records is from “professional imposters who have built entire careers” in claiming they were Indian.

The most prominent professional imposter who claimed he was an Indian was Iron Eyes Cody. He claimed that his father was Cherokee and his mother was Cree. In fact, Iron Eyes Cody was the son of Italian immigrants and his birth name was Espera DeCorti. Although Iron Eyes had played in a number of cowboy and Indian films since the 1930s, his claim to fame came in a 1970s television commercial as “the crying Indian” for Keep America Beautiful, an environmental ad campaign.^{xxxix} The stereotype of “the crying Indian” that Iron Eyes portrayed is America’s romantic notion of who Indians are not: they are not polluters of the environment. Perhaps the most common notion of how popular it is to be Indian is summed up best when Betty tells Thomas and Chess “White people want to be Indians. You have all the things we don’t have. You live at peace with the earth. You are so wise.”^{xl} David Lewis labels this belief as a “gross culture misinterpretation.” He also points out that these ideas deny Indians “their humanity, culture, history, and most importantly, their modernity.”^{xli}

Cavalry Records did not want a modern Indian band. And for various reasons, Coyote Springs loses their chance to become the “lucrative cross over” that the company wanted. Instead, towards the end of the novel, Cavalry Records asks Betty and Veronica to record for them. As Sheridan sees it, the two women “had some grandmothers or something that were Indian,” and since Betty and Veronica have been on the reservation, they “have got the Indian experience down.” Sheridan gives the two women an image of what they are to become by describing to them what they would look like after they have been in a tanning booth, with a “little plastic surgery on those cheekbones”^{xlii} and hair dyed black. Alexie writes that Betty and Veronica “could hear drums.” With a little cosmetic surgery, the two women, or anyone for that matter, can “be” an Indian.

Alexie puts another twist on the popularity of being Indian. After losing their chance at stardom with Cavalry Records and before returning to their reservation, Coyote Springs meet a young white man with the name Dakota emblazoned across his guitar case. Coyote Springs questions this young man about the name. He proudly proclaims his name is Dakota. He catches their perplexed stare and tells them that his “dad is way into the Indian thing. He’s part Indian from his grandmother. She was a full-blood Cherokee.” Not too sure what to make of this white man named Dakota, Chess asks the young man that if his dad was Cherokee, “then why did he name you Dakota?” The young man is baffled by Chess’s question. She explains that “Cherokee and Dakota are two different tribes,” and Victor adds, “[y]ou ain’t supposed to name yourself after a whole damn tribe, especially if it ain’t your tribe to begin with.” In an act of defiance, the young white man says, “You act like I’m stealing something from you. . . . I didn’t steal anything.”^{xliii} And perhaps he didn’t steal anything. He didn’t claim how proud he was of his Indian heritage as his

father did. However, he took what was given to him without question and without knowing its history.

Irony and cynicism play a strong part in how Alexie capitalizes on how others use their concept of the Indian to their advantage. People accept the stereotypes of minorities, such as the Indians, unquestioningly. But stereotypes show only the painted surface of reality. People try to don the stereotype of others, and in the end, look and act ridiculous.

The Past that Still Haunts the Present

You'll have to get off the land. The plows'll go through the dooryard.

And now the squatting men stood up angrily. Granpa took up the land

and he had to kill the Indians and drive them away.^{xliv}

John Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*, 1939

C-SPAN's American Writers: A Journey Through History series was broadcast on cable television in 2001. The *C-SPAN* series brought together writers, scholars, and historians to examine and discuss books by thirty-nine authors in American literature who have impacted the nation's history. Each author's spotlight was two and half hours and recorded on location of its subject.

The series began with a discussion on William Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*. Bradford and members of his congregation were English Separatists or Pilgrims seeking their religious freedom. Although their destination was for the English colony in Jamestown, Virginia, established in 1607, after two months at sea they landed on dry soil that would eventually become Plymouth, Massachusetts, established in 1620, which made it the second English colony. In the program's discussion of Bradford and *Of Plymouth Plantation*, guest speaker and historian,

Rev. Peter Gomes expressed that without the help of the Wampanoag Indians, Bradford and his congregation would not have survived their first cold winter in Massachusetts. However, Rev. Gomes quotes Bradford as having said he also believed that his mission for coming to this new land was to “plant the gospel here among the corn and that there might be those among the Indians who might leave aside their heathenishness ways and take up the cross.”^{xlv} In response to Bradford’s words and belief that the Indians were heathens, guest speaker Linda Coombs, a Wampanoag Indian who is also associate director of the Wampanoag Indian program at Plymouth Plantation, pointed out that those English settlers such as Bradford, blinded by their faith, failed to acknowledge that the Wampanoag was a nation of people.^{xlvi} Coombs went on to say that as a nation of people “we had our own community and government structure; our own political structure.... The English coming here and founding a country, [when] there was one here has never been acknowledged.”^{xlvii} When more colonists arrived, they came for different reasons than the Pilgrims. But they came with the same attitude as Bradford: they were superior and the Indians were heathens.

Between 1630 and 1650, with the arrival of more English settlers, the census for the Massachusetts Bay colony had grown to 50,400 and the Indian population such as the Wampanoag, Nausea, Mashpee, Pocasset and Pequot had either dwindled in size from war with the English settlers or by being pushed into unclaimed territory.

The *C-SPAN’s American Writers* series was shown in chronological order. Writers such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and the journals of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (Lewis and Clark) were all a part of the program. While the focus of the discussion and

examination were the writers and the impact they had in deciding the fate of America as a new nation, the question or problem, as many of them believed it to be, was what to do with the Indians? While the Colonists fought for their independence from Britain, they also fought the Indians for the land they wanted now to claim as their own.

We know that by the time President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark on an expedition in 1805, the land west of the Mississippi was contested terrain. James Ronda, guest speaker for the *C-SPAN* discussion on the *Lewis and Clark Journals of the Expedition*, stated that “Lewis and Clark are told very clearly by the president of the United States you have one mission: to find that connection between Atlantic waters and Pacific waters, and [take] the Columbia” to its end, which is now Astoria, Oregon.^{xlviii} By the time the Lewis and Clark expedition was completed, they had established and paved a way for exploration and settlement into the West. Lewis and Clark came into contact with well over fifty Indian groups on their expedition. Ruby and Brown write that the famed explorers discovered that Columbia was “not only a place of swirling waters, but of swirling populations, where interior Indians came with horses and skins to traffic with lower Columbia river peoples.”^{xlix} Lewis and Clark had come into contact with the Spokane Indians and this contested terrain would soon be populated with white settlers.

In the United States, expansion of the Great Plains and the problem of what to do with the Indians can be put in one word: treaties. One of the last *C-SPAN American Writers* series that specifically looked at an Indian writer and Indians in particular was Black Elk and his book *Black Elk Speaks*. The program was broadcast from Little Bighorn Battle National Monument in Montana. In 1863, he was thirteen when one of the last battles in the Indian Wars mentioned earlier in this essay took place. Black

Elk was too young to have fought in the battle of Little Bighorn in 1876, but he was a witness to this battle. He was also a participant and a living witness to tell of the Battle at Wounded Knee in 1890. After the signing of a number of treaties between the United States and the Indians for the Great Plains, roughly the areas of South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana, the treaties were broken and disregarded. Don Fixco, guest speaker and historian, on the *C-SPAN* show, explained what a treaty is and how many times the United States broke their signed treaties. He said:

When treaties are signed, we are really talking about an agreement that both sides are supposed to respect. That, in international law, the concept is one sovereign signing with another sovereign make an agreement. And just because one side tries to abrogate that does not necessarily void that agreement. There are 389 ratified U.S. Indian treaties and agreements (some scholars says there are 371). But most of those have been disregarded by the U.S. government for the rush for more land, by war, gold and natural resources.¹

After the treaties were broken, what ensued is what many historians have labeled as the Plains Indian Conflict. From 1864 to 1890 battles between the United States and Indians read as follows: 1864 Massacre at Sand Creek, Colorado; 1865 Plains War, Nebraska; 1866-8 Red Cloud's War, Nebraska; 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn, Montana; 1877 Wolf Mountain Kattle, Oregon; and 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre, South Dakota. The massacres can be neatly categorized as genocide by bureaucracy.

In 1890 the War Department placed Big Foot "on the list of fomenters of disturbances." The Seventh U.S. Cavalry were sent into South Dakota mountains to arrest Big Foot, a Minneconjou Lakota chief. Big Foot along with "120 men and 230 women and

children” were rounded up and led to a creek famously known as Wounded Knee. Big Foot and his men were ordered to give all their arms to the troops. In the process a shot was fired and the troopers fired volley after volley into the camp of the Lakotas. When the shooting stopped, an estimated count of “three hundred of the original 350 men, women and children were dead.”^{li} Before many had died, they performed a Ghost Dance that they believed would protect them from the cavalry bullets.

While these battles are well recorded and documented in history books and literature, and while the battles did not specifically involved the Spokane Indians, their repercussions have been detrimental to the Spokanes. And Alexie does not let his readers of *Reservation Blues* forget them. He gives Thomas Builds-the-Fire the voice to tell Chess Warm Water a story:

We were both at Wounded Knee when the Ghost Dancers were slaughtered. We were slaughtered at Wounded Knee. I know there were whole different tribes there, no Spokanes or Flatheads, but we were still somehow there. There was a part of every Indian bleeding in the snow. All those soldiers killed us in the name of God, enit? They shouted ‘Jesus Christ’ as they ran swords through our bellies. Can you feel the pain still, late at night, when you’re trying to sleep, when you’re praying to God whose name was used to justify the slaughter?

I can see you running like a shadow, just outside the body of an Indian women who looks like you, until she was shot by an eighteen-year-old white kid from Missouri. He jumps off the horse, falls on her and you, the Indian, the shadow. He cuts and tears with his sword, his hands, his teeth. He

ate you both up like he was a coyote. They all ate us like we were mice, rabbits, flightless birds. They ate us whole.^{lii}

While Thomas relates only the Wounded Knee Massacre, he is incorporating all the massacres into his story. No, Thomas and Chess were not at Wounded Knee, nor were they a part of the Wampanoag Nation. They were not around to meet Lewis and Clark on their expedition. But they are connected to what happened in the past. From shore to shore, what happened to one Nation is a part of every Nation. Their historical legacies merge into one.

Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Blues* is a work of fiction infused with characters living on the Spokane Indian Reservation in the twentieth century. However, Alexie doesn't let his characters or his readers forget what happened in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Its legacy and all the legendary historical phantoms remain with him and his characters as long as he and they can tell what really happened. Alexie puts it best when he says: [A]ll those bodies were dragged quickly and quietly into the twentieth century while their souls were left behind somewhere in the nineteenth.^{liiii}

Notes

ⁱ Daniel Grassian, Understanding Sherman Alexie (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 6.

ⁱⁱ Dave Welch, "Revising Sherman Alexie," 15 May 2007, <<http://www.powells.com/authors/shermanalexie.html>> (3 Aug. 2007).

ⁱⁱⁱ Welch.

^{iv} Grassian, 14.

^v Sherman Alexie, Reservation Blues (New York: Warner, 1996), 7. *Reservation Blues* was originally published by Atlantic Monthly Press, New York, 1995).

- vi Alexie, 45.
- vii Alexie, 12.
- viii Alexie, 5.
- ix Alexie, 101-3.
- x James Cox, "Muting White Noise: The Subversion of Popular Culture Narratives of Conquest in Sherman Alexie's Fiction," Studies in American Indian Literatures 9.4 (1997): 52-70.
- xi Theodore Roosevelt, The Winning of the West: From the Alleghanies to the Mississippi 1769-1776 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Son, 1889), 90.
- xii Alexie, 3.
- xiii Robert Ruby and John Brown, The Spokane Indians: Children of the Rising Sun (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 116.
- xiv Ruby and Brown, 147.
- xv Ruby and Brown, 88.
- xvi Ruby and Brown, 129.
- xvii Ruby and Brown, 130.
- xviii Ruby and Brown, 134-5.
- xix Ruby and Brown, 136.
- xx Alexie, 154.
- xxi Alexie, 154-5.
- xxii Alexie, 117.
- xxiii Jim Messerschmidt, The Trial of Leonard Peltier (Boston: South End Press, 1983).
- xxiv Dee Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Owl Books, 2001), 169.
- xxv Brown, 169.
- xxvi Brown, 170.
- xxvii Brown, 276.
- xxviii J.S. Radabaugh, "Custer Explores the Black Hill 1874," Military Affairs 26.4 (1962): 162-170 <<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0026-3931%28196224%2926%3A4%ACETBH1%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8>> (4 Jan 2008).
- xxix Alexie, 70-1.
- xxx Alexie, 142-5.
- xxxi Brown, 146.
- xxxii Alexie, 295.
- xxxiii Alexie, 44.
- xxxiv Alexie, 45.
- xxxv Alexie, 41.

- ^{xxxvi} Alexie, 44.
- ^{xxxvii} Janine Richardson, "Magic and Memory in Sherman Alexie's Reservation Blues," Studies in American Indian Literature 9.4 (1997): 39-51.
- ^{xxxviii} John Miller, "Honest Injun?" National Review 28 March 2005, 34-36.
- ^{xxxix} David Rich Lewis, "Native Americans and the Environment," American Indian Quarterly 19.3 (1995): 423-450 <<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici?=0095-182X%28199522%2919%3A3%3C423%3ANAATEA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6>> (9 Sept 2007).
- ^{xl} Alexie, 168.
- ^{xli} Lewis, 439.
- ^{xlii} Alexie, 269.
- ^{xliii} Alexie, 259-60.
- ^{xliv} John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath (New York: Penguin, 2002): 33.
- ^{xliv} William Bradford: the Mayflower Compact, host Susan Swain, 2 hr. 30 min., C-SPAN, 2001, videocassette.
- ^{xlvi} Bradford. Note: Rev. Gomes explains why the Pilgrims spelled Plimouth with an "I." He says, "Plimouth is the English town in Devon and it derives from the fact that Plimouth was located at the mouth of the River Plim. It also happens to be the town, the last English port from which the Mayflower sailed.
- ^{xlvi} Bradford.
- ^{xlvi} Lewis and Clark: Journals of the Expedition, host Brian Lamb, 2 hr. 30 min., C-SPAN, 2001, videocassette.
- ^{xlvi} Ruby and Brown, 36.
- ^l Black Elk: Black Elk Speaks, host Brian Lamb, 2 hr. 30 min., C-SPAN, 2001, videocassette. Note: The number of treaties between the U.S. and Indians is difficult to estimate. For example, Francis Paul Prucha in American Indian Treaties: the History of a Political Anomaly writes: "Between 1778, when the first treaty was signed with the Nez Perces, there were 367 ratified Indian treaties and 6 more whose status is questionable. In addition, a considerable number of treaties that were signed by the Indian chiefs and the federal commissioners were never ratified by the Senate and the president" (1).
- ^{li} Brown, 444.
- ^{lii} Alexie, 167-8.
- ^{liii} Alexie, 219.

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Adriana Lucía Ross

Major: Spanish
Minor: Business

Mentor:
Dr. Anne Fountain

Isabel Allende: ¿Cronista o
Novelista?

Biography

Adriana Ross graduated magna cum laude in December 2007 with a major in Spanish and a minor in Business. She was born in Colombia and came to the United States seven years ago. She has lived in Korea, Puerto Rico, San Diego, and Washington D.C. Adriana has worked as a freelance reporter for several Hispanic newspapers in the Bay Area, and as a Spanish translator, teacher, and tutor. She wants to pursue a doctorate in Hispanic Languages and Literatures. Her interests are 19th century to modern Latin American prose and poetry, lyrics as a mean of literary expression, and film.

Isabel Allende: ¿Cronista o Novelista

Introducción

Inés del alma mía es la más reciente publicación de Isabel Allende. La tercera en su serie de novelas históricas toma lugar

durante el descubrimiento y la conquista de Chile y del pueblo mapuche. A diferencia de sus dos novelas históricas anteriores—*Hija de la Fortuna* y *Retrato en Sepia*—esta última se basa en un personaje histórico real, Doña Inés de Suárez, la primera mujer española en Chile. Aunque posterior a la celebración del quinto centenario del descubrimiento de América, muchos novelistas latinoamericanos han revisado y revaluado las crónicas y relaciones de la conquista dándole una nueva imagen tanto a conquistadores como conquistados, según Kimberle S. López “the majority of the novels in this corpus have European male protagonists representing historically documented explorers and conquistadors, or fictional foot soldiers and cabin boys who accompany them on their expeditions” (9). Sin embargo, a pesar de la poca evidencia histórica de mujeres españolas partícipes en la conquista, desde la década de los sesenta ha surgido un gran interés entre escritores latinoamericanos por rescatar el rol de la mujer. Por ejemplo, la escritora argentina Josefina Cruz publicó en 1960 una novela basada en la vida de Mencía de Calderón, famosa por traer mujeres españolas al Nuevo Mundo para casarse con los conquistadores (López 9). Hoy, Isabel Allende se une a esta ola de revisión y reevaluación.

Algunos críticos sugieren que con *Inés*, Allende se consagra como “la cronista del siglo XXI de la conquista de Chile”, buscando con esta obra reivindicar y enaltecer, una vez más, el papel de la mujer y al mismo tiempo devolver la voz silenciada al indígena (Fountain, Amazon Book Review). Sin embargo para otros, *Inés* es una novela más sobre dicha época la cual resalta el heroísmo español y pasa por alto el sufrimiento indígena, limitándose a mostrar una simple realidad.

“...in this novel as in many others that have been written about the Spanish conquest, is that while it may seem heroic from the Spanish point of view, it is anything but heroic from the viewpoint of the

indigenous people who were slaughtered, enslaved and otherwise broken to the will of Charles I of Spain and his ambitious, ruthless emissaries. To say this isn't merely to indulge in present-day political correctness, though perhaps there is a bit of that (Yardley, *Washington Post*).”

En contra de las ideas de Yardley y Fountain, con esta obra no considero a Allende como “cronista” ni creo que la autora intenta dar una versión políticamente correcta de la historia oficial. Sin embargo, el comentario de Yardley se podría aplicar a las dos publicaciones anteriores sobre la vida de Inés, *La Condoresa* (1968) por Josefina Cruz y *Ay mamá Inés* (1993) por Jorge Guzmán. En la primera, Cruz refleja la situación socio-política de la mujer en Argentina, mientras que en la novela de Guzmán, Inés se queda en la sombra de la figura épica y trágica del conquistador Pedro de Valdivia.

A diferencia de *La Condoresa* y de *Ay mamá Inés*, *Inés del alma mía* logra sacar de la sombra a su protagonista y no intenta reflejar la situación socio-política de la mujer chilena actual. Se podría decir que esta novela aparentemente tiene dos objetivos: primero revisar la historia oficial, dándole voz a la mujer y al pueblo mapuche, y segundo reivindicar el papel de la mujer, reconociendo su activa participación en la conquista de Chile. Desafortunadamente, la *Inés* de Allende da la impresión de ser la repetición de *Hija de la Fortuna* en una época distinta y con personajes diferentes. Este ensayo pretende analizar la obra de Allende desde dos puntos de vista. Primero estudia el tema de la “intrahistoria” como herramienta para la revisión y reevaluación de la historia oficial. Segundo, utiliza el concepto del *Bildungsroman* femenino como medio para reivindicar el rol de Inés de Suárez en la historia, denotando la falta de originalidad de la autora para lograr su objetivo al comparar ésta con la estructura de la obra, la trama y los personajes de *Hija de la Fortuna*.

El estudio a continuación se desarrollará de la siguiente manera: Primero, se hará una reseña de ambas novelas. Segundo, se analizará la evolución de la novela histórica y el rol de la intrahistoria como elemento clave de esa evolución. Tercero se analizará ejemplos de intrahistoria en *Inés* para dar voz al pueblo mapuche y a la mujer. Cuarto se explicará el concepto del *Bildungsroman* femenino contemporáneo, y por último se comparará a *Inés* con *Hija*, resaltando sus cercanas similitudes.

I. Reseña de *Hija* y de *Inés*

Situada entre los años 1500 a 1553, la novela de Allende relata la vida de Inés de Suárez, una mujer española del común que llega a convertirse en conquistadora y gobernadora de Chile. Inés es originaria de Plasencia en donde se gana la vida cosiendo. Como toda mujer de su época, su única aspiración es conseguirse un marido que la mantenga y le dé el estatus quo tanto anhelado. Pero como muchas mujeres, Inés se enamora locamente de un hombre atractivo, enamorado, buen amante pero bueno para nada. Un “don Juan” como su nombre lo indica.

Juan¹ de Málaga es un jugador empedernido que como la mayoría de los hombres españoles del siglo XVI se embarca al Nuevo Mundo en busca de riqueza fácil. Después de meses de no saber nada de su marido, Inés, acompañada por su sobrina, emprende el viaje para buscarlo. Durante su búsqueda, Inés enfrenta las vicisitudes del viaje y las de ser mujer entre una tripulación y un mundo predominantemente masculino. Después de

¹ El nombre real del primer esposo de Inés no se conoce a ciencia cierta.

“Mariño de Lobera was to describe Inés as a ‘native of Plasencia and married in Málaga’...A modern writer went so far as to give her husband a name and the title of ‘Captain’, referring to Inés as ‘Inés Suárez de Figueroa’...A novelist speculated that Inés possibly ‘was married to one Agustín Padilla, who was from Plasencia and who died during the sea voyage’ (Nauman 6).

una ardua travesía a través de las tierras americanas siguiendo el rastro de su marido, Inés llega al Perú confirmando finalmente que Juan ha muerto y que es una mujer libre oficialmente. Durante su estadía en Perú, Inés conoce a Pedro de Valdivia, futuro conquistador de Chile, de quien se enamora perdidamente. De aquí en adelante, la novela cuenta la historia de la conquista del territorio mapuche a través de la historia de amor entre Inés y Valdivia.

En comparación con *Inés*, la trama de *Hija de la Fortuna*, sigue una estructura similar. Eliza, la protagonista de la novela, se enamora profundamente de Joaquín Andieta, un hombre del común como Juan de Málaga, quien se va a California en busca de riqueza durante la época de la “fiebre del oro.” Poco tiempo después de la partida de Joaquín, Eliza se da cuenta que está embarazada y decide—como Inés—emprender el viaje a California para ir a buscarlo. Eliza, al igual que Inés, debe afrontar las vicisitudes del viaje y de la sociedad predominantemente machista y masculina. Después de mucho vagar por el territorio californiano, Eliza—al igual que Inés—finalmente descubre que Joaquín ha muerto, abriendo paso a un nuevo romance.

Aunque en *Hija* Allende toma una época histórica real pero una protagonista ficticia, lo que le da Allende la libertad de narrar los hechos históricos de una manera anacrónica, en *Inés*, la autora se aferra al orden cronológico de los eventos históricos ya que el personaje principal es real. Así pues, *Inés* genera dos tipos de apreciaciones. Primero, Allende logra revisar la historia oficial y la reescribe a través de la intrahistoria con una vívida narrativa que hace que el lector experimente en carne propia lo sucedido. Segundo, la novela deja un vacío en lo que aparenta ser su principal objetivo, reivindicar y enaltecer el rol femenino en la historia. Como ya se dijo anteriormente, es una trama repetitiva en donde la autora utiliza elementos típicos de su narrativa como los

estereotipos románticos del hombre y la mujer, el sexo, la pasión, y el rompimiento de la reglas convencionales de la sociedad como símbolo de libertad femenina.

Antes de iniciar con la primera parte de mi análisis, es útil mirar la evolución de la novela histórica como base para el desarrollo de la “nueva” novela histórica latinoamericana, y del papel que juega la *intrahistoria* dentro de ese desarrollo para denotar el cambio ideológico que se presenta en la novela histórica latinoamericana de finales del siglo XX y que traspasa al siglo XXI.

II. Intrahistoria y la novela histórica

La novela histórica surge en Europa a principios del siglo XIX como medio para recrear eventos del pasado. En España, toma principal auge durante los años de la democracia con los *Episodios Nacionales* de Benito Pérez Galdós porque con este género ya no se busca recrear sino que se busca revisar y recontar los hechos desde una perspectiva individual. “Galdós solía decir que él había ido a la historia para buscar en el pasado una explicación de la circunstancia histórica en que vivía: la revolución fallada” (Ciplijauskaité 124). Aunque este género aparece en América Latina hasta finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, su propósito inicial “aspiraba contribuir a fundar los mitos, arquetipos, creencias y valores en que se creyó reconocer la identidad nacional” (Aínsa 11). Es por esto que las novelas sobre la Revolución Mexicana narran las hazañas de los héroes revolucionarios mexicanos con el fin de acentuar rasgos de su identidad.

Pero a fines de la década de los 70, emerge la “nueva” novela histórica latinoamericana, la cual no sólo se enfoca en definir una identidad o reflejar las transformaciones sociales y políticas del presente utilizando como herramienta los eventos del pasado, sino como producto de la posmodernidad. “La nueva

ficción se ha embarcado en la aventura de releer la historia, recorriendo con una mirada crítica el período colonia, el de la ilustración y, con un sentido revisionista, el siglo XIX e inicios del XX” (Aínsa 75). Sin embargo, durante este proceso evolutivo y creativo de la novela histórica tanto en Europa como en América Latina la mujer no se destaca sobremanera. Según Biruté Ciplijauskaitė la escasa presencia de autoras y personajes femeninos se debe a que ellas “invade[n] la poesía de cubierta a cubierta, pero está[n] poco menos que ausente[s] en la historia”² (123). Esta ausencia de la mujer en el caso de la conquista y colonización del Nuevo Mundo se hace evidente no sólo con la escasez de datos históricos sino también por la falta de protagonismo femenino en las crónicas y relaciones, debido no porque no hubieran habido mujeres sino por la omisión de su papel por parte de cronistas e historiadores. Aunque el estudio que hace Ciplijauskaitė de la novela histórica se enmarca entre los años de 1970 a 1985, la base teórica que utiliza se considera aún relevante en el siglo XXI para el análisis de la estructura literaria de recientes novelas históricas como *Inés del alma mía*.

Durante las dos últimas décadas del siglo XX, la aceptación definitiva de la mujer por la sociedad como ser independiente y autónomo, y como protagonista del escenario político podría considerarse como un “nuevo” movimiento social en Latinoamérica. La novela histórica femenina que surge a raíz de este movimiento tiene dos objetivos. El primero es estudiar los motivos de la ausencia del papel de la mujer en la historia, reivindicando y enaltecendo su rol como ser activo de la sociedad. El segundo es devolver la voz silenciada al oprimido. Seres participes en los sucesos históricos—tales como pueblos indígenas,

² Ciplijauskaitė toma la cita original de Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, p 45.

diezmados por las guerras y las enfermedades, las prostitutas y los niños desamparados—que han sido dejados al margen de la historia oficial. Para ello, “las autoras buscan un estilo original que ponga en evidencia el ‘yo’ femenino en su complejidad y permita percibir y comprender los muelles interiores que l[a] empujan a la acción y a asumir ciertas actitudes” (Ciplijauskaité 124). Es aquí, en la búsqueda de esa voz original y personalizada donde Allende utiliza la *intrahistoria*³. El uso de la intrahistoria ya venía desde décadas anteriores siendo una característica común de la “nueva” novela histórica latinoamericana. Es a través de esta que Allende logra en *Inés* reconstruir la vida cotidiana del pueblo mapuche, y de la mujer como herramienta para revisar los hechos históricos y para dar voz a estos personajes marginados.

Después de haber explicado la evolución de la novela histórica como base para el desarrollo de la “nueva” novela histórica latinoamericana y del papel que juega la intrahistoria como parte del cambio ideológico por el que ésta pasa, podemos entrar a la primera parte del análisis.

III. Intrahistoria y el papel del pueblo mapuche

En *Inés*, Allende recrea la vida cotidiana del pueblo que ha quedado al margen de los registros pero que ha sido participe de

³ Miguel de Unamuno fue uno de los pioneros en introducir el concepto de la *intrahistoria* para resaltar el papel del “otro” o del marginado. En su obra, *En torno al casticismo* (1902) Unamuno recrea “la vida diaria del pueblo llano que transcurre a lo largo de la historia por debajo, o al margen, de los grandes acontecimientos registrados por la historia oficial” (Bianco ix). Un siglo más tarde, Fernando Aínsa re-bautiza el concepto de Unamuno con el nombre de micro-historia al que, como Unamuno, lo define como el “esfuerzo por reconstruir la vida cotidiana de un pueblo desposeído de archivos y de personalidades ilustres” (Aínsa 40).

los sucesos históricos oficiales, describiendo de manera vívida las costumbres de los mapuche.

“Las pequeñas fogatas ardían en la niebla, iluminando el paisaje lechoso del alba. Los jóvenes volvieron del río, donde habían nadado en aguas heladas, y se pintaron las caras y los cuerpos con los colores rituales, amarillo y azul. Los caciques se colocaron sus mantos de lana bordada, celestes, negros, blancos, se colgaron al pecho las *toquicuras*, hachas de piedra, signo de su poder, se coronaron de plumas de garza, ñandú y cóndor, mientras las machis quemaban yerbas aromáticas y preparaban el *rewe*, escalera espiritual para hablar con Ngenechén” (*Inés* 216).

Allende utiliza la intrahistoria al describir la preparación de los nativos chilenos prelude a la toma y destrucción de la ciudad de Santiago en 1543. En contraste con las crónicas escritas por los conquistadores de la época, las cuales se limitan a describir las batallas y el heroísmo español, Allende le devuelve a los mapuche el protagonismo oscurecido por la historia oficial. En *Inés*, la autora intenta ir más allá de la mera narración de los eventos. Allende presta del pasado los hechos registrados por los cronistas, los revisa y reescribe mostrando la cara del “enemigo.” Con la descripción de los rituales indígenas para la guerra, Allende intenta a la vez devolver la voz al pueblo mapuche y resaltar su activa participación en la defensa del territorio.

Otro ejemplo de intrahistoria en la novela para revisar la historia oficial es la descripción de los padecimientos de los indígenas. Allende describe vívida y detalladamente cómo la población fue diezmada a través de maltratos y enfermedades. Cuenta sobre las atrocidades cometidas por los españoles tales como la mutilación de manos y narices, y la violación de las mujeres, hechos que no se mencionan en las crónicas de la época ni en las cartas de Pedro de Valdivia al Rey Carlos V. Por último,

Allende intenta devolver a los nativos chileno su identidad a través de la defensa de sus tradiciones.

“*Mapu-ché*, “gente de tierra”, así se llaman ellos mismos, aunque ahora los denominan araucanos, nombre más sonoro, dado por el poeta Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga, que no sé de dónde los sacó, tal vez de Arauco, un lugar del sur. Yo pienso seguir llamándolos mapuche—la palabra no tiene plural en castellano—hasta que me muera, porque así se dicen ellos mismos. No me parece justo cambiarles el nombre para facilitar la rima: castellano, hermano, cristiano, y así durante trescientas cuartilla” (*Inés* 83).

Al enfatizar el uso del nombre mapuche, Allende está devolviendo el valor cultural de llamar a los indígenas por su nombre original y criticando a la vez el poema épico de *La Araucana*. Además, a diferencia de la crónica de Góngora Marmolejo y el poema de Ercilla en donde sólo se mencionan unas cuantas palabras en la lengua de los mapuche, Allende utiliza 22 términos en *mapudungu*.

En síntesis, Allende recrea los eventos de la conquista de Chile utilizando la intrahistoria para revisar y reevaluar la historia oficial resaltando el rol del pueblo mapuche. Sin embargo, es claro que el principal objetivo de esta novela es rescatar y reivindicar el papel de la mujer en la historia oficial.

IV. A. *Inés del alma mía*, Intrahistoria y el papel de la mujer

Además de recrear la vida cotidiana del pueblo, dos formas en que se puede utilizar la intrahistoria para revisar y reevaluar la historia oficial destacando el papel de la mujer es a través de la “autoficción” y de la creación de personaje ficticios. La autoficción, se basa en un personaje real histórico pero hace una simulación de la vida del personaje, mientras que los personajes ficticios aunque no siendo parte de la historia oficial representan a aquellos que sí lo fueron. Ambos casos se observan en *Inés*.

Allende utiliza la “*autoficción*” al narrativizar los primeros años de vida de Inés. Este ejemplo de intrahistoria cuenta unos hechos que posiblemente no son parte ni objetivo directo del relato, pero que tienen en cuenta la incidencia de la historia oficial en éste (Bobes 45).

“Empecemos por el principio, por mis primeros recuerdos. Nací en Plasencia, en el norte de Extremadura, ciudad fronteriza, guerrera y religiosa. La casa de mi abuelo, donde me crié, quedaba a un tiro de piedra de la catedral, llamada La Vieja por cariño, ya que solo data del siglo XVI. Crecí a la sombra de su extraña torre cubierta de escamas talladas...Mi abuelo, artesano, ebanista de profesión, pertenecía a la cofradía de la Vera Cruz, honor muy por encima de su condición social” (Allende 18).

“Recuerdo las procesiones porque en una de ellas conocí a Juan, el hombre que habría de ser mi primer marido.” (Allende 19).

“Yo no tenía novio porque mi abuelo había decidido que me quedaría soltera para cuidarlo en sus últimos años, en penitencia por haber nacido en vez del nieto varón que él deseaba...yo era puro hueso y músculo y, además, terca como mula...Decían entonces que mis mejores atributos eran los ojos sombríos y la cabellera de potranca...Eso si era muy hábil con las manos, en Plasencia y sus alrededores no había quien cosiera y bordara con más prolijidad que yo. Con ese oficio contribuí desde los ocho años al sostén de la familia y fui ahorrando para la dote que mi abuelo no pensaba darme; me había propuesto conseguir un marido, porque prefería el destino de lidiar con hijos al futuro que me esperaba con mi abuelo cascarrabias” (Allende 20).

Allende recrea la niñez y juventud de la protagonista revisando y reescribiendo el pasado que se ha extraviado a través de la historia. Según Ann Nauman, “very little is known of the early life of Inés de Suárez, outside of the fact that she was born in

the town of Plasencia, in the province of Extremadura, Spain, in 1507” y que posiblemente se casó muy joven con un aventurero que la dejó al poco tiempo de casados para ir al Nuevo Mundo con Pizarro en busca de fortuna (5). Como se explica anteriormente, la autora utiliza la primera persona para darle voz y carácter propio al personaje. Además, al recrear estos eventos, Allende muestra la situación de la mujer dentro de la sociedad española de la época, en donde ella sólo podía aspirar al matrimonio como salvación económica o ser condenada a la soledad y al cuidado de los ancianos.

La otra forma en donde se destaca la intrahistoria para revisar y reevaluar la participación de la mujer en la época de la conquista del Nuevo Mundo es a través de la creación de personajes ficticios como Constanza—la sobrina de Inés—, Catalina—la india peruana—y Cecilia—la princesa Inca. Al crear personajes femeninos con nombres propios, Allende está revisando y reescribiendo la historia oficial dando a la mujer el protagonismo eclipsado por cronistas e historiadores. A excepción de la crónica de Mariño de Lobera donde se mencionan las proezas de Inés y la pequeña referencia tácita que hace Góngora Marmolejo de ella utilizando términos despectivos y culpándola por la muerte de Valdivia y la derrota en la batalla de Tucapel, en la mayoría de las crónicas de la época no se hace mención de mujeres participes durante la conquista de Chile.

“...mas cuando las cosas están ordenadas por el Divino juez, no se puede ir contra ellas: y así es de entender que quiso a Valdivia castigallo por sus culpas y vivienda pública, dando mal ejemplo a todos, con una mujer de Castilla siempre amancebado” (Góngora Marmolejo, 62).

En contra de la visión que da Góngora Marmolejo de Inés, Allende en su novela revisa esa imagen negativa, poniendo a su protagonista al nivel heroico de su homólogo masculino. Además,

Allende no se limita a la mención tácita de Inés o de otras mujeres sino que las hace seres partícipes activos de la sociedad. Constanza se casa con un aventurero al que sigue por el Nuevo Mundo dedicándose a la investigación. Catalina y Cecilia, se embarcan en la conquista de Chile, ayudando en las batallas a curar y alimentar a los enfermos. Cada rol desempeñado por cada una de estas mujeres es una micro-historia, la cual intenta revisar y reevaluar el papel de la mujer en la historia oficial.

En conclusión, a lo que respecta al primer objetivo aparente de esta novela, revisar y reescribir la historia devolviendo la voz y el protagonismo a los personajes marginados por la historia oficial como lo son en nuestro caso la mujer y el pueblo mapuche, se podría decir que Allende lo logra a través del uso de la intrahistoria y de la creación de personajes ficticios femeninos con nombres propios. Sin embargo, en el intento de reivindicar el papel de la protagonista en la historia oficial, la falta de originalidad de la trama y estructura de *Inés* se observa al compararse ésta con *Hija de la Fortuna*. Antes de iniciar esta segunda parte del análisis, primero explicaré el concepto del *Bildungsroman* femenino como herramienta para reivindicar el rol Inés.

IV. El *Bildungsroman* femenino contemporáneo

El *Bildungsroman* femenino contemporáneo cuenta las hazañas de la mujer para alcanzar su propia identidad e independencia, convirtiéndose en herramienta para muchas autoras feministas contemporáneas para reclamar la igualdad de derechos entre el hombre y la mujer tanto en la literatura como en la vida. El *Bildungsroman* fue formulado por primera vez en 1870 en Alemania por Wilhelm Dilthey. Tradicionalmente es un modelo completamente masculino, el cual analiza las etapas del crecimiento del héroe o protagonista para estudiar el proceso evolutivo de su personalidad y su rol en la sociedad. “The inner life

and the self-realization of the protagonist become an important element to the development of the whole person” (Avendaño 21). Las obras que pertenecen a este concepto, por lo general narran la vida de un hombre el cual pasa su niñez y adolescencia en el campo, emigrando durante su juventud a la ciudad en busca de su identidad para finalmente llegar a la adultez convirtiéndose en un hombre ciudadano con valores burgueses. Durante esa búsqueda de la identidad, el hombre encuentra personajes que lo guían y ayudan a través de su evolución y se enfrenta a aquellos individuos o situaciones que impidan su auto-descubrimiento (Avendaño 30). El “*Bildung*” es entonces el proceso de crecimiento, desarrollo y definición del personaje.

Sin embargo, durante el siglo XIX surgen novelas en donde se aplica el *Bildungsroman* masculino como fórmula genérica para la evolución del carácter de personajes femeninos. A diferencia del crecimiento y participación activa en la sociedad que alcanza el héroe masculino, la evolución del carácter de la mujer se muestra como algo inapropiado y se relega el personaje a la privacidad del hogar. Como dice Avendaño “in this most conservative branch of the woman’s *Bildungsroman* we find a genre that pursues the opposite of its male counterpart, providing models for ‘growing down’ rather than ‘growing up’” (23). Más tarde, durante la década de los 60, el “*Bildung*” de las protagonistas femeninas ya no refleja el “enanismo” de principios de siglo. Durante las novelas que pertenecen a esta época, se saca a la mujer de la esfera doméstica expresando “women’s anger and frustration toward their situation in society” (Avendaño 25), pero careciendo de la determinación e independencia alcanzada por el “*Bildung*” masculino.

El proceso evolutivo del *Bildungsroman* femenino continua y alcanza su etapa final a raíz del auge del movimiento feminista en los años 70. Una vez la sociedad comienza a aceptar la

independencia de la mujer y a apoyar su rol como ser activo de la sociedad en el ámbito político, económico, y cultural, los personajes femeninos empiezan a reflejar estos cambios. Al igual que el modelo masculino tradicional, los personajes femeninos en las novelas contemporáneas pasan a través de un proceso de formación para desarrollar su propia identidad. Pero a diferencia de éste, los personajes femeninos no se enfrentan a individuos sino que rompen con las normas sociales impuestas por el sistema patriarcal (Avendaño 30).

Tanto *Hija de la fortuna* como *Inés del alma mía* son un claro ejemplo del *Bildungsroman* femenino contemporáneo. En ambas novelas las protagonistas desarrollan su propia identidad y carácter al afrontar las normas impuestas por una sociedad patriarcal dominante. En ambas novelas el objetivo de Allende es revisar la historia oficial para reivindicar el rol de la mujer en la historia, mostrándola como ser participe activo de la sociedad y elemento esencial en el desarrollo histórico. Sin embargo, son tales las similitudes entre estas dos novelas que pareciera que fueran la misma historia pero en diferente lugar y época.

V. Comparación y contraste de *Inés e Hija*

En cuestiones de estructura ambas novelas se basan en una época histórica determinada y siguen “the formulaic structure of travel literature, a genre that has proven to be a rich vehicle for the exploration of cultural and individual identity (Avendaño 90). *Hija* toma lugar durante la época de la “fiebre del oro.” La novela está dividida en tres partes. La primera, de 1843-1848, cuenta la niñez y adolescencia de Eliza en Chile. La segunda parte, de 1848-49 narra la partida de Eliza a California en busca de Joaquín. Finalmente, la tercera parte de 1850-1853 cuenta la vida de Eliza en California. Al igual que *Hija*, *Inés* está dividida en épocas históricas que enmarcan los años de 1500 a 1553 y toma lugar en la conquista del Nuevo

Mundo, especialmente la conquista de Chile. Al igual que *Hija*, la novela inicia describiendo la niñez y juventud de la protagonista⁴ en su tierra natal. Ambas novelas parten del *Bildungsroman* tradicional, el cual llevará a Eliza y a Inés a desarrollar su propia identidad. La segunda parte de *Hija* al igual que los capítulos subsecuentes de *Inés* se desarrollan en lugares remotos lejos de cualquier convencionalismo social. Tanto Eliza en California como Inés en el Nuevo Mundo darán forma final a sus respectivos “*Bildung*”.

En cuanto a la trama, ambas novelas empiezan situando a la mujer dentro de una esfera doméstica, luego la mujer va ganando su independencia al mismo tiempo que alcanza el “*Bildung*” al aventurarse a tierras lejanas, y por último logra la libertad definitiva al darse cuenta que su amante ha muerto, abriendo paso para un nuevo romance. Eliza pertenece a una clase social alta y por lo tanto es educada como una mujer de su clase. Recibe clases de piano, idiomas, y baile. Su pasión por la cocina, la lleva a convertirse en experta cocinera. Por otro lado, aunque Inés pertenece a la clase trabajadora y es analfabeta, ella se entrena en las actividades domésticas típicas de una mujer de su clase. Es una costurera, pero al igual que Eliza es una cocinera prolija. Irónicamente, esta actividad de cocinar es lo que más tarde les ayudará a ambas protagonistas en sus novelas respectivas a ganarse la vida.

Tanto Eliza como Inés se enamoran profunda y apasionadamente. Las dos son abandonadas por sus respectivos amantes, los cuales salen en busca de riqueza y fortuna. Joaquín, el enamora de Eliza, parte para California y Juan, el esposo de Inés,

⁴ Este elemento descriptivo de la niñez y juventud de Inés tiene dos funciones. El primero es el de intrahistoria como ya se había explicado anteriormente y el segundo es como característica del *Bildungsroman* tradicional.

se embarca para el Nuevo Mundo. En su empeño por recuperar el amor perdido, Eliza e Inés salen en busca de sus respectivos amantes, rompiendo así con las reglas convencionales de la sociedad. Ambas protagonistas tienen que afrontar las vicisitudes de ser mujeres entre una tripulación predominantemente masculina y pasar por una serie de aventuras y experiencias, las cuales les van trazando a la vez un camino para el desarrollo del carácter y la identidad de cada una.

Finalmente, una vez Eliza e Inés llegan a sus destinos respectivos, ambas se van desenamorando gradualmente de ese individuo tangible, aunque contradictoriamente siguen aferradas al recuerdo de ese amor. Eliza después de recorrer incansablemente el norte Californiano en busca de Joaquín, por fin se da cuenta que ha muerto, dando rienda suelta a su amor con Tao Chi'en. Por otro lado, Inés sigue la misma fe. Después de cruzar todo un océano y de recorrer gran parte del Nuevo Mundo, comprueba la muerte de Juan al llegar al Perú, en donde inicia un nuevo romance con Pedro de Valdivia.

En cuanto a las características de los personajes, una característica típica que utiliza Allende en sus dos novelas para desarrollar el "*Bildung*" femenino es el rompimiento del rol convencional del hombre y la mujer al momento de amar. En ambas novelas, es la mujer quien toma la iniciativa del acercamiento y la que posee la mayor experiencia para el placer sexual. Eliza es la que busca constantemente el momento y el lugar para estar a solas con Joaquín.

"...por lo mismo se llevó un susto formidable cuando ella le entregó un sobre cerrado. Desconcertado se lo puso en el bolsillo...La esquila de Eliza contenía solo dos líneas para indicarle dónde y cómo encontrarse" (*Hija* 116-17).

En *Inés* es ella quien le enseña a Pedro de Valdivia el arte de hacer el amor. "Una vez que Pedro comprendió que a puerta

cerrada mando yo y que no había deshonor en ello, se dispuso a obedecerme de excelente humor...él creía que la entrega corresponde a la hembra y la dominación al macho” (*Inés* 117). En ambas novelas, Allende transforma a la mujer en sujeto y al hombre en objeto invirtiendo los papeles tradicionales de ambos géneros.

En síntesis, Allende aplica el concepto del *Bildungsroman* a ambas novelas para reivindicar el papel de la mujer en la historia, siguiendo la misma estructura y desarrollando la identidad de la protagonista de la misma manera. Además que atribuye las mismas características femeninas a ambos personajes. En su esfuerzo por reivindicar el rol de Inés en la conquista de Chile, Allende cae en la utilización de estereotipos clásicos de su obra, haciendo de *Inés* una novela repetitiva.

Conclusión

Con *Inés del alma mía*, Allende se une a la ola revisionista que toma fuerza a raíz de la celebración del quinto centenario de América, intentando dar una nueva imagen a conquistadores y conquistados, e intentando reivindicar el papel de la mujer en la historia oficial. Aunque la novela histórica latinoamericana ya venía desde finales del siglo XIX, su propósito inicial era reconocer y definir la identidad nacional. Pero hacia finales de los años 70 surge lo que se conoce hoy en día como la “nueva” novela histórica latinoamericana, la cual busca recorrer la historia con ojo crítico y con sentido revisionista. Como parte de ese revisionismo, muchos autores latinoamericanos adoptan la intrahistoria o micro-historia para recrear la vida cotidiana del pueblo y devolver protagonismo a personajes partícipes de los sucesos históricos oficiales, pero marginados por historiadores. Paralelo a este movimiento se desarrollan novelas feministas que siguen el modelo del *Bildungsroman* tradicional, y que eventualmente crearán el

Bildungsroman femenino contemporáneo, en donde los personajes femeninos rompen con la normas convencionales de la sociedad, convirtiéndose en seres autónomos e independientes.

Aunque la mayoría de las novelas contemporáneas que intentan revisar la historia oficial de la época de la conquista y colonización del Nuevo Mundo se basan en protagonistas masculinos, desde la década de los sesenta se han escrito algunas novelas basadas en mujeres partícipes de la conquista. Hoy *Inés* se une al corpus de novelas feministas revisionistas que intentan recuperar el lugar de la mujer en la historia oficial y dar protagonismo al pueblo indígena. Esta novela aparenta tener dos propósitos, el primero es reconocer la participación del pueblo mapuche y de la mujer en la conquista de Chile, y el segundo es sacar a la luz las proezas de Inés de Suárez, primera mujer española en Chile. Para ello, Allende recurre a la intrahistoria describiendo las costumbres de los nativos chilenos y creando personajes ficticios femeninos con nombres propios y roles activos en la conquista de Chile.

Sin embargo, para destacar la participación de Inés en la historia oficial, Allende sigue la misma estructura de *Hija de la Fortuna*. Ambas novelas siguen el modelo del *Bildungsroman* femenino contemporáneo, en donde sus protagonistas respectivas siguen el mismo proceso de formación para desarrollar su propia identidad. Son tales las similitudes en la estructura, la trama, y la características de los personajes que parece como si *Inés* fuera la repetición de *Hija* en una época distinta y con nombres de personajes diferentes

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Sahar Saffi

Major:
Nutrition
Concentration
Dietetics

Mentor:
**Dr. Colleen O'Leary-
Kelly**

Review Article:
The Link between
Nutrition and Crohn's
Disease

Biography

Sahar Saffi is a Senior majoring in Nutrition with a concentration in Dietetics. She is currently taking part in two mentorship programs, which include working with San Jose State students and foster care children. Her passion has always included helping others, especially in terms of spreading knowledge about healthy living. Sahar plans to obtain a Ph.D. in Public Health and conduct more research in the area of nutrition and peoples perspective and understanding of it. She hopes to one day write a book about nutrition and how it can change lives.

The Link between Nutrition and Crohn's Disease

ABSTRACT

The focus of this literature review is to provide a basic understanding of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) with a special focus on Crohn's disease, its possible causes, symptoms, side effects and potential coping methods. About 500,000 of the American population is currently living with Crohn's disease, which means that 1 in 544 people are diagnosed with Crohn's disease in the U.S. alone (Cure Research, 2003). About 64 percent of patients who are diagnosed with Crohn's disease are hospitalized (Cure Research, 2003). As a result, it is critical for these individuals to know possible ways to improve their health and state of disease. Although it is extremely challenging to understand the nutritional effects of Crohn's disease, it must be examined in order to understand the alternatives to medication for the treatment of this specific disease. Due to the fact that many Crohn's patients do not understand the importance of nutrition and the role it plays in maintaining the disease, the main focus of this review is to present knowledge to the reader about the link between Crohn's disease and nutrition.

Introduction

Although it remains difficult to make a direct link between Crohn's disease and nutrition, many recent articles show that there could be a connection between the two. Part of my interest in the subject stems from being diagnosed with Crohn's disease at age eleven. Moreover, I have constantly been battling the disease under the treatment of various medications. Although medications play a vital role in the treatment of Crohn's, the nutritional aspect may be just as essential. Also, individuals must value the importance of

nutrition in fighting against any type of disease, especial for diseases that pertain to the gastrointestinal track (G.I.). In this review, the connection between nutrition and Crohn's disease will be explored. The first step is to understand the symptoms, possible causes and the side effects of Crohn's disease. Afterwards, I will discuss the interplay of nutrition and Crohns disease, highlighting what type of diets could possibly decrease or increase the symptoms of Crohn's. I will examine specific foods, vitamins and minerals that can contribute to the nutritional issues that accompany the disease. Once this examination is completed then a link or possible connection can be supported.

Background on Crohn's Disease

Crohn's disease is an inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), which is a chronic, autoimmune and inflammatory disorder that can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract (GI tract). Although the small intestine is part of the gastrointestinal tract, which consists of three parts the duodenum, jejunum, and ileum; any of the three can be affected. Even though certain areas such as the distal end of the small intestine and the proximal beginning of the colon are more prone to being affected, there are other areas which can remain unharmed (Moore, 2007). Fifty to seventy percent of patients with Crohn's disease will need surgery because of the long term inflammation, thickening, scarring and fistula formation (Rosenberg et al, 2007). The disease affects the GI track which includes any part of the intestine. Treatment and control is very promising even though once diagnosed with the disease the likely hood of a cure is very rare. In addition, Crohn's disease is one of two autoimmune disorders and causes gastrointestinal discomfort, pain and inflammation. Patients who are diagnosed with Crohn's disease have to face the many discomforting symptoms and side effects. Crohn's disease causes abnormal changes in structure of

the intestine, colon as well as the entire bowel wall and as a result other defects may result in the gastrointestinal tract.

Possible/ Probable Causes

While the exact cause of Crohn's disease is unknown, there are possible theories for its development; however none have been proven. It is believed that a default immune system, genetics, environmental factors and certain areas of an individual's diet may lead to the development of inflammatory bowel disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Patients who are diagnosed with IBD are very likely to be malnourished (Razack & Douglas, 2007). Moreover, it is important to understand the difference between malabsorption and malnutrition. Malabsorption is defined as the inadequate absorption of nutrients from the alimentary canal (Merriam Webster, 2007). Malnutrition is an inadequate intake of nutrients due to defective nutrition (Merriam Webster, 2007). Malnutrition is common in Crohn's patients and as a result of several factors including; malabsorption, anorexia, diarrhea, altered metabolism, fluid and electrolyte loss, side effects from medications as well as abdominal pain (Razack & Douglas, 2007). O'Sullivan & Colm mention that malnutrition in inflammatory bowel disease maybe caused by inadequate dietary intake, abnormalities in digestion and an increased requirement of nutrients (2006). MacDonald mentions that another reason for malnutrition is due to insufficient consumption of important nutrients such as protein, minerals and vitamins (2006). Malnutrition can lead to muscle impairment, respiratory difficulties, immune problems, improper growth in children as well as slowing down the recovery process of any illness or surgery (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Although additional evidence shows that diet is associated with the development of Crohn's, the exact link has not been found (MacDonald, 2006).

Other possible theories in the development of Crohn's disease include outside factors such as, microbes and foods; although, there is no solid proof that food allergy's cause inflammation in the intestines. Even though many studies have considered the link between an increase intake of refined sugar and Crohn's disease, no exact connection has yet been determined (Rosenberg et al, 2007). According to Rosenberg, malnutrition in Crohn's disease is caused by several factors such as, not eating the proper amount of food due to abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, anorexia, restrictive diet ordered by a physician as well as not having the right replacement supplements (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Therefore, "nutritional factors play an important role in the pathogenesis and treatment of CD" (MacDonald, 2006, pg. 296). Further research may be helpful with narrowing the possible causes of Crohn's disease.

Side Effects/Symptoms of Crohn's Disease

Malnutrition in Crohn's disease has been linked to changes in fat, muscle and bone storage which can hinder muscle function (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). As a result of the constant diarrhea that accompanies Crohn's disease, many patients become deficient in vitamins, minerals and electrolytes, such as potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, zinc, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, folic acid, vitamin B, vitamin B12 and ascorbic acids such as vitamin C. (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Crohn's disease causes massive loss of plasma proteins across the inflamed mucosa; as a result of the extra loss—even if adequate amounts of protein are taken in—the liver can not replace the protein, which in turn can lead to hypoalbuminemia. Hypoalbuminemia is defined as low levels of albumin in the blood serum, leading to peripheral edema, which is swelling of the tissues (Rosenberg et al, 2007), (Merriam Webster, 2007). The massive loss in protein and blood can cause

decreased levels of iron, causing anemia. Hypokalemia, hypomagnesemia and zinc depletion. As the volume of diarrhea increases there is also an increase in the loss of zinc (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

In addition, some symptoms of Crohn's disease include diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, weight loss, and blood in the stool. Crohn's disease may cause individuals to be hospitalized, develop chronic health problems, health issues, infections, problems in development as well as possible social issues which could lead to an abnormal social life (Moore, 2007). Inadequate nutrition absorption in Crohn's disease patients may be caused by, severe diarrhea, nausea, weight loss and constant abdominal pain due to eating (Rosenberg et al, 2007). As a result of the inflammation, the surface area within the intestines loses its absorption ability, which causes loss of blood, plasma, fluid, minerals, vitamins and electrolytes (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Diarrhea is caused by the inflammation within the intestines (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Blood loss is found from the GI tract which can cause anemia; other contributors to anemia are deficiency in vitamin B12 or folic acid and severe inflammation (MacDonald, 2006). The growth of bacteria can also lead to inadequate absorption of nutrients (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Also, patients who have had to surgically remove any part of their small intestine or have had massive amounts of mucosa involvement are more prone to malabsorption. Weight loss and hypoalbuminaemia are present in three quarters of Crohn's patients. Significantly low bone mineral density, decreased lean body mass is very common and can lead to the reduction in the function of muscles (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Also, studies have shown that reduced muscle mass is present in sixty three percent of Crohn's patients compared to the twenty one percent in the unaffected group (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Lastly, many individuals with Crohn's disease have decreased appetite

which maybe a possible cause for not taking in the proper amount of calories and nutrients (Wisikin et al, 2007). The possible cause of a decrease in appetite may deal with not feeling well enough to eat, pain in the abdominal area, pain associated with food, diarrhea, anorexia nervosa or inflammation (Wisikin et al, 2007).

Short/Long Term Effects

As a consequence of the inflammation and disease, the surface area within the intestine loses its absorptive exterior (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Required nutrients such as proteins, bile salts, electrolytes, minerals and trace minerals are lost because of diarrhea. When a flare up, fever, infection or inflammation is present there is an increased requirement for calories and nutrients because of the increased cell turnover rate (Rosenberg et al, 2007). When inflammation is present the metabolic rate is affected, also not having proper nutritional intake effects the regulation of inflammation (Wisikin et al, 2007). Although during a flare up there is an increased requirement for calories, there is even a higher demand when the body is recuperating from the inflammation to make up for the loss of nutrients (Wisikin et al, 2007). Moreover, If the ileum is removed then there can be a deficiency in bile salts, which can lead to watery diarrhea causing the colon to clear out fundamentals material, such as fat to be seen in the stool (Rosenberg et al, 2007). The surgical removal of parts of the intestine has been linked to fat lost through stool. In Crohn's disease patients there is an excess loss of plasma proteins because of the inflamed mucosa and as a result, the liver cannot compensate for the protein loss through the plasma even if there is a sufficient intake of protein (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Furthermore, Protein loss in the plasma can lead to a deficiency of protein in the blood which then in turn, can lead to excess serous fluid on the surface leading to peripheral edema (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

There is also a connection between the intestines losing protein and the activity level of Crohn's in the patient (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Anemia and excessive loss of iron are a result of long duration of high levels of blood loss (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Losing large amounts of protein from the intestine can cause Crohn's to flare up and become active (Rosenberg et al, 2007). A link between protein loss from the intestine and the activity levels of the disease has been established (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Patients who have an increase in sedimentation rate also have an increase protein synthesis and protein breakdown rate showing an association between synthesis and breakdown of protein alongside the erythrocyte sedimentation rate (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Excessive loss of protein through the inflamed enteric mucosa is present in seventy six percent of patients with inflammatory bowel disease and is the major cause of diminished protein from the body (Rosenberg et al, 2007). About two thirds of patients with inflammatory bowel disease have negative nitrogen balance, which may result from the loss of protein (Rosenberg et al, 2007). As a result of the increase protein turnover rate and loss there is an increase requirement for protein in patients with inflammatory bowel disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). In a study conducted by researchers at the University of Chicago, one hundred and thirty three hospitalized patients with inflammatory bowel disease were evaluated by the Nutrition Consultation Service. Ninety-nine of the patients had Crohn's disease, this severely ill group conformed having an extremely high incidence of protein-energy malnutrition, and the majority of these individuals may have needed intensive nutritional support such as, enteral or parenteral nutrition (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is critical to rectify nutritional deficiencies in individuals with inflammatory bowel disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Not being able to take in proper amounts of protein can cause growth impairments in children and

insufficient wound healing in individuals recovering from surgery (MacDonald, 2006). Inadequate protein intake and micronutrients deficiency have effects on the gastrointestinal structure and function (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

Also, it is possible for patients who are severely malnourished to enter a vicious cycle where the secondary effects of malnutrition on gastrointestinal function and structure may lead to a deeper increase in gastrointestinal symptoms and malabsorption, resulting in a greater imbalance of nutrients. Malnutrition can cause greater difficulties in healing the inflammatory and may cause structural changes to the bowel (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is critical to make sure that adequate intake of nutrients is met while at the same time, adjusting dietary intake to decrease gastrointestinal symptoms (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is important to have an intake of small meals in order to minimize the amount of food in the GI track, making it easier on the intestine which will reduce stress on the bowel. Having an increased protein intake is critical for individuals with active inflammation because of the protein loss that is present with inflammation. Crohn's patients should have about a twenty five percent increase in protein intake as opposed to the recommended requirement (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Increased intake of calories is critical for individuals who have a fever, sepsis or are dealing with malabsorption (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Any individual with inflammatory bowel disease should be placed on multivitamins that provide one to five times the recommended dietary allowance (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Total parenteral nutrition (TPN) and bowel rest are critical in the maintenance of inflammatory bowel disease especially for the patients who have not responded to medication treatment such as corticosteroids and sulfasalazine (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Forty to eighty percent of Crohn's patients who have not responded to medical treatment have reduced

symptoms during a three to four week period of bowel rest and TPN treatment (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Many Crohn's patients who have had parts of their intestines removed causing short bowel syndrome are placed on TPN treatment at home, which allows them to gain nutritional support alongside social support (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Currently diet therapy using total parenteral nutrition or elemental diet has been used as primary treatment (MacDonald, 2006). Diet soda, caffeine, alcohol beverages along with diabetic candies that contain sorbitol are known to worsen diarrhea, and should be avoided (McClave, 2007).

Food/Nutrition and its Relationship to Crohn's Disease (Diet Treatment)

It is recommended to observe how different types of foods can affect each individual with Crohn's disease. It is important to make sure that the proper amounts of calories, vitamins, minerals and proteins are consumed (MacDonald, 2006). Due to the deficiency of calories, proteins, and vitamins, nutritional difficulties are frequent with Crohn's patients. Fat malabsorption occurs because of the loss of fat soluble vitamins and minerals and because of a reduced amount of calories (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Due to the inflammatory conditions that Crohn's disease causes, there is an increased dependence on nutrition (Rosenberg et al, 2007). There is also an increase requirement for calories, protein and micronutrients in the presence of a fever, which is a common side effect of Crohn's, however, if no fever is present then there is no need for an increased caloric intake (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Patients with inflammatory bowel disease who are severely ill need to be hospitalized because their nutritional state will otherwise be compromised (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Due to the lack of calories which leads to weight loss, patients can be hospitalized (Rosenberg

et al, 2007). Children with Crohn's disease may experience growth failure due to deficiencies in nutrients (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Individuals diagnosed with Crohn's disease may need to use enteral supplements because patients with severe intestinal disease or with extensive resection do not find it possible to achieve their nutritional goals only through diet and as a result, are forced to use supplements and formula diets (Rosenberg et al, 2007). The formula diets may be used in addition to their regular diet as added supplements or as the primary nutritional source (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Patients who are not able to get the correct amount of calories per day must use parenteral or enteral feeding systems.

Parenteral nutrition is the practice of feeding a person using intravenous therapy (IV therapy) which is bypassing the process of eating and digestion and is set to go straight into the veins. Enteral nutrition is the process of inserting a plastic tube into the nostril, which will then lead into the stomach. This process is used to bypass eating and go straight into the digestion. A variety of enteral formulas are available for different types of nutritional needs; meal replacement formulas which are comparable in composition to the normal diet of the patient, some formulas are low in fat and have other nutrients that are easily digested or predigested (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Adolescents and children with inflammatory bowel disease may be affected with growth problems as a result of deficiency in proper caloric intake and therefore would benefit from enteral supplements (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Enteral diets may be used as a way to prevent or treat malnutrition and is recommended especially for children to prevent growth problems and osteoporosis (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Although these formula diets may help provide nutrients and calories, they may also cause diarrhea. In order to avoid diarrhea it is advised to take antidiarrhea agents. Another problem that may arise from this treatment is gall stone formation due to the lack of stimulation

from food which therefore prevents normal flow of fluids in the gall bladder (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Due to the fact that TPN home treatment may cause chronic liver disease it should be used as the last resort (Rosenberg et al, 2007). As a result of the complications that may follow TPN home treatment, it is advisable to first try oral or enteral nutrition before turning to TPN (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Ninety five percent of patients with Crohn's disease are sent into clinical remission as a result of the patient not eating by mouth and using exclusive parenteral nutrition to give them complete bowel rest (Forbes, 2002).

In addition, many Crohn's patients change their diets to improve symptoms because different foods can affect their Crohn's in different ways (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). In a study of sixty three newly diagnosed Crohn's disease patients' milk was removed from the diets of twenty eight percent of the patients, showing that these patients had a lower intake of calcium (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Separating liquids from solids at meals may help prevent diarrhea (McClave, 2007). It is recommended that individuals diagnosed with Crohn's increase the frequency of their meal time but at the same time, decrease the size of each meal (McClave, 2007). It is wiser to have six small meals as opposed to three larger meals (McClave, 2007). It has been noted that individuals with Crohn's disease consume more carbohydrates, specifically sugars, compared to individuals not diagnosed with Crohn's disease. Although Crohn's patients also have a higher prevalence of food intolerance than other individuals; decreasing sugar does not necessarily help the individual with the intolerance of certain foods (Forbes, 2002).

Vitamins/Minerals

Patients with Crohn's are more likely to have lower levels of vitamins and minerals (MacDonald, 2006). Excessive diarrhea

causes water and electrolyte loss which then leads to potassium, magnesium and calcium loss. As a result of the severe diarrhea, there is an extra loss of electrolytes and trace minerals, which then can lead to hypokalemia: deficiency of potassium; and hypomagnesemia: a deficiency of magnesium in the blood; and a depletion of zinc (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Moreover, “in a study of 57 patients with Crohn’s disease, total-body potassium (TBK) was significantly lower than the controls and starving patients with matching weight” (Rosenberg et al, 2007, pg, 469). If potassium levels are lower than normal then there maybe an increase in the activity levels of the disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Although potassium deficiency may cause muscle weakness; it is even more critical to treat the deficiency in order to avoid the development of any secondary disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is important to avoid a lack of potassium in order to prevent complications during surgeries (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

In addition, many patients with Crohn’s disease are also diagnosed with hypomagnesemia, which is a deficiency of magnesium (Merriam Webster, 2007), (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Although magnesium supplements are critical, they are not encouraged to be used for people with a short bowel because oral supplements will not work for them due to absorption difficulties (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Hypocalcemia: a deficiency of calcium in the blood, (Merriam Webster, 2007) and hypoproteinemia: abnormal deficiency of protein in the blood, (Merriam Webster, 2007) is witnessed in individuals with inflammatory bowel disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). The main cause of reduced calcium in these individuals is due to inadequate dairy intake, loss of absorptive surface, vitamin D, corticosteroid treatment, and steatorrhea. It is recommended for patients to take calcium carbonate such as, Tums to provide more calcium to be absorbed with the food (McClave, 2007). The accurate calcium intake

should be at 1500 mg per day; however, patients with Crohn's have extensively lower vitamin D levels juxtaposed to people who do not have Crohn's (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). In a study of one hundred and fifty four Crohn's patients who had decreased bone mineral density, they were given vitamin D and calcium supplements daily and were able to see an increase in bone mineral density (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Many patients link dairy products with irritating the disease and therefore avoid products that contain dairy and calcium, leading to an inadequate calcium intake (Razack & Douglas, 2007). Also, if there is a great deal of fat in the stool then: (steatorrhea) there will also be a significant loss of calcium and magnesium (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Steatorrhea in Crohn's patients leads to fat malabsorption and diarrhea because fatty acid derivatives produced by colonic bacteria will stimulate fluid and electrolyte secretion by the colon (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is recommended for patients who have problems with their ileum to be placed on a low fat diet (Rosenberg et al, 2007). It is recommended to restrict fat intake to about 70 g per day. Although some individuals may be advised to be on an even stricter fat reduced diet, it is not recommended because calorie intake maybe affected (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

Moreover, a major cause of deficiencies of nutrients in Crohn's patients is malabsorption of fat-soluble vitamins (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Vitamins A, D, E, and K are fat-soluble vitamins that are not properly absorbed by Crohn's patients. In a study of fifty two patients, twenty one percent were found with low plasma retinol levels. Three patients who had low levels of plasma proteins and retinol-binding protein experienced impaired dark adaptation, and one case of night blindness was present. Crohn's patients have lower levels of bone mineral, lean body mass and vitamin D (Razack & Douglas, 2007). Vitamin D deficiency maybe present due to malabsorption, lack of proper dietary intake and lack

of sun exposure (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Antibiotics causes malabsorption of fats leading to a deficiency of Vitamin K, hindering the synthesis of vitamin K by the gut flora (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Patients who are on a low residue diet also have a lower intake of vitamin C. Twenty patients with Crohn's disease had expansively lower levels of serum and leukocyte ascorbic acid compared to individuals without Crohn's disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Deficiency in iron which may lead to anemia is very common in inflammatory bowel disease because of the gut's sever blood loss (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

Treatment/Medications

Medications have been used to prevent flare ups and to keep the disease in a state of remission; however, treatment with medications may have destructive effects on the nutritional aspect of patients and negatively affect the body (MacDonald, 2006). Corticosteroids are adrenal-cortex steroids (Merriam Webster dictionary) and are used to control inflammation in the intestines (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Although corticosteroids are commonly used to set the patient into remission, the side effects can vary from patient to patient. The most common side effects being hypertension, increased risk of infection, weight gain, acne, cataracts, osteoporosis, mood swings, increased facial hair growth, high blood sugar levels and bone damage (University of Maryland Medical Center, 2007). Corticosteroids have harmful effects on bone mass, calcium absorption and protein metabolism (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Although there are many negative side effects associated with corticosteroids, this class of medications have been used for Crohn's patients and have illustrated great recovery time. Some of the beneficial side effects associated with corticosteroids for Crohn's patients who have lost a great deal of weight or are malnourished is weight gain and an increased appetite. There is a

wide range of side effects with the use of corticosteroids and patients should discuss the side effects and drug usage with their physician. Different medications can cause problems with keeping the proper balance of nutrition. The cause of zinc deficiency is primarily due to the loss of zinc through diarrhea, impaired absorption and lower intake of foods containing zinc (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Children with Crohn's have been noted to have drastic reduction in plasma as well as the zinc that is found in the hair, affecting the absorption of folic acid by interfering with folate-dependent enzymes (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

There is a direct link between the drug sulfasalazine and a deficiency in folic acid (Rosenberg et al, 2007), (MacDonald, 2006). There can be a folic acid deficiency in individuals taking sulfasalazine, even in the presence of an unrestricted diet; it is recommended that these individuals take one milligram of folic acid per day (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Sulfasalazine can also cause hemolysis of red blood cells (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Patients on Cholestyramine need to be monitored for deficiency in fat-soluble vitamins and folic acid because Cholestyramine affects the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins, they can also be placed on supplements if needed (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Possible nutrition treatments include the use of nutritional supplements, a healthy balanced diet, assistance in proper nutritional choices, as well as enteral and parenteral nutrition (Razack & Douglas, 2007).

Different Effects between Adults and Children

The proper treatment for adults and children are not considered the same due to the different effects on each group. Crohn's disease is the most common IBD diagnosed, with twenty-five percent of individuals diagnosed being children (Wisikin et al, 2007). Enteral nutrition is considered predominantly for children who have inadequate nutrition intake and have growth problems.

Enteral nutrition is great for children as a result of the minimal side effects which include nausea and headaches, both of which can be diminished as the individual becomes customized to the diet (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Weight loss is present in seventy percent of children with Crohn's and is also a contributing factor to malnutrition and has been linked to damaged linear growth and development in adolescence and children (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Inadequate nutrition, inflammation of the G.I. track, genetics, as well as corticosteroid treatment are all contributing factors which may inhibit healthy growth (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Due to the possible link of corticosteroids with growth impairments, it is probable to avoid this drug in children and adolescences (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). If corticosteroids have to be used in adolescents it is recommended to use calcium supplements as well as multivitamins (Wisikin et al, 2007). It has been presented that inflammation may possibly be linked to impaired growth; however, no direct connection has been made (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006).

Many children who experience poor nutritional intake have also suffer from inadequate linear growth (Wisikin et al, 2007). At the University of Chicago, a study found that nutritional supplements are beneficial for children with growth problems and inflammatory bowel disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007). Growth impairments that take place as a result of Crohn's disease may effect development and onset of puberty in adolescence (Wisikin et al, 2007). However, with proper early treatment, there is a possibility for later growth and development to take place (Wisikin et al, 2007). Enteral nutrition is used for many different patients, for example, those who maybe anorexic and are not meeting there energy requirements (Gavin et al, 2005).

Elemental and polymeric tube feeding has also been proven to bring about remission in about fifty to seventy percent of

patients (MacDonald, Angie 2006). Many polymeric formulas have been proven to stimulate clinical remission (Wisikin et al, 2007). A study showed that polymeric formula, when taken for eight weeks, increased remission in seventy to eighty percent of children with Crohn's disease (Gavin et al, 2005). Linear growth was improved in six out of seven patients that used polymeric formulas (Wisikin et al, 2007). Although enteral nutrition provides benefits, seventy five percent of patients viewed the treatment as affecting the quality of life because of the restrictions placed on social activities (MacDonald, 2006). Children who have been recently diagnosed require a higher caloric intake for a number of reasons including, inadequate nutritional levels, excessive stool loss, possible malabsorption, metabolic rate, catch up growth and weight gain (Gavin et al, 2005). As a result of these negative side affects, corticosteroids are more commonly used for adults (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006).

Possible Preventative Factors of Crohn's Disease

There is no evidence of any dietary factors to prevent the development of inflammatory bowel disease; however, certain foods may increase gastrointestinal disease symptoms (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). "No preexisting nutritional abnormality has been identified consistently in patients who later develop inflammatory bowel disease" (Rosenberg et al, 2007, p. 464). Due to the fact that Crohn's disease is more common in developed nations, it is fair to state that there a relationship between Crohn's disease and a diet high in sugar, saturated fats and processed foods (University of Maryland Medical Center, 2007). Genetics also is a possible indicator of the disease because may people who have Crohn's also have a close relative with a similar condition (University of Maryland Medical Center, 2007). Even with all the research

conducted on Crohn's disease a direct cause is still to be determined.

Fiber

Although fiber is an important dietary component, different theories have associated Crohn's disease and fiber. It is important to see the different effects of soluble and insoluble fiber on the gastrointestinal system. Soluble fiber helps hold water in and as a result, may help patients with bowel movements that are too watery. Also, Insoluble fiber increases bowel movements because of the effects it has on gastrointestinal transit time. Although fiber seems to pose uncertainties on how it affects Crohn's, it seems that increasing the amount of daily fiber intake maybe beneficial (McClave, 2007). On various occasions, it is recommended for patients to be on a high fiber diet in order to decrease some of the symptoms of IBD (Rosenberg et al, 2007). A diet low in fiber, high in sugars and animal fat may provide some evidence in the development of inflammatory bowel disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Although there are different theories about how fiber affects IBD, the best approach maybe for each individual to decide how fiber affects them directly. Too much fiber might be harmful if the patient's Crohn's is active because of the effect it has on feces production rate and bowel movement. Fiber might lead to increased diarrhea and decrease absorption rate; also, it is important to note that fiber makes you feel full faster and is known to decrease appetite, so as a result individuals may eat less leading to even more weight loss. There may also be a link between diets high in refined sugars, dairy products, margarine, fast food and inflammatory bowel disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006). Yet, there is currently no specific evidence linking any specific food too the cause of Crohn's disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006).

Diet Treatment as Opposed to Medication

Medications have thus far been the primary treatment for Crohn's disease; however, alternative methods such as nutrition have recently come into consideration (MacDonald, 2006). Using medication can aggravate some symptoms of Crohn's disease for some individuals and as a result, these individuals are forced to look elsewhere for treatment. To look at an individual example, Debbie Sarfati was diagnosed with Crohn's disease at the age of eighteen and was forced to take anti-inflammatory medications, muscle relaxants and steroids like most diagnosed patients; however, her body was not able to tolerate these medications. Everyday her condition seemed to progressively worsen, and as a result, she was forced to consider alternative coping methods. It is critical to change an individual's diet to incorporate healthy food choices such as fruits and vegetables and to avoid items that have been processed such as cakes and cookies. More notably, it is important to understand what the body wants and what it needs. Organic foods are one of the healthier choices for individuals with bowel problems, foods that are easily digested such as cooked vegetables and soups are encouraged. In order to allow the body to be cleared of the toxins, antioxidants are vital for many individuals who have been on long term medications (Sarfati, 2005). It is important to understand that this is the story of one individual and no dietary plan should be considered without the consent of a physician. Stopping the use of medications altogether can be very dangerous and deadly and should not be done without proper supervision. It is recommended to avoid foods processed with large amounts of fat, dairy, hot spices and gluten (Errey, 2007).

Certain herbs have been linked to having anti-inflammatory effects such as turmeric, ginger, flaxseeds, hempseeds, and fresh nuts (Errey, 2007). There is the possibility that anorexia nervosa can also become present along side Crohn's disease but this

combination is extremely rare (Bayle & M.P., 2003). Many of the symptoms of Crohn's are similar to anorexia such as; weight loss, intolerance of certain foods, avoidance as well as fear of many types of foods. Some of the symptoms of Crohn's disease and anorexia are so similar that it is difficult to distinguish from the two with some individuals (Bayle & M.P., 2003). Although special attention should be given to both Crohn's disease and anorexia, they should be treated separately. Crohn's can be treated with diet and medications while anorexic patients need psychiatric treatment. There is a possible link between the development of Crohn's disease and the intake of chewing gum, soda and chocolate, but there was no link between citrus fruits and Crohn's (MacDonald, 2006). Many people with Crohn's disease consume fewer amounts of vegetables, fruits and fruit juices and have lower intake of dietary fiber, which may possibly be the leading factor for the development of Crohn's (MacDonald, 2006). Individuals who take in larger quantities of potassium, vitamin C, magnesium and water alongside more fruits and vegetables had lower incidence of IBD (MacDonald, 2006). Diets high in fish-oil may prevent the cause of Crohn's disease; Japan has been a nation whose diet revolved around fish oil and they had low rates of Crohn's. In recent years however, their diets have become more westernized with a decreased intake of fish oil possibly being the cause for the increase in the number of Crohn's patients in Japan (MacDonald, 2006). As Japan's diet increases in fat consumption so does the number of individuals diagnosed with Crohn's disease, which possibly may show a relation between fat consumption and the development of Crohn's (MacDonald, 2006). The food and drug administration in the United States have evaluated fish oil supplements as being safe to use, yet currently there is not enough research to make a direct link to the effects it has on Crohn's disease (MacDonald, 2006).

Conclusion

Although there are many possible theories as to the causes of Crohn's disease, there has not been any evidence leading to the exact source of this disease. A primary cause of malnutrition in Crohn's disease seems to be present because of malabsorption. Malabsorption is caused in Crohn's disease because of inflammation in the bowel wall, GI track and especially in the small intestine. One of the most common symptom of Crohn's disease is diarrhea, which can also lead to the cause of malnutrition. There are a number of different factors contributing to deficient nutritional status present in individuals diagnosed with Crohn's disease such as: inadequate nutrition intake, malabsorption, diarrhea, increased caloric intake required, changed metabolism rate as well as side effects from medications. In children it is critical to make sure that the disease is under control in order to prevent growth failure and to ensure that optimal development is reached. Many children who are diagnosed with Crohn's have had failure to reach proper height for many different reasons including malnutrition, inflammation, steroid use as well as being in a diseased state for a long period of time. Enteral nutrition seems to serve as an important component in the nutritional status of children with Crohn's disease because it ensures that patients get adequate vitamins and minerals along sided proper caloric intake. Enteral nutrition has been favored by physicians because it increases the chances of remission due to the fact that it allows bowel reset. More specifically polymeric formulas have been proven to induce clinical remission for some individuals and have been linked to improving linear growth in children (Wisikin et al, 2007).

Moreover, nutrition is considered a priority even when the disease is under control and the use of nutritional supplements is

recommended to reach optimal nutritional statuses (Wisikin et al, 2007). Nutrition plays a critical role in the development and treatment of Crohn's disease (MacDonald, 2006). As with any healthy diet it is recommended to eat a significant amount of fruits and vegetables especially for individuals with Crohn's. Also, it is significant to avoid excess dietary fat. It is critical for each individual to consider what foods have what type of effects on their bodies. It is recommended that individuals with active Crohn's disease take a multivitamin that contains minerals because of the malabsorption that takes place in the GI track. Individuals diagnosed with Crohn's are accompanied by a wide variety of lifestyle changes; however, it may be worth acknowledging that avoiding stress may help prevent flare ups, more research needs to be concluded and evaluated before a direct conclusion can be drawn. Lastly, it is critical for patients with Crohn's disease to be monitored very closely by their physician and or their gastroenterologist.

Foods / Vitamins/ Minerals

- Increase in calories in individuals who have a fever and for those who are extremely ill as a result of the malabsorption (Rosenberg et al, 2007).
- Multivitamins that provides one to five times the recommended dietary allowance for any individual with inflammatory bowel disease (Rosenberg et al, 2007).
- Fresh vegetables or cooked vegetables. (Sarfati, 2005).
- Flax oil, ginger, turmeric, flaxseed, hempseeds, and fresh nuts have anti-inflammatory effects (Errey, 2007).

- Larger requirement of protein because of the protein loss as a result of inflammation in the GI track (Rosenberg et al, 2007).
- Low fiber, high sugar and animal fat diet may prove a link to the development of inflammatory bowel disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006).
- Diet high in refined sugars, dairy products, margarine, and fast foods may provide a link to inflammatory bowel disease (O'Sullivan & Colm, 2006).
- Diet beverages, drinks containing alcohol or caffeine and diabetic candy that contain sorbitol make diarrhea worse (McClave, 2007).
- Avoid foods high in fat, dairy, hot spices, and gluten (Errey, 2007).
- Omega-3 fatty acids have anti-inflammatory properties (MacDonald, 2006).
- It is recommended for patients to be placed on a multivitamin to provide one to five times the dietary requirements (Rosenberg et al, 2007).

Summary of Crohn's Disease

Possible Cause:

Genetics, diet, environmental factors, definitional immune system and abnormalities in the body.

What Happens:

Inflammation of the small intestine, scarring of the intestinal wall, malabsorption of nutrients.

Symptoms:

Diarrhea, lose stools with blood present, fever, nausea, lose of appetite, malnutrition, weight lose, inadequate intake of nutrients due to inflation, pain throughout ones body, excessive pain in the abdominal.

***Treatment
Options:***

Medication, surgery, and diet.

The exact cause of Crohn's disease is still unknown; however, different theories have come into play. The cause of the disease may vary depending on the individual and each person diagnosed with the disease may have had a slightly different cause. Most individuals diagnosed with Crohn's disease have similar symptoms; although their maybe rare case of Crohn's disease depending on the individual. Treatment options can vary for each individual but the most common used option is the use of medications. Diet may help some individuals but further research needs to be conducted. Like all types of disease each individual's case varies and is different from others. Individuals with Crohn's need to be monitored closely by a valid health care provider.

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Harry Sebastian

Major:
Biological Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Mentor:
Dr. Robert Fowler

The Role of the *dinB* Gene
on Spontaneous
Mutagenesis in
Escherichia coli

Biography

*Harry Sebastian is a senior pursuing a degree in biological sciences and a minor in chemistry. He enjoys tutoring students in Chemistry and English. For his research study Harry investigated the effects of *dinB* gene on the rate of spontaneous mutagenesis in the bacterium, *E. coli*. His research focused on how the *dinB* gene contribute to the mutational load of the bacterium. Harry wishes to enter an M.D./Ph.D. program in the future. He hopes to do research which will help find cures for major neurological diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.*

The Role of the *dinB* Gene on Spontaneous Mutagenesis in *Escherichia coli*

ABSTRACT

The *dinB* gene is thought to directly regulate the mechanisms of spontaneous mutagenesis. This study seeks to investigate the effects of the *dinB* gene on the frequency of back-mutation in *Escherichia coli*. Two strains will be studied: TrpA23 and TrpA46. Although in the majority of trials the *dinB* gene contributed to an increase in mutation rates, this slight increase may not be significant. This suggests that the *dinB* gene and its gene product, DNA Polymerase IV, may not be singly responsible for the increased rate of spontaneous mutagenesis.

Introduction

The spontaneous mutagenic rate of *Escherichia coli* is controlled by many factors, one of which is the expression of certain genes. The *dinB* gene product, DNA Polymerase IV, is an error-prone DNA polymerase that allows the synthesis of DNA across damaged template (1, 2). DNA Polymerase IV, for instance, allows for the replication of DNA even when the *E. coli* DNA is damaged after being exposed to UV light (3). Without an error-prone DNA polymerase, replication cannot occur over damaged DNA template and synthesis would come to a halt. Additionally, the mechanism of adaptive mutagenesis in *E. coli* is linked by the products of the *dinB* gene (4, 5). The extent of the effects of the *dinB* gene on spontaneous mutagenesis, however, remains unclear. A study has found that the deletion of the *dinB* gene has shown little effect on the rate of spontaneous mutagenesis (6). The results of another study of the *dinB* gene, on the contrary, shows that a Polymerase

IV-lacking mutant has a “two- to threefold decrease” in reversions (7). These seemingly conflicting studies imply that genes located downstream of *dinB* may effect actual mutation rates (6, 8).

DNA polymerase IV is part of the polymerase Y superfamily, a superfamily of error-prone polymerases that can be found in many organisms because of its high tendency to be conserved through evolution (9, 10). The ability of the error-prone DNA polymerase to replicate past DNA lesions reduces the accuracy of the newly synthesized DNA. In *E. coli*, another member of the polymerase Y superfamily (DNA polymerase V) is also involved in replicating damaged DNA. Both DNA polymerase IV and polymerase V are highly expressed during the SOS DNA damage response (8). These polymerases can be crucial for the survival of the bacteria because it permits the synthesis of new DNA from damaged DNA.

DNA Polymerase IV may be able to synthesize DNA translesion because the DNA polymerase lacks its proofreading ability. Although DNA Polymerase IV tolerates the synthesis of DNA past DNA lesions, the insertion of bases on these DNA lesions is done with low accuracy. The frequent incorrect insertion of DNA bases will give rise to erroneous DNA and will increase the rate of spontaneous mutagenesis. Thus, at least theoretically, the expression of the *dinB* gene should increase the rate of mutagenesis. A recent study demonstrated that the *dinB* operon that controls the expression of the *dinB* gene actually includes four genes, *dinB-yafN-yafO-yafP*, and it is the interaction of the genes in this operon which contribute to the rate of spontaneous mutation (6).

This study directly examines the effect of the *dinB* gene in influencing the mutation rates of *E. coli*. Two strains of *E. coli* will be studied (TrpA23 and TrpA46) and mutation frequencies will be noted by recording the rates of back-mutation (using procedures

described later). To study the effects of the *dinB* gene, each of the two bacterial strains will either be *dinB* positive or lacking *dinB*, and the two mutation frequencies will be compared.

Materials and Methods

The materials required to conduct this investigation include basic laboratory glassware, minimal media plates, tryptone plates, kanamycin plates, heating plates, incubation box, refrigerator, gel electrophoresis device, and other appropriate laboratory equipment.

In order to determine the rate of mutagenesis, pure strains of bacteria must first be obtained. For this study, two strains of the *E. coli* will be examined (TrpA23 and TrpA46). Next, in order to compare the effects of the *dinB* gene on the reversion frequency, the *dinB* gene must be transduced into the strains. The successfully transduced strain of *E. coli* should have the *dinB* gene (cultures need to be grown in kanamycin plates to ensure purity).

To obtain the reversion frequency for both the *dinB*⁺ (*dinB*-present) and *dinB*⁻ (*dinB*-absent) strains, a colony of each strain should be inoculated in a tube containing 5 mL LB broth. Eight test tubes should be prepared to compare the effects of *dinB* on the two strains of *E. coli*, two test tubes for each: TrpA23 *dinB*⁺, TrpA23 *dinB*⁻, TrpA46 *dinB*⁺, and TrpA46 *dinB*⁻. The test tubes should then be incubated at 37° C in an incubation box overnight. After one day, 0.05 mL of the bacteria-filled LB broth should be transferred to a new 5 mL LB broth. This is then incubated again overnight at 37° C.

Next, the first set of bacteria-filled LB Broth should be plated in normal media and counted for colonies. In order to do this, a dilution must first be prepared. Plate the LB broth (at a 10⁻⁸ dilution) in a normal media and incubate the plates at 37° C overnight. The next day, the bacterial colonies that have grown in the plates should be counted and recorded.

Now, the second set of bacteria-filled LB broth should be plated in minimal media and counted for the number of colonies that have back-mutated. Colonies that have successfully grown on the minimal media have mutated in such a way that they can produce tryptophan and survive in the tryptophan-deficient media. The number of colonies that reverted will be used to calculate the reversion frequency (to determine the rate of spontaneous mutagenesis), and the reversion rates for the *dinB*⁺ strain will be compared with the reversion rates for the *dinB*⁻ strains. To do this, the bacteria-filled test tube is to be centrifuged for three minutes and the LB broth should be discarded. 0.1 mL of saline is to be added and the bacterial broth is then to be plated in minimal media (made in a 10⁻¹ dilution). Next, the plates should be incubated at 37° C and counted for colonies. Using the number of colonies that have grown after five days of incubation the reversion frequency is then calculated.

The next part of the study is to characterize the kinds of mutations that grew on the minimal media. The revertants are purified, grown on a separate plate, and incubated for one day at 37° C. Then, each of the revertants is to be tested for the kinds of back-mutation that they have using the Indole-3-Glycerol Phosphate (IGP) test. It is also possible to sequence their DNA.

Results

The reversion frequency is obtained by dividing the average number of revertants by the total number of colonies. Certain trends can be seen in the data obtained. In the case for TrpA46, for example, the reversion frequency of the *dinB*⁺ strain is always higher than the *dinB*⁻ strain for all the trials. The results fluctuate more unpredictably in the case of the TrpA23 strains. Statistical tests will be utilized later to check whether the presence of the

dinB gene actually cause a difference in the data. The following are the results of the TrpA46 strain:

TrpA46		
	dinB+	dinB-
1	5.17e-9	2.42e-9
2	4.14e-9	1.90e-9
3	6.44e-9	5.39e-9
4	5.65e-9	8.31e-10
5	1.17e-9	1.02e-9
6	3.38e-9	1.46e-9
7	1.37e-9	5.59e-10
mean	3.90E-09	1.94E-09

Table 1: Reversion Frequencies of seven trials with E. coli TrpA46 strain. The reversion frequency of the dinB+ strain is always higher than the dinB- strain in every trial.

A statistical test (unpaired t-test) is done on the following data for the TrpA46 strains to test whether the means of reversion frequency of the two bacterial cultures (dinB+ and dinB-) are significantly different. The t-calculated is 1.97, and the p value is somewhere between 0.10 and 0.05. The null hypothesis is accepted and the reversion frequencies of the two cultures are not significantly different.

The following are the results of the TrpA23 strain:

TrpA23		
	dinB+	dinB-
1	4.73e-9	1.33e-9
2	1.24e-8	2.29e-8
3	8.26e-9	1.10e-8
4	1.93e-9	2.09e-9
5	3.93e-8	4.17e-8
6	3.32e-9	6.55e-9
7	2.67e-9	2.97e-9
mean	1,04E-08	1,26E-08

Table 2: Reversion Frequencies of seven trials with E. coli TrpA23 strain. The reversion frequency for this strain is more unpredictable and follows no pattern.

An unpaired t test is also done on the following data for the TrpA23 strains to test whether the means of reversion frequency of the two bacterial cultures (dinB+ and dinB-) are significantly different. The t-calculated is 0.29, and the p value is greater than 0.10. Thus, one must accept the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the reversion frequencies of the two cultures.

The next two graphs depict the mean reversion frequency difference between the strains with the dinB gene and the one without:

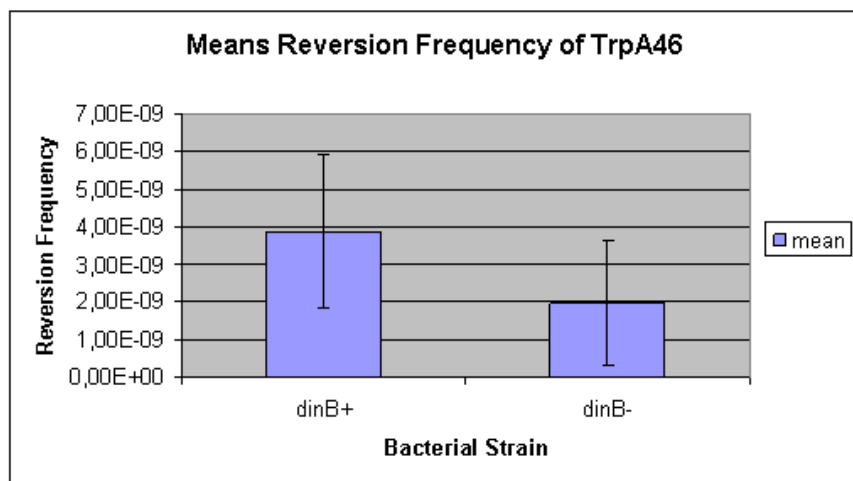


Figure 1: The means reversion frequency of TrpA46. The error bars depicted in the figure represents the standard deviation of the data points. As can be seen from the graph, on average, the reversion frequency of the TrpA46 dinB+ is higher than that of the TrpA46 dinB-.

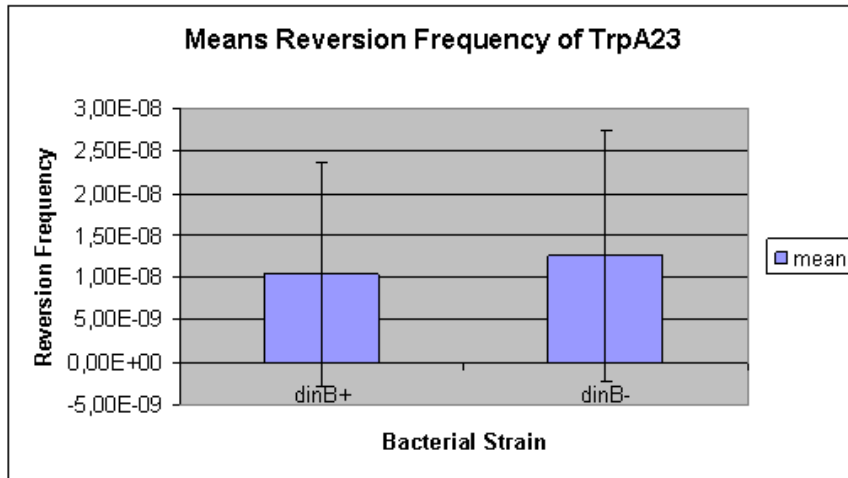


Figure 2: The means reversion frequency of TrpA23. The error bars depicted in the graph represents the standard deviation of the data points. As can be seen from the graph, the standard deviation is really high. This means that the raw data points vary a lot.

Conclusion

In theory, the strains of *E. coli* that have the *dinB* gene (*dinB*+) should have an increased in the frequency of mutations rates because the products of *dinB* gene, DNA Polymerase IV, lacks its proofreading ability and only allows the sloppy synthesis of DNA. If wrong bases are incorporated in the newly synthesized strand of DNA, the resulting DNA has a higher chance of being back-mutated (to gain its ability to synthesize tryptophan) and survive in the minimal media.

In our study, the TrpA46 *dinB*+ group is seen with a higher reversion frequency than the TrpA46 *dinB*- group. This coincides

with our initial theory. The observed difference between the two group, however, is not large. Although in all seven trials the observed reversion rates of the *dinB*⁺ group is always higher than the *dinB*⁻ group, the differences are always small. With the small sample, it is difficult to conclude that the difference that is seen in the two groups is really due to the *dinB* gene. A statistical analysis (unpaired t-test) is done on the data with our initial hypothesis stating that the means of reversion frequencies of the two groups are different. The result of the t-test, however, states that the hypothesis must be rejected and that there are no significant differences between the means of the two groups.

For the seconds strain, TrpA23, the raw data does not follow a predictable pattern. In some cases, the *dinB*⁺ group has a lower mutation rate while at other times the *dinB*⁻ group has a lower mutation rate. This implies that the *dinB* gene does not seem to influence mutation rates for this strain. The same statistical test was done on the TrpA23 strains (with the same hypothesis that the two group means are going to be different). The result of the t-test states that the two group means are not significantly different and it does not matter whether or not the *dinB* gene was present. The findings of this study support earlier studies that found that the *dinB* gene has little to do with spontaneous mutagenesis.

Although the experiments with the two strains of *E. coli* suggest that *dinB* does not play a significant role in mutagenesis, one should keep in mind that this study is done with limited trials. In the case for TrpA46, at least, *dinB* seems to play an important role in increasing the mutation rates (this can be proven through further trials).

As mentioned before, the rates of spontaneous mutagenesis may not be the regulated by the *dinB* gene alone. Because of this, to simply study the effects of a single gene may not yield any significant results. To fully understand whether *dinB* really

influences the rate of spontaneous mutagenesis, as previous studies have mentioned, it may be better to include in the study the genes surrounding the *dinB* gene. The interaction between these genes may provide a powerful insight into the workings of the *dinB* gene products and reveal the true role of *dinB* in mutagenesis.

In order to further the experiment, a similar study can be done with more trials this time (with twenty or thirty trials, for example) to get more statistical power. With more trials, trends in the data become more apparent and the data become more reliable. Similar studies can also be done with different strains of *E. coli*. With other strains of *E. coli* perhaps the role of *dinB* can be further explained. Another way to complete the study is to fully characterize the nature of the mutation that is, possibly, induced by the *dinB* gene. This can be done by sequencing the DNA of the revertants. By noting the trends in mutations, it is possible to make claims about the types of mutations that are most frequently caused by the *dinB* gene.

Although this study failed to provide the definite correlation between *dinB* and mutagenic rates, it supports the idea that *dinB* and its corresponding gene product, DNA Polymerase IV, may not be singly responsible for the mechanism of spontaneous mutagenesis. Further examinations should be conducted to the genes surrounding the *dinB* gene before any conclusions can be made.

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Sukhbir Singh

Major:
Biological Sciences
Concentration in Systems
Physiology

Minor: Chemistry

Mentor:
**Dr. Adrian
Rodriguez**

Detecting Genotoxicity in
Pacifastacus Leniusculus
(Crayfish) Exposed to
Polluted Sediments in
Coyote Creek and the
South San Francisco Bay.

Biography

Sukhbir Singh is a Senior majoring in Biological Sciences with a minor in Chemistry. Currently, he is working as a Peer Advisor with the College of Science. He is also serving as President of the Pre-Medical Club and as a member of the College of Science Dean's Advisory Board. Sukhbir is exploring the option of obtaining an MD PhD in order to work with underserved communities and contribute to society through research. Sukhbir enjoys the outdoors, camping, swimming, reading, movies, and hanging out with friends.

Detecting Genotoxicity in *Pacifastacus Leniusculus* (Crayfish) Exposed to Polluted Sediments in Coyote Creek and the South San Francisco Bay

ABSTRACT

Xenobiotics such as organochlorine pesticides (OC), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury, can greatly influence the biodiversity and balance of the aquatic habitats because of their toxicity. Coyote Creek in San Jose has the potential to accumulate xenobiotics. Crayfish are one of the organisms that are living in and are exposed to these contaminated environments. The comet and micronucleus assay were used to test for genotoxicity in four tissues types namely blood, gill, gut and liver. This paper presents the preliminary findings of the study. These findings will be used as baseline for other sites along the stream. Scientists have expressed concern about xenobiotic levels and their adverse effects upon both humans and wildlife. This study is important because fresh water habitats are constantly under threat of xenobiotic accumulation due to a number of factors. Xenobiotics in Coyote Creek, California include mercury, organochlorine pesticides (OC) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). These xenobiotics can greatly influence the biodiversity and balance of the aquatic habitats because of their toxicity. Furthermore, since parts of Coyote Creek are used for sport fishing, consumption of crayfish exposed to xenobiotics such as mercury may have an adverse impact on human health.

Introduction

Xenobiotic Sources

Studies have confirmed the accumulation of xenobiotics and toxic metals in sediments in the San Francisco Bay. (Anderson et al., 2007, Connor et al., 2007, Davis et al., 2000, Davis et al., 2007, KLI, 2002, McKee et al., 2004). These xenobiotics include organochlorine pesticides (OC), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and mercury. The sources of organic substances are from agricultural runoff, via urban drainage channels, chemical waste from local industries, and urban waste management sites along side the bay and streams that feed into the bay. Metal contaminants arise from naturally occurring sources such as mercury mines in the south Santa Clara Valley, discharge from municipal wastewater facilities, rainfall-runoff from city streets that are contaminated with dust from automobile break linings and from the refining and burning of fossil fuels. Urban drainage channels drain into local creeks that flow into the bay. One creek of interest is Coyote Creek that flows from the southern end of Santa Clara Valley through downtown San Jose and empties into the South San Francisco Bay at Dixon Landing in Milpitas (Figure 1). Along its course a number of urban drainage channels and small streams flow into this creek.



Figure 1: Map showing the flow of Coyote Creek.

Negative Effects of Xenobiotics

Many studies have been conducted in order to understand the effects of these toxic substances on the organisms living in these contaminated environments (Pitt & Burton, 2002, Hui et al., 2005, Lerner et al., 2007, USGS report, Kuivila, 1995). Pesticides present a great risk to an ecosystem due to their persistence and accumulation in the environment. Organochlorine pesticides (OC) such as DDT are insecticides that pose a neural toxicity threat due to their effect on neuronal membranes. Moreover, an occupational exposure of an OC compound, chlordecone, led to a neurological syndrome in which the patients suffered from a number of negative symptoms including behavioral changes, tremors, and headaches (Klaassen, 2001, pp. 771-772).

In an aquatic ecosystem, mercury is transformed to methylmercury. Methylmercury is lipid soluble and has a high level of stability. It quickly travels up the food chain due to its accumulation in fat stores in aquatic species and their predators such as birds, mammals, and humans. The gastrointestinal tract quickly absorbs Methylmercury and it readily enters the brain tissue where it is converted into inorganic mercury. In humans, methylmercury has led to developmental deficits in children exposed in-utero. In animals, methylmercury exposure has affected cognitive, motor and sensory functions.

In addition, studies have found genotoxic effects in organisms exposed to environmental toxins. A genotoxic carcinogen can lead to tumor formation due to the activation of oncogens and the inactivation of tumor suppressor genes. OC pesticides are carcinogenic as they may be involved in the induction of Hepatoma, a tumor of hepatocyte cells. Organochlorines have also been shown to cause tumors in Beluga whales (Kendall et al., 1998). Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have been shown to interfere with endocrine function of

developmental and reproductive physiology. Chronic exposure to PCBs have led to their action as promoting agents of carcinogenesis in rat and mouse liver tissue (Klaassen, 2001, pp. 279).

Crayfish are one of the organisms that are living in and are exposed to these contaminated environments. They are being used as test organisms in order to study aquatic pollution and its effect. (de la Sienna, 2003). Schilderman et al. (1999) concluded that crayfish can be used as biological indicators of aquatic pollution. Crayfish were chosen as test organisms for this study based on such factors as availability, useable tissue types, exposure to sediment, and ease of collection and storage. Crayfish live close to the sediment and they are potentially exposed to organic chemicals and metals. This study was conducted using the comet assay and the micronucleus assay in order to determine if the crayfish exhibit genotoxicity due to their exposure to contaminated sentiment in Coyote Creek.

The comet assay also known as single cell gel electrophoresis (SCGE) is a technique that quantifies the amount of DNA damage in an individual cell (Singh et. al,) The comet assay detects damage in DNA including single and double strand breaks, alkali-labile sites, oxidative base damage, and DNA-DNA, DNA-Protein, DNA-xenobiotic cross-links. It is used extensively for evaluating genotoxicity (Hart et al., 2004, Coughlan et al., 2002, Rigonato et al., 2005) and all types of nucleated cells may be used in this assay. The image obtained from the assay resembles a comet with a head and a tail (Figure 2). The head contains intact DNA while the tail consists of damaged DNA that has migrated away from the nucleus. The main advantages of using the comet assay for this study include the fact that it has a high sensitivity for

detecting DNA damage and it only requires a small population of cells.

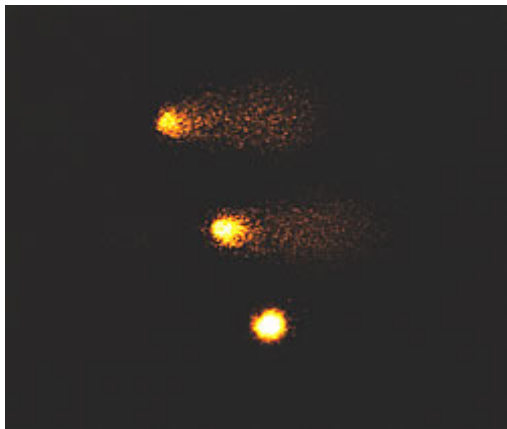


Figure 2: Comet assay results in comets that have a round head which is the nucleus and a tail which consists of fragmented DNA.

The micronucleus assay is an established standard test to analyze DNA damage and genotoxicity. Cells that contain DNA damage will exhibit small membrane bound DNA fragments that are known as micronuclei (Fenech, 2000). This assay can also be used to determine if a chemical is genotoxic and is widely used in cancer research.

We used four different tissues: gill, gut, liver and blood. All tissues types were tested for DNA damage using both the micronucleus and comet assay. These tissues were chosen for a number of reasons. Blood is exposed to environmental agents due to its physiological role in the transport of substances around the body. Gills are constantly exposed to the environment and are responsible for utilizing oxygen from the polluted water. The gut

is also exposed to the environment, as it is responsible for processing what the organism consumes. The liver plays a major role in detoxification.

We hypothesize that the crayfish will exhibit acute genotoxicity due to the presence of genotoxins in the sediments of Coyote Creek.

Method and Materials

Chemicals

The reagents used for the micronucleus and comet assay were as follows: Sodium Hydroxide (NaOH) (JT Baker), Tris Base (Fisher Scientific), molecular biology grade agarose (Sigma Chemical Co.), 0.5 M EDTA, Sodium Chloride, Trizma Hydrochloride, Hanks balanced salt solution (without calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, magnesium sulfate, and phenol red), (Invitrogen Corporation), Triton X-100 (Eastman Kodak Company).

Site Characteristics

Coyote Creek begins in Henry W. Coe State Park, and flows through Santa Clara County along the eastern boundary of San Jose. The watershed from which it emerges also provides water for Coyote and Anderson reservoirs in the hills east of Morgan Hill. It provides a warm fresh water habitat for a number of aquatic species. Crayfish were collected from a single site in Coyote Creek adjacent to William Street Park in San Jose, California (Figure 3). The specimens were transported to the laboratory at San Jose State University.



Figure 3: The collection site at Coyote Creek located next to William Street Park.

Biological Material

Crayfish were used as our test organism (Figure 4). Crayfish live close to the sediment and often hide close to it or burrow into it increasing their exposure to xenobiotics. Four tissue types (liver, gut, gill and blood/hemolymph) were obtained for test purposes. Blood was drawn using a 26-gauge needle and 0.1M EDTA in order to prevent clotting. Gill, gut, and liver were isolated via dissection. The tissues were placed in petri dishes and rinsed with Hanks solution and EDTA in order to remove calcium. Each tissue was cut into smaller pieces and a solution of Trypsin was used to dissociate cells from the tissues. The tissues were trypsinized for fifteen minutes. The cell suspensions were filtered using a 40 micron mesh tissue strainer.



Figure 4: Crayfish are good bioindicators of aquatic pollution and have been used to test genotoxicity.

Comet Assay

After filtration, the tissue cell suspensions were resuspended in 1 ml of phosphate buffered saline (PBS) and then centrifuged to obtain a pellet. The supernatant was discarded and 200 μ l of low melting point agarose (1%) were added to 25 μ l of cell suspension. One hundred microliters of the agarose-cell mixture was pipetted onto agarose coated slides and a coverslip was placed over the cells. The slides were placed on ice for 10 minutes to allow the agarose to form a gel. The cover slips were then removed and the slides were placed in Lysis Solution for one hour over ice. After cell lysis, the slides were rinsed with deionized water three times for five minutes each time. Slides were incubated in alkaline denaturation Solution for 40 minutes in order to unwind DNA. After equilibrating slides with TBE buffer for 10 minutes, they were electrophoresed for 6.5 minutes at 25V. After electrophoresis, slides were washed in deionized water two times for five minutes each wash. At this point the slide could be air dried for later use or stained with 100 μ l of 0.1 μ g/ml of propidium iodide.

Micronucleus Assay

100 μ l of cell suspension was pipetted directly onto microscope slides and allowed to air dry. After drying, the slides were stained with 100 μ l of 0.1 μ g/ml propidium iodide. Stained cells were analyzed microscopically for the presence of micronuclei. Cells were scored to determine the frequency and number of micronuclei per cell. As a measure of genotoxicity, the cells were classified as mononucleates, binucleates, or multinucleates.

Data Analysis

Data was collected using fluorescent microscopy. Comet assay slides were scored based on a scale of zero to five. A zero score represented no comet and a score of five represented a large comet in which the tail was completely separate from the head. Figure 5 shows the comet scale used. Figure two provides a realistic example of comet size zero and three. Micronucleus assay slides were recorded by the number of micronuclei seen per cell in each tissue type. For both assays one hundred cells per tissue type were scored for each crayfish. The data were analyzed by averaging the number of comets per tissue type and the number of micronuclei per tissue type.

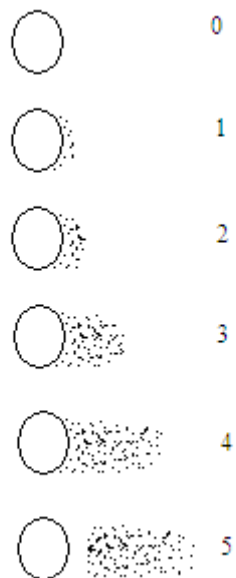


Figure 5: Scale used to record comet assay results. The white area represents the nucleus, while the shaded area represents the fragmented DNA that has migrated.

Results

Comet Assay

Data was collected from seven crayfish. For the comet assay, a total of 300 gut tissue cells, 700 liver tissue cells, 600 blood cells, and 700 gill tissue cells were scored. For all the tissues studied, the average comet size was small ranging from 0.2 to 1.15 on our scale. The liver presented the largest average comet size of 1.15 (Figure 6). The data was skewed towards low comet scores

because of the high frequency of zero scored cells (Figure 7). Liver tissue cells presented the highest score of comet occurrence.

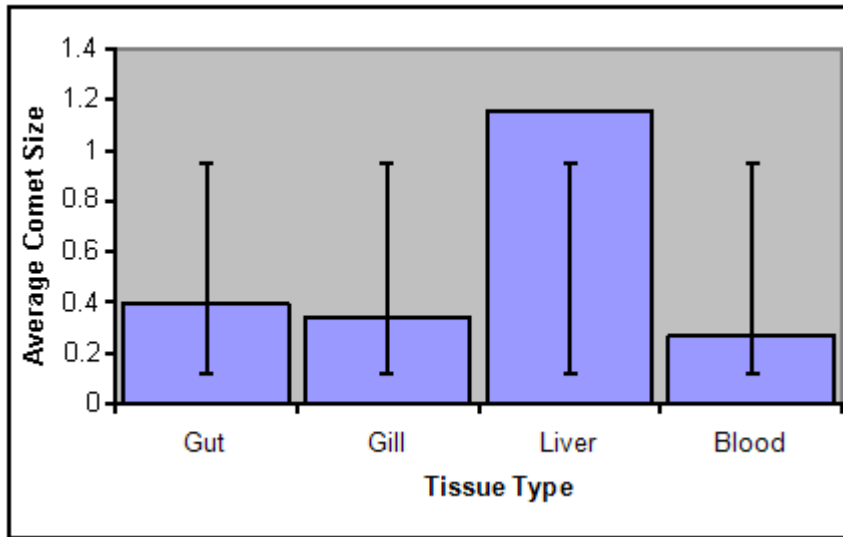


Figure 6: Comet assay results for all four-tissue types. The columns show the average comet size per tissue type. Liver cells exhibited the largest average comet size.

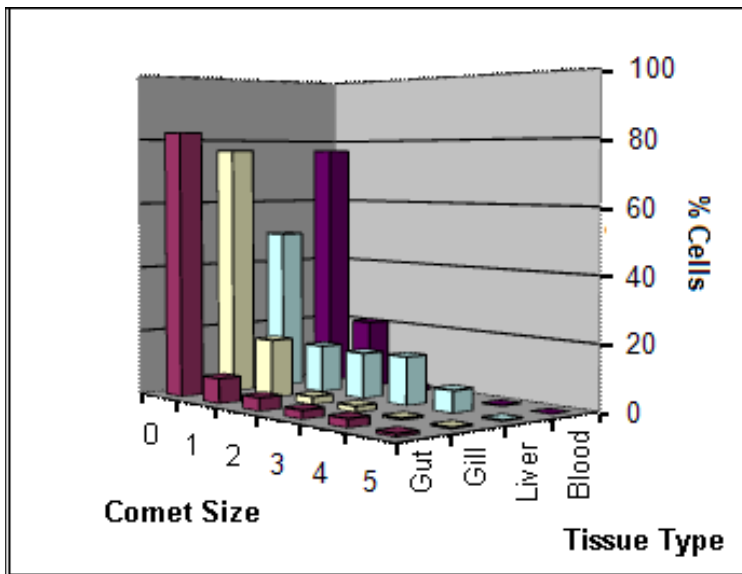


Figure 7: Frequency of Comets per size and tissue type. Liver tissue cells had the highest frequency of comets.

Micronucleus Assay

For the micronucleus assay, a total of 400 gut tissue cells, 400 liver tissue cells, 600 gill cells and 700 blood cells were scored. The average number of micronuclei varied from eight for gut tissue cells to fifty-seven for blood tissue cells (Figure 8). Blood cells presented the highest frequency of micronuclei (Figure 9).

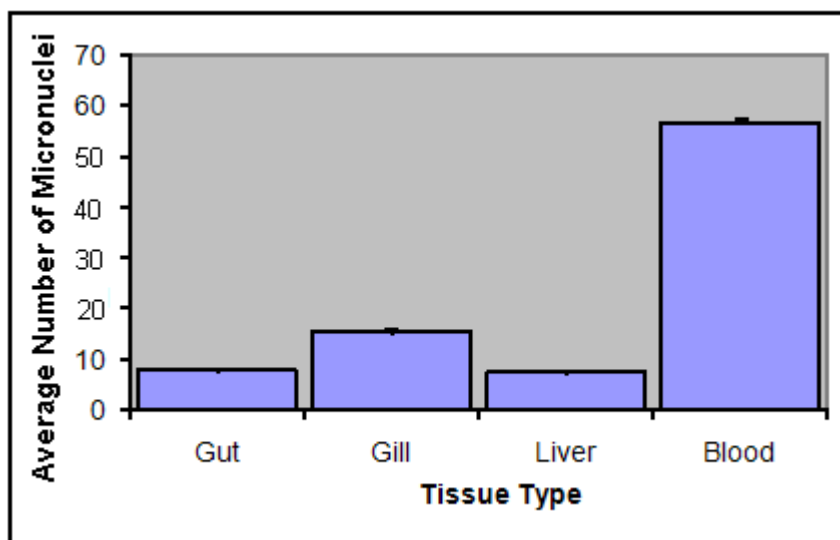


Figure 8: Micronucleus assay results. The average number of micronuclei observed for each tissue type. Blood exhibited the largest number of micronuclei.

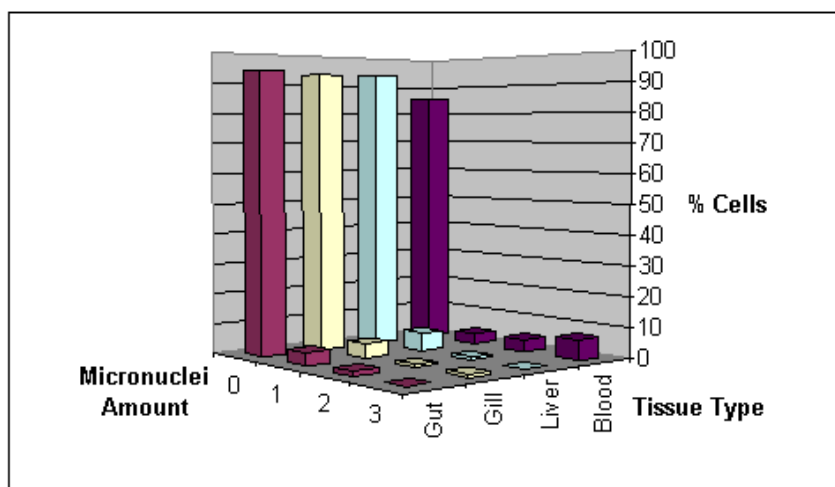


Figure 9: Frequency of cells with one or more Micronuclei per tissue type. Blood tissue cells had the highest frequency of micronuclei. One represents mononucleates, 2-binucleates, and 3-multinucleates.

Discussion

Findings

This paper presents the preliminary findings of this study. The study will be continued by collecting crayfish and exposing them to sediment from a downstream site in Coyote Creek that is closer to the south end of San Francisco Bay. We suspect that the south end of San Francisco Bay may have a higher accumulation of xenobiotics in the sediment due to the presence of the delta. These preliminary findings are our baseline that will be used for comparison at other sites along the stream.

The average comet size was very small for gill, gut and blood tissue. This signifies that this area of Coyote Creek is relatively unpolluted. However, liver tissue presented comets that were relatively larger than the other tissue types. One reason for the higher comet size in liver tissue may be due to the fact that it is responsible for detoxification. This results in the constant exposure of liver cells to xenobiotics. Liver tissue was the most fragile compared to gill and gut tissue. Some of the comets could be due to the procedural manipulation of the tissue. The higher average comet size could also be due to the electrical field that could have caused the DNA to pull out of the nucleus and migrate. Blood cells may be going through apoptosis due to the fact that they are short lived and there is a constant turnover. As apoptosis involves the formation of micronuclei, this could account for the high frequency of micronuclei observed in blood cells compared to other tissue types.

In addition, It is also important to note that each tissue type has its own ability to repair itself. This can greatly influence the comet size and number, as some tissue types may be better able to stand the exposure of xenobiotics than others.

Limitations

Our samples were small in number and were restricted to a small portion of Coyote Creek so they cannot be considered to represent the entire length of the creek, however the presence of the comets and micronuclei can provide insight into the environmental conditions of the creek. Another limitation of this study is the fact that it does not take into account age, which could account for exposure time, as this plays a role in the amount of genotoxicity suffered.

Conclusion

As this paper presents our preliminary findings, it is not possible to draw conclusions at this time.

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Vedada Sirovica

Major:
German and International
Business

Mentor:
Dr. Romey Sabalius

Swiss Author Martin R.
Dean's Novel *Meine Väter*
Explores a Suppressed
Multicultural Identity
Through the Search for an
Unknown Father.

Biography

Vedada Sirovica is a Senior majoring in German and International Business. Currently, she helps out as an administrative assistant at a construction firm. Also, she was involved in tutoring German students in her last year at SJSU. Her main interests include photography, traveling, film and art. Taking part in a study abroad opportunity in Mannheim, Germany has been one of the best experiences of her college career. Her passion has developed throughout her undergraduate years and she sees herself researching identity construction and multiculturalism in German language literature. Her ultimate career goal is to be a professor of literature one day while being able to teach abroad. She will either be attending the University of Washington or the University of North Carolina in the Fall.

**Swiss Author Martin R. Dean's Novel *Meine Väter*
Explores a Suppressed Multicultural Identity
Through the Search for an Unknown Father**

ABSTRACT

My research focuses on Martin R. Dean's novel "Meine Väter" and his struggle with identity as well as the feelings of otherness in one's homeland. The protagonist comes from a multicultural family with his mother being Swiss and his father originating from Trinidad. Even though he considers himself Swiss, he is viewed differently by his community because of his outward appearance, mainly his darker skin tone. Furthermore, the author challenges the traditional view of what it is considered to be Swiss. My research will focus on his struggle of cultural duality as well as the ambivalence surrounding his search for identity and acceptance.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to highlight the theme of identity, through the means of contemporary literature, using Swiss author Martin R. Dean's novel "Meine Väter",⁵ published in 2003. The basis of my argument is to illustrate the issue of identity and self for a person with a different ethnic heritage in a nation that has always been defined by a monolithic culture. The book

¹ Martin R. Dean: *Meine Väter*. (München: Carl Hanser, 2003). In this paper, quotes indicated with MV are from the paperback edition published by dtv in 2005.

incorporates autobiographical aspects and therefore serves as a significant example to highlight the problems that are encountered by individuals of a multi-cultural background. As literary scholar Romey Sabalius observed, “Martin R. Dean (1955-), born to a Swiss mother and a West-Indian father, feels like an outcast in Swiss society, which fuels his quest of coming to terms with his identity in his novels”.⁶ Only since WWII has the Swiss population been mixed with immigrants and is thus less experienced with their approach towards foreigners. With twenty percent of the Swiss population being foreign today, a large number of its inhabitants live multicultural lifestyles, thereby inevitably exposing the Swiss to other cultures.⁷ There is some opposition against those who attempt to live according to the norms of their former countries, while inside the borders of Switzerland. The “Swiss People’s Party” (SVP), a major political party in Switzerland, publicly expresses their desire to protect the Swiss way of life from foreign influences.

Since the novel was published in 2003, there is only very limited scholarly literature available. However, Dean’s novel has been reviewed in the major German-language papers in its year of publication. Also, in “*Meine Väter*”, Dean addresses the theme of identity, one that he has elaborated upon in his previous works. Moreover, Anne-Marie Heintz-Gresser explains the search for an impossible place where existence and nation are allowed to coexist. In relevance to Dean, the same search can surrender to a needed desire to negate ourselves, and who we are, in order to allow the

² Romey Sabalius, “Swiss-German Literature 1945-2000” in *Literary Encyclopedia*, LitEncyc.com.

³ Hallwag Kümmerly+FreyAG. *Switzerland in its Diversity*. Schönbühl-Bern: HKF, 2005/06, p.23-24.

two entities to coexist.⁸ Dean, as well as the protagonist Robert, have a West-Indian father. Having a darker skin tone than the typical Swiss is one of the reasons they stand out in society. Feeling singled out, pushes them to search for anonymity. According to Heintz-Gresser, Dean suffers from the myth of a protected and happy land, the key catalyst that helped him develop a critical literature.⁹

Sabalius in reference offers an overview of contemporary Swiss literature and addresses Swissness as a literary motif and an uneasy issue for contemporary writers in Switzerland. His findings indicate that the general trend in Swiss literature seems to drift away from the explicitly political and to gravitate towards autobiographical writing.¹⁰ In Dean's case, as well as in the novel *Meine Väter*, one can observe how the depiction of one's own microcosm also illustrates problems that affect society overall.¹¹

The novel published in 2003 narrates the story of the protagonist Robert, whose father Ray is from Trinidad and whose mother is Swiss. Robert's mother remarries a man named Neil, also an Indian from Trinidad, who can be described as the very opposite of Ray, Robert's biological father. Robert's stepfather Neil never allowed the questioning and curiosity that Robert had about Ray.

⁴ Cf. Anne-Marie Heintz-Gresser, "Das Territorium der Utopie," *Neue Perspektiven zur deutschsprachigen Literatur der Schweiz*. Ed. Sabalius, Romey. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997: 227

⁵ Cf. Anne-Marie Heintz-Gresser, "Das Territorium der Utopie," *Neue Perspektiven zur deutschsprachigen Literatur der Schweiz*. Ed. Sabalius, Romey. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997: 227-232.

⁶ Cf. Romey Sabalius: "Kategorisierungsprobleme in der Schweizerischen Gegenwartsliteratur." *1945-1995: Fünfzig Jahre deutschsprachiger Literatur in Aspekten*. Eds. Knapp, Gerhard P. and Labrousse, Gerd. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 1995: 179.

⁷ Cf. Sabalius (see footnote 3)

However, Neil's death presented the opportunity for Robert to finally search for his roots. Despite his wife's wariness, he sets out on a journey to London in order to find his biological father in the hope that he will be able to better understand and accept himself. His father turns out to be a person that does not resemble the protagonist Robert in the least. In fact, he is mute, in a wheelchair and possesses the opposite qualities Robert's wanted in a father. This forces Robert to explore other aspects of identity as well as how one can define oneself through means other than heritage. Through the lack of communication with his father, Robert is forced to find other means of tracing his father's history. The search takes him from London, to Switzerland, and finally to Trinidad.

The theme of identity in Dean's novel tries to solve the mystery of who we are in essence. The search is attempted by looking for building blocks that lie in a person's history. Initially, the protagonist views his identity as physical, and whichever characteristic deviates from that is looked upon as less authentic. As he distances himself from what he understands as home, the protagonist sees and accepts himself more favorably when he comes into contact with people of similar physical attributes and background. When in contact with his biological father, he recognizes his brown skin and accepts it as a sign of someone who is physically similar (MV 47). Robert has difficulty finding a balance between the old and new world, which he seems to be entangled in. Reinacher's book review explains how Robert's search for truth is ultimately the reason why our hero falls into a

crisis. His exploration shatters the carefully built up image of his life.¹²

Identity in this novel can be studied through several examples. One is the distinction between Robert's biological father, Ray and the father who adopted him, Neil. Ray is a character who has lost his ability to speak, thereby complicating the protagonist's search for identity. He is unable to take care of himself, and is dependent on a nurse for assistance. He stands in almost complete opposition to Robert's idealized version of him. Ray represents the old world of Trinidad, a citizen forever negatively impacted by the colonial history in his homeland. The protagonist often feels at fault for Ray's situation, not realizing that his expectations are to blame for this (MV 158). Robert understands Ray's helplessness because it is something he felt when he was very young (MV 163). He even admits that his logic is overshadowed by his childish longings (MV 185). Martin Ebel states in his review that the protagonist is not interested in his father's personality, but rather in the similarities they share.¹³ This, in turn, is the reason why Robert cannot understand his father Ray, he only accepts traits that are positive and comparable to his own.

Neil, on the other hand, portrays the modern world character, one who has assimilated into Swiss society, and who has become placid and content. He is rational and accepts his life in Switzerland. As much as the protagonist rejects Neil as his father, he is still in many ways like him. They can both relate to the

⁸ Pia Reinacher: "Vatersprache, in Lügen erstickt: Auf Augenhöhe: Martin R. Dean erforscht Sohnesgefühle" in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 August 2003.

⁹ Martin Ebel: "Den Vater suchen - sich selbst finden" in *Tages-Anzeiger*, 19 February 2003.

feeling of wanting to be recognized as Swiss, yet not being accepted as such. Throughout his life in Switzerland, Neil suppressed feelings of homesickness and a loss of belonging (MV 194). Moreover, lack of communication with Neil, or rather Robert's resistance to it, could be the cause for a lack of bonding between a father and son who have much more in common than our protagonist is willing to admit. He can typically be classified as the early immigrant to Switzerland who is his willing to assimilate without any reservation. As the protagonist points out, they are exemplary in comparison to today's immigrants that rush to Switzerland from war-torn countries. In addition to bringing their cultural norms along, they also refuse to submit to a strictly Swiss way of life.

A model immigrant should avoid questioning the values of his new country; instead, he needs to accept them as a compromise that is necessary in order to live as an integrated citizen. In opposition to Trinidad, Switzerland is a country with a cohesive population, where being Swiss is synonymous with being alike.

Robert fights against his association with Neil on the basis that he is not his biological father. In addition, he feels betrayed that his adoptive father did not allow him to accept Ray as another father figure (MV 129). Through this forced denial of Ray, our protagonist starts to repudiate himself and his roots (MV 137). Having experienced this suppression as a child explains his lifelong yearning to find the missing link. It is so deeply embedded in his identity construction that he refers to it as "phantom pain", and he is haunted by the desire to come to terms with his past (MV 360).

A second example of identity models in Dean's novel are the two women who the protagonist defines in opposition to one another. Navira is an Indian nurse taking care of Robert's father Ray in London. Robert is immediately drawn to her as he finds

similarities between his and her skin tones. Spending time with Navira allows Robert to accept himself, which up to now was an unfamiliar mind set for him. As an Indian in a predominantly white society, she had faced similar prejudices as Robert and could relate to him.

What differentiates them, and what Robert admires, is her ability to accept and embrace her heritage in light of the fact that she is surrounded by a different culture. He admits to feeling more Indian by merely being in the company of people of Indian descent. Her colorful clothing reminds him of the fact that he tries “to play down his skin tone by wearing clothes that neutralize his skin color” (MV 84 - translated by the author of this article). This is where part of his Swissness comes to light, namely the desire not to be different from the homogeneous image of everyone else.

Leonie, Robert's wife, is a consistent voice of reason throughout the story. She constantly encourages Robert to come back home to Switzerland, and she repeatedly reminds him that he has a family. Her idea of identity construction does not depend on heritage, nor is it a relevant factor for her. She continuously attempts to distract Robert from his obsession by emphasizing that his ghosts from the past are still haunting him (MV 343). As his journey reaches an end, the protagonist asks his wife how one handles a truth that seems unbelievable (MV 363). As a symbol for reason, she explains that he cannot assign value to a truth. His truth needs to be assessed on the basis of how it answers the questions with which he set out (MV 363). As with most examples, the author frames Swiss characteristics, such as Leonie is, as positives. He is drawn home to what he is familiar with and which is subconsciously ingrained in his reality, yet he fails to fully accept it as a valid reason for returning.

The countries featured in this book, Trinidad and Switzerland are polar opposites. The old world is Trinidad, one full

of color and life, whereas Switzerland is described as dull and grey (MV 66). To reconcile a past that lies in both places is unimaginable for someone that grew up in central Europe. The chaos of Trinidad is exemplified by the volatility of race relations between its African and Indian populations. The majority of social tension and crime is often a result of racial prejudice, which is not common in Switzerland, where subtle forms of racism prevail. Almost every sentence uttered or written in "Meine Väter" has a racist connotation (MV 297). The most commonly used adjectives to describe Trinidad are: dirty, dependent, hot, and even brutal (MV 213, 218). A country that is home to several racial groups is fighting the battle between its earlier immigrants (slaves from Africa) and later immigrants (Indian laborers arriving during the 19th century) who are by now fully integrated into the country.

As Trinidad deals with its own internal struggles between African and Indian, the Swiss have taken a defensive stand against immigrants who are challenging the values of the nation. The Swiss only started questioning their identity once they were faced with foreigners (MV 176). Their unfamiliarity with other cultures within their country causes them to observe rather than get physical (MV 196). The only way to retain the predominant culture of their land was to promote values that everyone followed and respected. Intentionally showing that one is bicultural is almost disrespectful in the eyes of conservative Swiss citizens. In a country so strictly governed by rules and regulations, the immigrant needs to "learn" how to be Swiss and act accordingly. Robert is in every way a Swiss citizen, and is only questioned as such because of his darker skin tone. Obermüller's critique of the novel discusses how "Robert only superficially finds what he is looking for. On the inside he stays the same as before: a man of a slightly darker skin tone, who is seen just as foreign in Switzerland as he is in

Trinidad”¹⁴. It is this “out-of-place-feeling” that forces him to seek acceptance somewhere else.

Through his journey the protagonist comes to appreciate the orderly culture of Switzerland, with its set beliefs and laws, once he has experienced the laxness of Trinidad, where nothing rules but chaos. Similarities often times reduce the degree of feeling out of place (MV 330). The focus on physical characteristics makes it much easier for Robert to find similarities, which is possibly a reason as to why the protagonist focuses on finding visual features, rather than searching for abstract conceptions of identity. The identity exploration ends in the realization that his own self cannot be found in someone else’s history, nor in the characteristics of any one nation. Räkel mentions in his book review that this novel is attempting to show that “identity cannot be inherited”¹⁵. Many critics follow suit by illustrating the complexity of identity construction first, followed by an explanation how Martin R. Dean is looking in the wrong place. Obermüller states that, “Identity is constructed from the inside, combined with the perception of how others see us from the outside. This identity formation is also dependant on memory as well as a certain experience that teaches us to accept ourselves as we are”¹⁶

¹⁰ Klara Obermüller: “Lebenslügen und andere Katastrophen: Martin R. Dean legt einen grossen Roman über die Suche nach seiner Herkunft vor. Der Schweizer Autor kann viel - leider weiss er dies auch” in *Weltwoche*, 13 February 2003.

¹¹ Hans-Herbert Räkel: “Vatermangel: Martin R. Dean lässt die Söhne zu Wort kommen” in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 July 2003 (translated by author of this article).

¹² Klara Obermüller: see footnote 11(translated by author of this article).

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Tuneka Tucker

Major:
Behavioral Science and
Sociology

Minor: Business

Mentor:
Dr. Preston O. Rudy

“ ‘It’s about a Social
Movement. We Are Not
Just a Union’: An
Examination of the
California Nurses
Association’s Use of
Social Movement
Unionism.”

Biography

Tuneka Tucker is a Senior with a Behavioral Science and Sociology Double major with a minor in Business. She is the Administrative Coordinator in the San Jose State University Child and Adolescent Development Department Office. Part-time, she is a Disc-Jockey on KRTY, San Jose’s Hot Country. She has done volunteer research in the Stanford University Sociology Department, and hopes to study race and social movements, and continue her research on the California Nurses Association. She will be attending North Carolina University in the fall of 2008.

“It’s about a Social Movement. We Are Not Just a Union”: An Examination of the California Nurses Association’s Use of Social Movement Unionism

Introduction

The nursing profession has changed immeasurably, from its inception as a domestic duty practiced within the home, to modern-day care. Technology has changed the face of nursing, as has the creation of bureaucracy in hospitals, health care, and the actual nursing job. Today, many of the same technologies that have been introduced to make the nurse’s job easier and safer, have also threatened its very existence. In the present health care climate which is geared towards cost-cutting and downsizing, staff nurses are fighting for their right to practice the way that they were trained and have determined provides the best care for the patient. In California, registered nurses have banded together to form one very powerful organization comprised of the most active sector in the labor movement called The California Nurses Association.

The California Nurses Association (CNA) has been a very visible actor in California politics for at the least the last few years, starting with their role in the defeat of all of Governor Schwarzenegger’s special election initiatives in 2005, and more recently with the opening of Michael Moore’s movie Sicko, an indictment of the United States’ for-profit health care system. The CNA nurses have also been active outside of the state since creating their national organization, the National Nurses Organizing Committee. They were also able to gain huge advancement in the 1990’s for California nurses, with the passing

of the Safe Staffing Law in 1999, the first of its kind in this country.

The current study seeks to identify the ways that the California Nurses Association is able to represent the interests of its members and to empower the members to become spokespersons in the hospital on the issues of patient care. The union has a reputation in the popular media for being very powerful, due to its success in its visible political efforts, so I sought to learn about these efforts from the standpoint of the rank-and-file nurses involved, to better understand how the union garners support from workers who spend long hours in a highly emotionally charged job, then use their own time to show up for protests and rallies. I also wanted to know their individual motivations for getting involved in the union and its politics. The sociological significance of the study is to gain an understanding of the processes by which individual members become a part of this movement and how the union uses its position as a representative of a highly respected profession to meet the needs of both the individual nurses and the larger organization.

Literature Review

Apesoa-Verano and Verano (2003) describe four different main ideologies found in nursing: professional, apprenticeship, and managerial, and unionist – working class, then provide a historical context for each. The professional ideology comes from the beginning of nursing as an occupation to provide a compensated and respected role for women. The emphasis was that it promised a better life for the nurse than did factory work. The nurses sought standardized education for the practice and control over nursing school accreditation, in order to earn level of independence of similar value to that of physicians (Apesoa-Verano and Verano 2003: 85). Professionalism was oriented to the middle-class

woman, so an answer for the working-class woman, the apprenticeship ideology, materialized with the perspective that nursing was a trade and was perceived to be rigidly anti-intellectualist. The most important aspect of this ideology was hospital training and bedside understanding, and the mark of a “professional” was hard work and dedication to the craft. The managerial ideology emerged with the end of private duty nursing and the advent of the hospital nurse. With this came new opportunities to advance within the field of nursing, but the price paid was that of professional autarchy, due to the hierarchical structure found in hospitals. Nursing also became more stratified, as higher level nursing specialties separated from regular staff nursing. As an answer to this stratification and the changes in practice that have taken place because of it, this profession has seen a surge in the unionist – working class ideology since the 1980’s (Apesoa-Verano and Verano 2003:88), coinciding with the surge of organization and job restructuring found throughout the industry. Although many nurses do see unionism as a way of meeting these challenges, they also see a conflict between the desire to mobilize in order to protect their practice, and the desire to advance the professionalism of nursing (Apesoa-Verano and Verano 2003:88).

It is not only unionism that conflicts with professional values, but also the bureaucratic environment found in hospitals. According to George Strauss, “Most managers feel that (1) management alone should decide who is competent for a job, (2) and how the job will be done, and that (3) an individual’s loyalty should be to his own company, and (4) management alone should be responsible for discipline” (Ponak 1981:397). These values are completely antithetical to nurse autonomy and professional nursing practice which allow a nurse to make decisions and provide care based on the needs of the patient, not on the needs of management.

This can cause nurses to feel powerless in their own jobs and to resolve this, they may choose to organize and join unions. Because their primary concern is not the pay and benefits, but the need to have a voice in the care that they provide, their negotiations will include more professional concerns, which Archie Kleingartner refers to as the “expansion of bargaining thesis” (Ponak 1981:396). This thesis assumes that professionals differentiate “professional” goals and “traditional” goals when involved in collective bargaining and that they feel that those “professional” goals are the more important of the two. The thought is that in the first round of negotiations, they will focus more on the traditional bargaining items, such as wages and benefits, and then save the other items for later negotiations (Ponak 1981:398).

The encroachment on the nurses’ scope of practice comes in many other forms, including depleted staffing levels, advanced technology, and increased job duties, all of which reduce the time that the staff nurse is able to spend at the bedside. Although there is evidence to the contrary in the State of California, according to the nurses who participated in this study, while ancillary staffing has effectively been reduced because of legislation that has improved staffing ratios for registered nurses, in other states there has been an increase in ancillary staff and RNs are required to supervise them (Clark et. al., 2001: 135).

In addition, the aides and licensed vocational nurses do most of the bedside care, as it is considered lower level work, thereby removing staff RNs from the bedside and causing job dissatisfaction (Clark et al. 2001: 135). There is also an increase in “floating” for nurses, in which they are required to work in various areas in the hospital, some of which they may not be adequately trained to work in, causing further anxiety, and the perception of reduced quality of patient care (Clark et. al 2001:

135). The increasing amount of paperwork that RNs are required to fill out reduces the time that nurses get to spend with their patients. Possibly, the factor with the most impact is that managed care has created a system where only the sickest of patients are admitted to hospitals, effectively increasing the acuity of the patients that the nurses have to care for, obviously increasing the workload (Clark et. al 2001: 135). All of these add up to nurses' perception of a reduced quality of patient care found in the hospitals.

Nurses must rely upon organization or unionization to serve as a vehicle for change in the circumstances that they find most unacceptable. When nurses find that they have trouble getting help and support from administration and feel that their voice is not being heard in the hospital, they are more likely to view a union as a way to rectify the situation (Clark, et. al. 2001:144). Given the level of dissatisfaction with the changes to our healthcare system, especially among the nursing profession working in hospitals, nurses are looking for ways to make their voices heard, making this a time of great opportunity for unions to expand their reach. Nurses also feel a real sense of duty to partake in patient advocacy, and therefore have a need to have a voice in the patient care in their workplaces (Clark et. al, 2001:135).

The kind of unionism practiced by the California Nurses Association to address these situations is what Fantasia and Voss (2004) refer to as social movement unionism. They outline six characteristics that differentiate the new social movement unionism from the old business unionism that was prevalent before the 1980's and still exists in many unions (Fantasia and Voss, 2004:126). First, the new organizers frame union membership as a vehicle for solidarity and social change through worker action, rather than the top-down approach which provides protection for

those who agree to be represented by the union. One of the components that they discuss is “promoting rank-and-file leadership”, recognizing the importance of the workers being led by their peers. Second, social movement unions use “corporate campaigns’ in order to gain leverage over powerful corporations that are barriers to fulfilling their interests. Third, because the traditional means of organizing with the National Labor Relations Board are cumbersome and bureaucratic, social movement unionism circumvents these barriers by passing out cards to the prospective members. If they want to belong to the union, they sign them and the union is recognized if 50% plus one does so. Fourth, the authors discuss a social justice orientation within these organizations. The fifth point is that organizers use a variety of strategies, which keeps employers guessing about the union’s next move. They may use corporate campaigns, strikes, letter writing, committees, or legislative advocacy, but they vary their uses depending on the particular situation that they face. The sixth component is that the union perseveres through the triumphs and the defeats, and uses unionism as a movement (Fantasia and Voss, 2004:126-130). The California Nurses Association has positioned itself as a social movement union, utilizing all six of the practices that the authors outline. Their strategists have framed their political activism in terms that not only benefit nurses, but the public as well, thereby further increasing support.

Despite all of the professional difficulties that nurses face in the workplace, only 10% belong to the American Nurses Association, and only 17% belong to unions (Gordon, 2005:241). This is an opportune time for the strategists in unions and professional associations to reach out to non-members and communicate how they can provide solutions to workplace problems. The California Nurses Association has been particularly

responsive and successful in this area, forming a national arm called the National Nurses Organizing Committee, and boasting 75,000 members in 40 states (calnurses.org). They have sponsored legislation in California that enforces safe nurse-to-patient ratios in hospitals, and are currently involved in promoting universal healthcare in California and nationwide. They have a variety of strategies to ensure support from the nurses that they represent, and also to garner support from legislators and patients. The California Nurses Association's success has come largely from the use of the social movement unionist tactics that Fantasia and Voss describe.

Methods

The data were gathered using in-depth, semi-structured interviews. I started by calling the organization and introducing myself, asking if there would be anyone willing to speak with me about political activism within the union. Once I found an informant who was a former official of the CNA, she gave me access to the organization by setting up two visits to headquarters. During one visit, she and another elected official took me to lunch and we discussed the problems befalling the nursing profession. When we returned to headquarters, I was permitted to speak with several union staff members who were not nurses, but gave me an understanding of the operations of the organization and some of the tactics used and the reason for those tactics.

My informant advised me that I would be able to meet some CNA activists if I attended the opening of the movie *Sicko*, since nurses were going as part of a publicity drive for Single-Payer health care, which they are supporting. I went to the Camera 7 Theater in Campbell, California on Friday, June 29, 2007 and there I met twelve nurses who said that they would be willing to participate in an interview about political activism and their involvement in the union. My selection criteria were that the

participants were registered nurses, and that they had the perception of themselves as activists. In this preliminary phase of research on the organization I did not want to exclude anyone who felt that they had something to offer to the study. Of the twelve people that agreed that day to be interviewed at a later date, I actually interviewed six. I also asked the people that I interviewed the names of more respondents.

I interviewed a total of fifteen RNs between June 29th and August 2nd. Their ages were between twenty-nine and seventy-four years of age. There were two males and thirteen females. Four of them were actually retired from the nursing profession, although they continued to renew their nursing licenses, and a fifth is retiring at the end of September. Four were RNs who are actually employed by the union, although one of them was on a leave of absence from her job and another continued to work at the bedside and in the union as well. Six of the respondents have bachelors degrees in nursing, four have associate's degrees in nursing, although one of them also has a bachelor's in a different field, four have three-year hospital based diplomas, and one started her career as a licensed vocational nurse and took a challenge exam to become a registered nurse. One has a master's degree in nursing, one was going to finish a dual master's program in Nursing and public Health in September, and one had a Juris Doctorate. Fourteen of them joined CNA because they worked in hospitals in which you had to be a union member in order to be a registered nurse, although three had prior knowledge of the union and would have joined anyway. The other nurse, however, belonged to a different union, but thought that CNA was doing great things for nurses, so she joined, not as a union member, but as a member of the professional organization, so that she could be involved in their activism.

In order to make the subjects feel comfortable, I asked them to choose a place where they would be able to speak freely about their involvement without fear of being overheard. Most of the interviews took place in small cafes and coffeehouses in San Jose, California and I conducted one in the respondent's office in the hospital. The activists who were also CNA staff members were interviewed in their offices at headquarters in Oakland, California. I began by asking questions about why they chose nursing as a career, how they had been educated to become nurses, how long they had been members of CNA, and why they joined CNA. I moved into questions about their activism and what it meant to them, trying to find out exactly why nurses, who are known for working long hours on their feet, are willing to write letters, go to Sacramento or New York, and go to rallies on weekends, and sit on unpaid committees.

The difficulty in interviewing politically active nurses is that they work long hours at an exhausting job, then spend a portion of their free time working with the union. Therefore, some of the nurses that were able to participate were actually retired from working in hospitals, although they continued to renew their licenses. This provided an interesting perspective on the organization, because although they were not dealing on a daily basis with the problems that they were fighting, they were still dedicating their time to creating a better life for nurses and patients. I only interviewed one nurse under 30 years of age. Another nurse explained to me that it is difficult to get the younger nurses to see beyond the hospital, so most people do not get involved until they are older and have more experience nursing.

I recorded the interviews using a Creative Labs Zen Vision: M mp3 player and recording device, which made transcribing the interviews a slower and more difficult process than using

traditional transcription equipment. I transcribed the interviews verbatim. Next, I printed out the interviews and did a thematic analysis of their content. From each answer that the subjects provided, I extracted the theme of the statement that they were making. I created a document where I listed the themes of each interview, and analyzed the themes for frequency and pertinence to social movement unionism and reported the findings in the following section.

Findings and Discussion

CNA underwent some changes in the early 1990s, changing from a business union, whose activities centered on wages and benefits and compliance with hospital administration, to the association that it is today that resembles social movement unionism and seeks to represent the interests of the nurses, not the hospital budgets. After an analysis of the transcripts recorded from the fifteen interviews, I found that the nurses spoke about their patients being their foremost reason for getting involved in activism, usually by first taking a position in the union that enables them to feel like they have more say within the union. “Patient Advocacy” leads them to get more interested in the political aspects of the union, such as supporting the Clean Money initiative and single-payer health care. The nurses also begin to understand that the union empowers them to take care of issues in the workplace without seeking permission from the elected officials and staff of the union. Next, they begin to use that power, both in the workplace, and in their communities, expanding the definition of patients to include every person, since “at some point, we will all be patients (“Zoe”, 2007)”. Finally, the nurses experience personal growth from their involvement and continue their activism, some even into retirement.

Staff Nurses Take over the California Nurses Association

The California Nurses Association is “the largest and fastest growing organization of direct care Registered Nurses in the country” and they “are dedicated to providing a voice for nurses and a vision for healthcare (calnurses.org).” The California Nurses Association had once been a more hierarchical organization, belonging to the American Nurses Association, with the union arm of the professional organization being run by administrative nurses who had little personal interest in the union. After a struggle between the staff members and the union leaders, the staff nurses were able to detach from the ANA and self-regulate. James, an executive board member who has been active in CNA since the day he became a nurse in 1977 explained how the change unfolded.

"We basically had a revolution in CNA in 1992 and 1993. It was really a result of various things. One was that there was a staff nurses' movement within CNA to try to change the organization from below... So there was a constant fight for several years. Then in 1992, the former executive director Barbara Nichols made the mistake of firing the top collective bargaining staff because they were getting too radical... Anyway, this aroused the staff nurse leadership in CNA of which I was a member to fight back, to say this was not going to fly, to fire, I think it was 12 or 13 people, including Rose Ann DeMoro who is our current executive director... We took to court the whole idea that there were people who were members of the board of directors and were managers and pro-management, who were not represented in collective bargaining by CNA, but were making decisions about collective bargaining by making decisions about the budget. We won the case. And also at the same time we were organizing everyday. We were in

the hospitals organizing against these firings. Staff nurses had all sorts of demonstrations. We had all sorts of actions, and then we were organized for the elections. We were going to try to win the elections. So the elections happened and we won a bare majority on the board. There had been one staff nurse on the board out of fifteen and now there were eight out of fifteen. Barbara Nichols announced her resignation and the one vote majority on the board decided to hire Rose Ann DeMoro as the executive director. So that is really how the staff nurses took over the organization (“James”, 2007).”

Thus, CNA's current philosophies were born of a struggle involving the mobilization of rank-and-file nurses and their eventual defeat of larger forces using collectivity. The overthrowing of the old guard involved a change from business unionism, characterized by top-down leadership, to the way that they operate today as a social movement union, providing the rank-and-file nurses their own voice in the workplace and opportunity of leadership in the organization. Members say that now, because the members of the Board of Directors are also bedside nurses, they share the interests expressed by staff nurses in the hospitals. They are aware of the issues that nurses want in their contracts and the barriers to patient care that need to be hashed out with management. They also work hard to create solidarity among their members, and to teach their members that they are CNA and CNA is not the representative that speaks for them. They are the front line, and they know what they need to get the job done, so they have the power to do so without permission from managerial levels within the union.

Patients First

“Patient advocacy” was an important topic among the participants in this project. For the nurses, barriers to patient care are the main cause of political struggle and disagreement with hospital administrators. Every issue that they take on as a major organizational battle, whether through lobbying or other forms of collection action, is necessary for nursing practice and patient care. According to Stephanie, a 46-year old labor and delivery nurse, “We care for our patients and I think that if nurses had more input then we would have a better system and be able to provide better care (Stephanie 2007).”

This pursuit of larger social justice that goes beyond their own jobs is one of many reasons that CNA nurses have been advocating universal healthcare, which they have been doing for twenty to thirty years, according to Cynthia, a high ranking official in the union, who initially got involved because CNA helped overturn the denial of her leave of absence after her husband died. Nurses see the human side of what happens when people do not have health care daily. Julie, a very active retired nurse, told me a story in which a young man was admitted to the emergency room hospital and needed a cardiac catheter. She was told that he was going to be stabilized and transported to the county hospital because he had no insurance. She protested because the county hospital did not give patients cardiac catheters. The manager’s reply was a shrug. Julie said that she threatened to call a local television station and report the treatment that this patient was being given, and the manager, not wanting the bad press, ensured that he could receive the needed procedure. Her argument was that this never would have been an issue under a universal healthcare system. Every nurse that I interviewed stressed the importance of universal medical care and how it would change not only their jobs, but society as a whole. Their fight for single-payer health

care is important to them personally, however, the larger issue is being able to care for their patients, and also curing some of the other ills in society.

"If anyone can change this nation, it's the nurses," Julie avowed, illustrating the desire for greater social change outside of the nursing profession. "It's about a social movement. We are not just a union." Other members reiterate that patients trust nurses so it is a nurse's obligation to fight for social justice. Amy, a 34-year-old RN and Labor Representative for the union said about nursing that, "We are the number one occupation in public credibility, which is a very powerful thing and can be used to help everyone, not just our patients ("Amy", 2007)." Cynthia, told me,

"Nurses have a credibility bank, which is full to overflowing. When we speak on certain issues, people tend to listen to what we are saying more than if we were just a regular citizen, so when we champion certain causes, we have an easier time selling an issue than someone else might. It is really important that we use that credibility and trust to protect our community. So we have a responsibility since they have given us that trust, we have a responsibility to speak out on their behalf ("Cynthia", 2007)."

CNA provides its nurses "Voice and Respect" (calnurse.org) by emphasizing the importance of collectivity in the workplace as a way of empowering the rank-and-file membership. One of the stories I had heard was about a nurse representative who insisted that the contract stated that she could be present at the reprimanding of another nurse. The human resources representative disagreed and when the nurse representative was suspended, a large group of nurses showed up, and wanted to know what was going on. Because of their collective action, no action was taken against either of the first two nurses. CNA gives its

nurses contractual support and personal support that allows them to feel more comfortable confronting issues at work. Gina, a twenty-nine year old nurse who started her career in upstate New York, where she felt that unions had no power said the following:

“The union has provided a sort of parental unit for us, so that we feel safe in our practice so we don’t feel like we are going to be fired from our jobs, so that we have a voice to explain or stand up when something happens. And things happen in health care all the time to really good people, so CNA serves as that kind of backing, the way a family would back its members. That is the way that CNA backs its members so that they can do a good job and provide good care (“Gina”, 2007).”

CNA is more concerned with empowering the nurses to help themselves than with providing grievance assistance, although they do so when necessary. However, the idea is that grievances are not required as frequently they are in other organizations that use business unionism, since the members in CNA have the means to take care of issues before they escalate. Julie explained that, “Nurses are looking to CNA for help, not realizing that *they* are CNA, not some labor rep over here.”

It is a struggle to convince some of the less active nurses that they do have the power to make a difference at work, which is why so many of the active members devote their time to explaining to others that they have rights. Julie told me, “This is really the fight for equality, I think, but we have to push, drag, coerce many of our nurses to come forward and find out that they have power and strength, that they are intelligent and that they really can think.”

CNA Nurses Get Political

In addition to the using collectivity to advocate for patients in hospitals, CNA uses legislative advocacy to reach out to communities and constituents. I asked about this and the replies all centered, again, around the idea that nurses are the most respected profession in our society, and that people listen to nurses, so the nurses feel that it is their duty to fight politically for social justice. According to Gallup News Service survey results released in 2006, nurses are in fact, the most respected profession (Gallup News Service, December 14, 2006). While they do advocate for things that will help them at work, such as patient ratios and whistleblower protections for nurses who report unsafe working conditions, they have also advocated for broader issues such as the Clean Money Initiative that was on the state ballot in 2006. This initiative would have made public office a possibility for all people, regardless of fundraising ability, since it would have made funds for campaigns a public expense. The idea behind this initiative is that as long as campaign funds come from PACs and other means that business owners and corporations use to gain access to candidates, that candidates will never be free to represent the constituents, and they will always represent the interests of corporations. It is an example of the social movement unionist strategy that uses a variety of tactics to keep management and indeed, the hospital industry, guessing about their next move to ensure that that they become recognized as a powerful force with the means to get their interests met. The Clean Money Initiative is also an illustration of the “self-expanding” nature of social movement unionism, which values both victories and defeats as a process of change. Although the initiative was defeated, it publicized an issue that was important for the nurses and it gave them a direction for further political struggle.

Cynthia had this to say about the Clean Money Initiative:

“We broadened patient advocacy to include advocacy for social change because we feel that our job does not stop at the hospital door. Because we have these skills, they need to be used in a broader context. Why are nurses advocating for clean money? A nurse takes care of patients. Our response what that we were not able to adequately campaign for candidates that would do the right thing for our communities and patient because they were being bought off by lobbyists and we had to get into that arena and change it, so we could get back to advocating for the patient. So when you look at the broader picture, we’ve incorporated social issues as well (“Cynthia”, 2007).”

Nancy, who is very close to retirement but plans to stay active, also commented on the need for nurses to be politically active on broader social issues:

“Many things affect people’s health, than just health care. Most things that keep people healthy have nothing to do with health care. It is if someone has a place to live, adequate housing, adequate food, clothing, education. All of those things affect your ability to be healthy and function in a society. I see nursing as more universal than taking care of patients in any setting. I consider myself one of the privileged, because I have a decent education, a decent job and decent health care. I feel an obligation to see that others have the chance to have that opportunity also (“Nancy”, 2007).”

Initial Reasons for Political Activism

At a micro level, a process emerged by which individual members of CNA become politically active. There is typically an

event that gets them active at the union level. For example, Stephanie described an issue that she had at her hospital in which they were required to fill out a form about smoking cessation for all patients who were admitted to the hospital. She worked in labor and delivery and was appalled that she had to take time away her patients to fill out a smoking cessation survey for newborns. This was the catalyst for her to join her hospital's Professional Practice Committee. Once she was involved in the union and started receiving emails about actions that the union was taking on a national level to enact social justice by way of single-payer health care, she began to see that nurses must be active in politics. Isabel, the nurse who was saved from suspension by the collective action of her peers says:

“You cannot separate nursing from politics and the longer you are a nurse, you see that. Nursing is political in and of itself with the Board of Registered Nursing, and Department of Health Services serving as regulatory agencies. Beyond that, with the care and condition deteriorating in the hospital, CNA has found that when they cannot stop the process on their own, they have been successful getting help using legislative advocacy (“Isabel”, 2007).”

Because CNA can issue continuing education units to satisfy nursing licensing requirements, they use the classes to educate nurses on issues that are important to the organization. “The transformation for me becoming more active in CNA, or at least more active at work, took place when I went to a CNA workshop that was offering CEUs and was promoting, I think, Proposition 85 at the time. I really got a background on where CNA came from, and about unions in general”, said Gina, the

youngest, and least active nurse that I interviewed. She has been active in the union for one year, and is beginning to understand how politics play a role in her nursing practice, but she still sees things at the level of the union, without the view of “society as patients,” which is the thought that all members of society are a nurse’s patients, not just the ones currently in the hospital.

Although all of the nurses cite different reasons why they became active, they all began membership for some specific reason and were eventually able to see that the union had a greater purpose that they wanted to get involved in. This is because the union uses various recruiting techniques that speak to different members who would like to accomplish different things with their membership. Maybe a nurse cannot be involved with the Professional Practice Committee because of other commitments, but does need to complete her yearly Continuing Education Units. A nurse who may not yet understand her place in the union’s struggle may begin to after hearing about the CNA in the context of this country’s healthcare system after going to one of the classes, just as Gina did. The union provides different activities for those desiring different levels of involvement, giving everyone the opportunity to be active, should they want to, which is a very good way to build solidarity, a main objective of social movement unionism.

Personal Growth as a Vehicle for Solidarity

Several of the nurses also talked about personal growth that has come with involvement in CNA, both at the union level and at a more universal level. Gina said,

“It has helped me transform in other areas of my life...The people in CNA have helped me to understand the importance of my voice and how powerful my voice can

be. CNA helped me to begin my communication process at work, to walk up to people and say, what do you think about this? I was timid like had just used my voice for the first time, CNA helped me in that way, with open and honest communication, with not only my staff members, but my whole world”.

Kenneth, a male nurse who came here as an immigrant and initially wanted to be a doctor and saw nursing as a way to get his foot in the door told me, “Personally, I have learned to give. Before, I was selfish and only thought of myself. Involvement has made my personal and professional level a higher level, more mature.”

Isabel said, “Being an RN and being involved in CNA has changed how I feel about myself. You develop a confidence and when you are involved in CNA, it’s not just about being a member and being active, they give you the tools and nurture you, and you have your peers that help you along the way. That has been personally satisfying.”

These members all identify the personal ways that being an active member has helped them to grow, but I would argue that this personal growth causes greater solidarity. Gina told me that she uses the voice that CNA helped her to find in the workplace to inform the other less knowledgeable nurses on staff about their rights under their union contract. Kenneth has taken a volunteer position within the union that does not allow him to work any overtime, but he feels is important enough to the union’s purpose that he is willing to sacrifice. Isabel has been active in the union in many unpaid capacities for similar reasons. These members all serve as examples of social movement unionism as a vehicle for solidarity in order to get the members to solve their own workplace

problems, thereby rendering the need for the bureaucratic grievance process nonexistent.

One Nurse's Perspective on Professionalism

The topic of the interviews was political activism, so the topic of professionalism in nursing only came up once, although all of the nurses interviewed referred to nursing as a profession and to California Nurses Association as both a union and a professional organization. One nurse felt that nursing is not actually a profession, because of the requirement for nurses to join a union and because of the lack of autonomy that nurses have in their jobs. She told me:

“The other thing is that I don't think that nursing is all that professional. I think that a lot of what nurses do is very task oriented, but the part of it is the majority of nurses are ADN's and they are missing that critical thinking piece that comes with a BA education which I think you need to be called professional. And there is a whole lot of argument over that. Canada now requires a bachelor's, and a whole lot of other countries do, and here we are in the US and you've got, well the license is good enough. I think that the decisions that you have to make in nursing are getting more complicated and you make a mistake in an office and misfile something, you lose some money. You make a mistake in a hospital, somebody dies. It's not an equal thing and even though I am an AD nurse, I think that the bachelor's should be the entry level standard, and I think that that would help with the professionalism with the idea of nursing, because I don't consider nursing a profession, which people don't like to hear. We wear uniforms, we have our names on them, we belong to a union, we punch a time clock, we are hourly, and we don't require a BA. How professional is that?”

Later in the interview, she continued,

“But there are nurses that belong to the AFL-CIO, which is labor. It is not a profession and I am still really struck by that. I know it is offensive to say to nurses that we are not professional but, oh well.”

This provides an interesting counterpoint to the widely accepted idea that nursing is a profession, particularly since during the past year, the CNA became a member of the AFL-CIO as a strategic move in their fight for single-payer health care, and other scholars have discussed nursing and professionalism at length.

Conclusion

The nurses of the California Nurses Association have found a solution to their workplace problems using social movement unionism. Unorganized nurses find their tactics attractive, thereby creating a draw to the organization over other organizations. Because they are a union solely for staff nurses, they claim to be able to better serve the interests of their members, since they focus on only one profession. There may be some truth to that, as they have become the fastest growing staff nurses' organization (calnurse.org). With their array of bargaining strategies, they have been able to put together a very attractive wage and benefit package in their contract. The thing that makes that organization even more attractive, according to the answers that I received in the interviews, is the opportunity to make changes in the hospital by having an outlet for fixing problems with nursing practice and patient advocacy, leading to both personal and professional development. Their Professional Practice Committee seems to stand alone in the industry, as a part of the contract that allows

these issues to be addressed by a paid, elected committee. The emotional nature of nursing calls for nurses to be able to care for the patients and the business nature of today's healthcare systems disallows this practice in many cases. These nurses have regained control of their practice through their staffing ratios and social movement unionist tactics that give them more freedom to care for their patients.

CNA provides its nurses a contract that they are involved in creating every step of the way, from developing the contract to ratifying it, just one more way that the nurses are empowered and given a voice within the organization. California Nurses Association uses the card practice described by Fantasia and Voss to certify its representation in hospitals; however, they send the card to the NLRB or "an appropriate organization" to be counted, giving the nurses the final say in the decision to be represented by CNA (calnurses.org). As Fantasia and Voss point out, this disregard of the typical procedure of union certification, is a show of strength for the union.

The California Nurses Association utilizes a very active research department that is able to find information that uncovers wrongdoings in hospitals and provides empirical support for laws that the union is advocating, such as single payer health care and safe-lift policies. When CNA was preparing to strike Tenet healthcare system, the research department launched a corporate campaign and examined Tenet's finances and found information that got them indicted on regulatory charges. This is just one of many examples of how CNA has used the corporate campaign model to meet its needs when bargaining.

The California Nurses Association is a social movement union as defined by Fantasia and Voss (2004) in Hard Work: Remaking the American Labor Movement, using all of their defining characteristics of such a union. Although the unions that

were described in the book were trade unions instead of professional unions, there are parallels in their tactics, even if the issues facing the two different types of unions are not the same. The California Nurses Association's membership numbers, centralized governance, strong orientation to social justice, and public reputation give them the potential to be more successful than the Justice for Janitors and Las Vegas Hotel Workers Campaigns that the authors use to illustrate social movement unionism (Fantasia and Voss 2004:134-159).

This organization will provide opportunity for study over the next few years for those interested in health care, social inequality, social movements, unions and the labor movement. They have a vision for their union, not just in the hospital, but how they can create social change. If one cause is defeated, they restructure their tactics and try it again. They recognize that their position as nurses and the most respected profession in our society wields power, and that they have not only the ability, but the responsibility to create equality in our society, because "people listen to their nurses ("Cynthia", 2007)." Another opportunity for research would be to interview the nurses about their perspectives on nursing and professionalism, to see if any CNA activists share the opinion of the one nurse quoted in this study, and if the affiliation with the AFL-CIO has changed their perspective in terms of their level of professionalism, since public perception of their professionalism may be tied to their ability to gain support for a universal health care system. In addition, it would be important to know if the change to a social movement unionist orientation has created better contracts for the nurses, as this would answer questions about its effectiveness when compared to the business union model. I would also like to get an understanding of the public's opinion of the California Nurses Association to see if they have any impact on California residents' voting behavior. Finally,

I would like to investigate the validity of the claim that it is difficult to get the younger nurses active and see what, if any, effect this has on organizing the membership, as this would answer important questions about the potential for a resurgent labor movement.

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Adam Welch

Major:
Social Science (Single
Subject Preparation)

Minor: Latin American
History

Mentor:
**Dr. Maria Luisa
Alaniz**

Intermodal Trucker Labor
Protest in Central Valley
Stockton

Biography

Adam Welch is a Senior majoring in Social Sciences (Single Subject Preparation) with a Minor in Latin American History and is a transfer student from De Anza College. As a student, community activist and labor organizer he has been active in social movement activism for over 10 years in San Jose. His research project is based on his own experience as a labor organizer working with predominantly Sikh immigrant truckers in the Stockton area from 2004-2005. He hopes to continue combining his research with social movement organizing as well as go into teaching in one form or another.

Intermodal Trucker Labor Protest in Central Valley Stockton

Introduction

Background

Nestled in the San Joaquin Valley is the easily over looked city of California's Central Valley, Stockton. On the gritty south side of the city, off a main thoroughfare of taquerias and tire shops in a predominantly Latino neighborhood, lies unexpectedly the historical heart of the Sikh immigrant community since the turn of the century. Today the Sikh temple, or Gurdwara, is tied inextricably to the industry of trucking and as many as one third or more of the male members of the temple work in the occupation. Many of the Sikh truckers own trucks which they lease to trucking companies subcontracted by logistics firms for the short-haul shipment of containers by truck from the rail yards to manufacturers, retailers and warehouses throughout the area. Called Intermodal trucking, the term refers to the movement by truck of shipping containers which are interchangeable between ship, rail and truck modes of transport.

On April 26, 2004 Punjabi Sikh Indian truckers of Stockton, joined by the vast majority of the estimated 300-400 Intermodal truckers in the area, initiated a nearly two week long strike in protest of escalating diesel prices which they pay out of pocket, along with demands around improved pay and working conditions. Truck traffic out of the Union Pacific and Burlington-Northern Santa Fe rail yards crawled to 5% of normal on the first

day of the strike.¹⁷ The effort of the Stockton truckers, especially the Sikhs, would play a key role in the ensuing Intermodal trucker strike that swept west coast ports within the next week and even southern and eastern ports. By striking first and, as some Stockton truckers claim, playing a role in initiating the Oakland port truckers strike several days later, the Stockton Sikh truckers played a leadership role in the ensuing west coast strike. In August of the same year they went on to initiate several successful workplace actions and strikes up through December 2004 as members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) union.

This manuscript is a social history of these events including the period of the wildcat strike, union involvement (of which the author was a participant) up to the point where the leadership of the drivers ended their union involvement in early 2005. This research further places the drivers and their struggle in several contexts to better grasp a more nuanced understanding behind the events: Beginning with an overview of the Intermodal trucking industry, a look at the political economy of California's Central Valley, and following the narrative a discussion of the radical tradition of the Indian and Sikh diaspora which is linked to the Stockton truckers.

Coming to Stockton

After deliberating for nearly an hour in the library of the Stockton Gurdwara July 28, 2004, roughly fifty Sikh Indian truck drivers came to a sudden consensus- hands were raised- and the decision was made: those present would join the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). "Damn the bastard that can't afford to pay \$6 for his dues," jokingly said one of the driver leaders, Sohan Singh, as the room became a flurry of signing forms and

¹⁷ *The Record*, April 27, 2004.

exchanging money. After receiving their newly minted membership cards, called a “red card” in the tradition of the IWW, drivers emerged from the library meeting room of the Gurdwara library holding them up like bars of gold.

Many observers might see this moment as the beginning of a labor struggle, and certainly it was beginning of the IWW labor union’s involvement, but for the Punjabi Sikhs who make up roughly 80% of the Stockton Intermodal trucking industry, it rather could be seen as perhaps a second chapter in their struggle.¹⁸ Whether in the Gurdwara library- whose walls are covered with the martyrs of the Sikh religion and fighters against British colonialism in India- or in dusty pullouts off of local highways, this wasn’t the first gathering of drivers held to discuss their conditions and plan action.¹⁹

When the initial wildcat strike of Intermodal truckers across the west coast broke out in late April and early May 2004, I was involved in the IWW, described in detail below, in the capacity of a volunteer organizer in a Bay Area campaign among the workers of a local retail grocery chain. I had previously worked in the industry and had been a staff organizer with another union. I also played a role in the administration of the union as an elected

¹⁸ Though no formal survey or statistical information exists regarding the demographics of the industry, this seems to be the figure I would most comfortably assert through discussion with drivers and my own observation. Estimates drivers have given range from two-thirds to 85%.

¹⁹ The Stockton Gurdwara library has undergone renovation since these events have taken place. The framed pictures of religious and Ghadar era martyrs have been put into storage as of summer 2007.

member of the General Executive Board and as a trainer in the Organizing Training Program of the union. Within the Bay Area branch of the IWW I worked with others in initiating small solidarity efforts in support of the striking Intermodal truckers at the Oakland port. Following the Stockton truckers contact with the IWW, I became one of three core organizers along with IWW members Bruce Valde and Harjit Singh Gill. We were volunteers initially but began receiving a stipend as paid staff as the campaign progressed. From this point on we worked with the truckers on an almost daily basis until the end of the campaign.

Purpose and Approaches

Becoming perhaps a minor cause celebre in certain milieus of the labor movement and political left, the events detailed here are a topic that years after the events I still find myself being asked about. Articles sometime accompanied by photo spreads of the campaign appeared in the now defunct, 20-something generation oriented, progressive magazine *Clamor*, union reform journal *Labor Notes*, and the left-oriented South Asian online periodical, *Samar Magazine*. Internationally, the radical Frein Arbeiterinnen- und Arbeiter-Union or FAU union of Germany published on the front page of their monthly *Direkte Aktion* a translated article along with an interview of one of the truckers.²⁰ Other European syndicalist unions carried brief mentions of the campaign in their publications as well. This very public profile of the campaign among certain circles and rumors as to its outcomes and demise

²⁰ Adam Welch and Charisse Domingo, "Stockton Truckers," *Clamor*, Issue 30, January/February 2005; Joshua Freeze, *Labor Notes*, October 2004; Adam Welch and Charisse Domingo, *Samar*, "Road Warriors," Issue 18 Available at: <http://www.samarmagazine.org/archive/article.php?id=166>; Adam Welch, "Vorsicht: Wobbly am Steuer," *Direkte Aktion*, January 16, 2005 Available at: http://www.fau.org/da/ausgaben/DA_166/art_050116-080917.

leaves lingering questions for many I'm sure, but whether this piece will provide them with an awaited reckoning of the campaign I cannot be sure.

The goal of this piece though does not aim to delve specifically into the questions of why the campaign ended or under what conditions it may have continued. Such inquiries would require a level of speculation that would be better reserved for a different forum and inevitably distract from the analysis that I attempt to present in this work. Rather, the main goal of this piece is to outline a narrative of Stockton Intermodal trucker protest and to place these actions within several contexts of analysis, making my primary focus not on the IWW union, but the truckers themselves.

The initiative to begin this project came about through my own desire to record the struggles that took place, but also to give them meaning through analysis; and through creating a deeper meaning we begin to see those in struggle, whether Sikh truckers on strike in Stockton or Latino immigrants marching in the streets of Chicago, with an independent agency, set in particular contexts and shaped by social and historical processes. These help present us, as much as these elusive and sometimes ephemeral qualities are discernable, with underlying character and motivations and I hope that readers will be able to see these in the narrative as clearly as I came to them in my work with the truckers.

Two aspects I wish to avoid are the common reduction of labor struggles into two main formulations which are sometimes overlapped. One is as a dependant of structure, whereby labor struggle is reducible largely to a byproduct of the contradictions of

capitalism.²¹ Certainly as long as workers are exploited by capital, there will be resistance of one sort or another. But the terms, character and intensity, I believe are largely shaped other more qualitative factors. Second is as a dependant of institutions, whereby worker struggle is made possible by the presence of powerful apparatuses of labor unions, in cadres of staff and large coffers, which often come to be personified in a single individual (such as Samuel Gompers, John Lewis, César Chávez and perhaps more recently the main personality of the Change to Win Coalition, Andy Stern). While the strength of this approach allows insight into the dynamic role and contributions that dedicated individuals can make to social movements, the limitations of this view are in amounting to a “great man,” or rather a “great institution,” lens of understanding events; instead of the deeper understanding that social movements and their everyday protagonists deserve. While each of these approaches lends themselves to strengths and

²¹ See Karl Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” in *The Marx-Engel’s Reader* Ed. Robert Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1978), pp. 473-500. Though not present in Marx’s earlier and more humanistic work such as the “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,” we can clearly feel the determinism and sense of the inevitability of capital’s advance marching hand-in-hand with workers struggle in Marx’s more popular works such as the “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” “The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to association. ... What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.” For an excellent overview and discussion of the debates around agency, structure and class in the social sciences in her work on Latino farm workers in the California cotton industry see Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton and the New Deal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 4-6. I take inspiration from her approach which she sees as “driven by the underlying question of the relationship between structure and human agency.”

weaknesses, I believe that this narrative will speak to the power of self-organized workers, their independent leadership and the role of grassroots led organizations.

The questions delved into in this article first began to form in my mind during the organizing with the mainly Sikh truckers in Stockton. Between two and a half hour round trip car rides to Stockton, meetings and endless cell phone calls, a number of questions began to pull at my consciousness. The tenacity of immigrant workers in self-organizing to confront their employers was certainly inspiring, but not original. Seeing their strikes in the context of the truckers as independent contractors, possessing no formal rights or the meager protections within the traditional context of labor law, is nothing short of courageous, but again not without several precedents.²² Perhaps this account can be one more complement to the existing accounts that others have woven together around similar struggles. But I think several unique themes emerged in mind during my involvement with the Stockton truckers that not only fascinated me personally, but after looking

²² For case studies of immigrant worker organizing in Los Angeles see Ruth Milkman and Kent Wong "Organizing Immigrant Workers, Case Studies from Southern California" in *Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the 21st Century*, Ed. Lowell Turner, Harry C. Katz and Richard W. Hurd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 99-128; on independent contractor taxi drivers in New York see Mathew Biju, *Taxi! Cabs and Capitalism in New York City* (New York: The New Press, 2005); for an instance similar to the Stockton truckers where Vietnamese independent contractors working for the San Jose Mercury News delivering newspapers launched a self-organized wildcat involving a larger number of workers see Adam Welch, "Mercury News carriers wildcat," *Industrial Worker*, January/February 2001 or Adam Welch, "News carriers strike resolved with a 12 percent raise," *La Voz*, October 23, 2000.

into the literature and asking questions, I was led to further examination of the events.

Methodologies

The formal aspects of this research project began in the summer of 2007 while working as part of the San Jose State University McNair program. In Stockton that summer, I examined archival sources of the University of the Pacific, the San Joaquin County Central Library in Stockton, as well as reading ethnographic and historical sources on the early Sikh community in Stockton, the Khalistan movement in India, and general background sources on Sikhism. In-depth interviews of truckers who participated in these events as well as organizers and community activists were conducted. One of truckers who I built a relationship with during the campaign served as my primary informant on many of the events outlined below and from his interviews I based my subsequent interviews questions to cross reference events and viewpoints. I also spent time looking at the socioeconomics of the Stockton/San Joaquin Valley area as well as the history of the dominant agricultural industry of the region and the labor struggles that occurred in that industry.

The informal aspects of this project began through my own participant observation through my role as a labor organizer in the union campaign outlined below. Not having experience as a truck driver and only having marginal experience with independent contractor workers, my relationship with numerous truckers and our various fights around day to day issues affecting them became my crash course in the structure and operation of the Intermodal transport industry. My relationship with truckers whom I met during the campaign and knowledge of the industry became the starting point from which to start my research. Formal interviews

of several truckers as well as informal conversations with other truckers that played varying roles in the events and conversations with fellow organizers supplement the data analysis. The methodology I choose to follow throughout this piece is partly shaped by my own involvement as a participant and witness to many of the events after the July 2004 meeting, though the main focus of this study is the truckers themselves and not my involvement with them or the IWW specifically.

2. Gritty Realities: Intermodal Truckers in the Central Valley

“We’re getting paid the same as 10 years ago, but everything else keeps going up. Insurance goes up. Everything goes up. And now gas. We make no money”

-Jatinder Singh, Oakland port trucker

What struck me hardest in organizing with the truckers in Stockton was the convinced resolution of the truckers of the need to fight their companies. Even the reluctant or scared drivers would not deny the reality of the conditions they faced. It didn’t seem anything like what might be called the trade union consciousness that urban workers I had previously organized with might develop. Perhaps owning, or at least mortgaging, their own trucks gave them a greater attachment to the industry as would any skilled worker who owned the tools that their employer depended upon. I would describe it as more of a gritty class consciousness than anything else, a consciousness that understood the daily necessity of the trucking companies to squeeze the truckers for profit and to maintain their competitiveness in relation to the logistics brokers.

The city of Stockton could be described as gritty as well. With a poverty rate comparable to the similarly sized Birmingham, Alabama²³ of the deep South and sharing with nearby Modesto a listing in the top five US cities for auto theft.²⁴ Though Stockton is a far cry from the metropolitan centers of wealth in the Bay Area, less than two hours away, the Stockton Intermodal truckers move the products and goods to the warehouses that supply the Bay Area's consumer markets. More than anything I was reminded of Franz Fanon's discussion in *The Wretched of the Earth* of the divide between the consciousness of the privileged urban proletariat, who rubbed shoulders with the elites, in relation to the rural population excluded from the wealth and culture of the metropolitan centers.²⁵ While Fanon provides us with an examination of the psyche and consciousness of the dominated and colonized, which may lend its use to a region such as the Central Valley, a more material explanation is needed in characterizing the political economy of the region, which is clearly not colonial. Here I think that most useful analysis would be Immanuel Wallerstein's concept of core and periphery production processes which creates a "constant flow of surplus-value from the producers of peripheral products to the producers of core-like products."²⁶ This is a situation which allows what Richard Walker describes in the

²³ According to the 2000 Census estimates Stockton has a population of 243,771 with 56,783 individuals living below the poverty line at a rate of 23.9% and in comparison Birmingham, Alabama estimated population is at 242,820 with 58,339 individuals living below the poverty line at a rate of 24.7%. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov>

²⁴ *Silicon Valley/ San Jose Business Journal*, November 15, 2004.

²⁵ Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).

²⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis; An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 28. For a broad introduction to Wallerstein's concepts of the core and periphery see Chapter 2 'The Modern World-System as a Capitalist World-Economy,' pp. 23-41.

Central Valley as akin to the “primitive accumulation” of Adam Smith.²⁷ Just as the global south relates to the north, or the southern states of the US relate to the industry of the Midwest, so does the Central Valley to the metropolitan areas of the Bay Area and Los Angeles- as the periphery feeding wealth of labor and resources into the core.

Intermodal Trucking: Contingent Labor in a Global Economy

Intermodal truckers working out of port and rail yards are models of itinerant workers in the global economy. They are a key link in the global supply line of a “just in time” economy, whereby ships, Intermodal yards and trucks have become the mobile warehouses of large corporations. The push towards this economy is driven primarily by large retailers such as Costco, IKEA, Target and Wal-Mart moving imported and shipped goods from the nation’s ports to warehouses and distribution centers in the interior of the country.²⁸ Working without the benefits of a formal employment relationship, the truckers are classified by the trucking companies not as workers, but as “independent contractors.” They work on an on-call basis, receiving a piece rate and taking on the risks of employers by owning their truck while paying fluctuating fuel prices and maintenance costs out of pocket.

The industry is also structured in several layers through a contractor system. The starting point in the chain begins with customers ranging from small businesses, warehouses, processing plants or increasingly large retailers who need containers moved

²⁷ Richard A. Walker, *The Conquest of Bread; 150 Years of Agribusiness in California* (New York: The New Press, 2004), p. 5.

²⁸ Mark Brenner, “As Cargo Chains Grow, So Does Workers’ Leverage,” *Labor Notes*, February 2008.

over long distances. These customers sub-contract this task through Intermodal logistics firms who organize and manage the movement of the containers. In port trucking these firms are referred to as “shippers” and are large, international firms moving container ships across the globe. In Intermodal rail these firms are referred to as “brokers,” whom are sometimes firms or sometimes individual agents working on a commission basis. Large retailers or manufacturers will either develop their own logistics operations in the case of Wal-Mart, create subsidiary logistical firms or exclusively contract with a single logistics firm. The shippers and logistics firms then coordinate container movement with rail shippers and arrange the sub-contracting of trucking firms who dispatch the individual container movements to independent contractor truckers who are also referred to as ‘owner-operators.’

Outlining this shift in the economy and the advent of what is known as the ‘logistics revolution’ in the movement of goods and production is Edna Bonacich’s piece “Pulling the Plug: Labor and the Global Supply Chain.” Here she describes the paradigm shift in the methods of supply chain management, whereby firms manage the flow of the goods from the producer to the consumer. This shift is rooted in the decline of the mass standardization of goods, known as the Fordist mode of production, and the emergence of what is called flexible specialization, aiming to directly link production and supply, which is referred to as the Post-Fordist model of production. This mode of production aims to produce only those goods that consumers actually purchase, specialize them directly to the needs of consumer markets and attempts to overcome problems of overproduction inherent in a market economy. She argues that while many of the shifts in supply management are ostensibly for the purpose of increasing efficiency, the use of “‘flexible’ employee relations, such as piece

rate, independent contracting, and part-time and temporary status for their workers” reflects the ultimate goal of firms to reduce labor costs and stem unionization. She further frames this shift within the development of what is referred to as the global sweatshop and the ‘race to the bottom’ of globalization. For Bonacich, “of all the global trade related logistics workers, port truckers are the most oppressed”²⁹ with rail Intermodal truckers facing largely similar conditions.

The shift within the US economy towards flexible specialization also has to be seen as integrally linked to a shift from an industrial and producing economy to a largely service based economy relying on imported goods within the last several decades.³⁰ This increasingly makes Intermodal trucking a key link in the logistics supply chain and in the growing movement of goods imported into the US economy. As discussed in trade journal *Inbound Logistics*, “The U.S. logistics industry is in the midst of a growth spurt, as we shift from a producing economy to an importing economy. This adjustment means import containers will continue to come into the country, regardless of whether oil hits \$100 per barrel or we experience a ‘flat’ economy.”³¹

²⁹ Edna Bonacich, “Pulling the Plug: Labor and the Global Supply Chain” *New Labor Forum*, Summer 2003, Vol. 12, Iss. 2.

³⁰ The advent of this shift is partly described in Daniel Bell, “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting” in *Social Theory; Continuity and Confrontation*, Ed. Roberta Garner (Orchard Park, New York: Broadview Press, 2000). Also informative is the discussion of the rise of the low-wage service sector with the decline of manufacturing jobs in Robert Brenner, “The Economies of Global Turbulence: A Special Report on the World Economy, 1950-98” *New Left Review* 299, May-June 1998, pp. 1-265.

³¹ Curtis Spencer, “Port Diversion Strategy: Consistency Beats Velocity” *Inbound Logistics*, October 2006.

The turn towards these conditions for Intermodal truckers began with the introduction of deregulation in the trucking industry by the passing of the Motor Carrier Act of 1980, which lowered barriers to entry within the industry and eliminated restrictions on carriers, the rates they could charge, the type of freight that they could carry and destinations to which they could deliver.³² Consequently this worked to steadily erode the influence of unions, largely the Teamsters, within port and rail Intermodal trucking. “By 1985 only 28 percent of [port] truckers were organized, down from 60 percent in the 1970’s ... And since 1985 the competitive squeeze has lowered rates and wages on the least powerful competitors, [Intermodal] truckers.”³³ No specific statistics could be found on rates of unionization among Intermodal rail truckers prior or following deregulation, but I believe it can be assumed to be a largely similar trajectory to that of port Intermodal truckers.

But this network of transportation, especially within California, has grown overstretched and fragile. West coast port traffic has exploded as well with “the number of trailers and containers on rail cars nationwide grew by more than 60 percent between 1990 and 2003.”³⁴ Jennifer Bronson, an employee of shipping company APL said “[w]ith everything so inter-dependant, any little wrinkle can screw up the entire chain.”³⁵ And this is exactly what happened in the ‘summer 2004 meltdown’ where a combination of labor shortages and faulty projections by the

³² Kenneth D. Boyer, “Deregulation of the Trucking Sector: Specialization, Concentration, Entry, and Financial Distress” *Southern Economic Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (January 1993), pp. 481-495.

³³ Tom Price, “More Port Trucker Action Back East” *The Dispatcher*, June 2004.

³⁴ Patrick May, “Red-Hot Rails” *San Jose Mercury News*, February 25, 2007.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

railroads caused the adjacent ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the nation's main entry point for goods based in Asia, to come to a halt. Estimates of effects on the economy for the "11 days of idling ships and trucks, cargo back-ups and empty railroad tracks was \$70 billion."³⁶

Similar to the conditions of the Intermodal truckers working out of the rail yards of Stockton are the approximately 10,000 Intermodal port truckers working out of the bustling ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. One of these truckers in the Los Angeles area for over 25 years is Chicho, who fled Nicaragua in the 1980's to escape the violent political conflict that engulfed the country. Similar to the fate of many Intermodal trucker's daily struggle to earn a living in a precarious piece rate system, a press account describes his experience:

If port truckers like Chicho ... are lucky, they can squeeze in two or three loads a day, at anywhere from \$70 to \$180 each, depending on the shipper and the route. ... At most, a driver earns about \$300 a day, including the fee for returning the empty container. Working 50 weeks a year, he can gross close to \$80,000. But since drivers work as independent contractors – or "independent owner-operators" according to industry euphemism – they pay their own fees, taxes, insurance and fuel. These expenses, combined with monthly payments on that \$69,000 truck, easily whittle a trucker's salary down to around \$30,000.³⁷

Central Valley Stockton: "The Beautiful and the Damned"

The Intermodal truckers of this story work in the rail yards just south of the city of Stockton, one of the major urban areas of the San Joaquin Valley and part of California's Greater Central

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Judith Lewis, "Heavy Load," *LA Weekly*, July 15, 2007.

Valley. “California- the Beautiful and the Damned” was a slogan of 1910’s IWW organizers working among the farm laborers of the Central Valley- and it still speaks to today’s realities in describing the regions contrasting abundance of wealth and massive disparities.³⁸ The San Joaquin Valley stands unique in both the billions of dollars worth of crops produced annually in one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world, and also as one of the most economically depressed regions of the United States. Dominated by a small elite of land owners, the region has always relied upon a massive low-wage labor force composed of successive waves of immigrant groups.³⁹

Geographically defined, the San Joaquin Valley is the southern region of the Great Central Valley of California stretching from Mt. Shasta in the north to the Tehachapis of the south, at 450 miles long and averaging 50 miles wide through the center of California.⁴⁰ The San Joaquin Valley is defined as encompassing the eight counties of Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Tulare, covering a land mass of 27,280 miles and with a population of 3.3 million at 10% of California’s population.⁴¹

³⁸ Walker, *The Conquest of Bread*, p. 11.

³⁹ Coining it as a system of agrarian capitalism, Richard A. Walker, gives the most recent and up to date analysis of agribusiness in the region. Included are excellent discussions on the productivity and wealth produced by the extractive industrial agricultural industry and a succinct overview of California farm labor struggles in *The Conquest of Bread*.

⁴⁰ Great Valley Center, “The State of Great Central Valley of California; Assessing the Region Via Indicators, The Economy 1999-2004” (Modesto, CA: Great Valley Center, 2005).

⁴¹ Tadlock Cowan, “California’s San Joaquin Valley: A Region in Transition,” (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Services/Library of Congress, 2005). Available at:

Important to understanding the San Joaquin Valley region is the role of the dominant industry of agriculture and by all accounts the industry is framed by “the glaring disparity between the bounty of the agricultural industry and the conditions and wages of its workers [which] remains as painfully evident as it has been for the past hundred years”⁴² Part of “the most prosperous agricultural region in of the advanced industrial nations”⁴³ the San Joaquin Valley produced over \$15 billion worth of agricultural products in 2002, which averaged at about half the state’s \$30 billion total agricultural output.⁴⁴ In contrast, the mean wage in the agricultural industry averaged between the northern and southern counties of the San Joaquin Valley is \$8.24 with an annual income of \$17,155 and stands at roughly 13% of the regions workforce.⁴⁵ Throughout California the shifting workforce of 200,000 to 250,000 field workers as a whole is composed of up to 80% undocumented workers largely from Mexico, though a recently growing one-fourth originate from Miztecan indigenous communities in the southern state of Oaxaca, Mexico. Also present are thousands of refugee population Southeast Asians, including Vietnamese, Hmong, and Cambodians.⁴⁶ Similar to Intermodal trucking, the workforce is managed predominantly through a

http://www.greatvalley.org/pub_documents/2005_12_22_16_59_41_San_Joaquin_Valley_CRS_Report.pdf

⁴² Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 201.

⁴³ Walker, *The Conquest of Bread*, 1.

⁴⁴ Great Valley Center, “The State of Great Central Valley of California.”

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* It bears mention that these figures include skilled and supervisory positions which skew the average upwards and that the southern counties of the San Joaquin Valley (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Tulare) have a greater concentration of agriculture, lower wages and higher indicators of economic distress.

⁴⁶ Walker, *The Conquest of Bread*, 74.

contractor system of intermediaries working on behalf of the growers⁴⁷ and has maintained “flexible production before flexibility became a buzz word of the New Economy.”⁴⁸

In a massive study produced by the Congressional Research Service, which is the public policy research arm of Congress and an agency within the Library of Congress, the region of San Joaquin Valley is demographically analyzed and compared to another, though well known, impoverished region of the US: Central Appalachia. While the greater Appalachia has improved as a region over a period of four decades of federal intervention, the report lays the San Joaquin Valley region in such stark contrast that an at length quotation of the summary is helpful:

In 2000, the SJV [San Joaquin Valley] ... had substantially higher rates of poverty than California or the United States. Poverty rates were also significantly higher in the SJV than in the ARC region [Appalachia Regional Commission, the area spanning several states designated by the federal government for economic development of the Appalachia region], although the rate is somewhat lower than that of the Central Appalachian subregion [the most impoverished core area of Appalachia]. Unemployment rates in the SJV were higher in California or the United States and the ARC area. Per capita income and average family income were higher in the SJV than in Central Appalachia, but per capita income in the SJV was lower than in the ARC region as a whole. SJV households also had higher rates of public assistance income than did Central Appalachian households.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Farm labor activist and scholar Ernesto Galarza’s work provides an in depth elaboration of the contractor system and agribusiness generally. Though dated, many of the basic conditions remain largely the same. See *Farm Workers and Agri-business in California 1947-1960* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977).

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 10.

⁴⁹ Cowan, “California’s San Joaquin Valley: A Region in Transition.”

This availability of low cost labor and land in the area of San Joaquin County has also shaped the region to serving a growing role as the hub of distribution operations for major retailers and warehouses that were once located in the San Francisco Bay Area. Notably the same major retail corporations leading the shift in the economy towards the supply chain management model- Costco, IKEA, Target and Wal-Mart- all have major warehouses in the San Joaquin County or the broader San Joaquin Valley area. Statistically we can see this shift where between 1990 and 2004 in San Joaquin County, “[t]ransportation and warehousing employment increased by 137 percent, from 5,100 to 12,100 jobs, led by a 1,367 percent increase in warehousing and storage from 300 to 4,400 jobs.”⁵⁰ In sum the region of San Joaquin Valley lies at the intersection of the forces in the global economy and its sweatshop inducing race to the bottom in wages and conditions; and this is where this narrative takes place.

3. The Big Strike, Wobblies and Stockton Intermodal Truckers

“We are going to strike for our rights. Strike on Monday”

-Flyer distributed among drivers

“Basically Rates Ain’t Increased”

“Stop Free Work”

⁵⁰ Great Valley Center, “Selected San Joaquin Valley Regional Statistics,” (Modesto, CA: Great Valley Center, 2006).

-Picket signs during the Stockton Intermodal strike

The dry heat of the Central Valley sweltered in the mid-90s on Roth Road off Interstate 5 and just south of Stockton on Monday, April 26, 2004. Between a highway off ramp and a dog food plant was an empty field where 200 or more Inter-modal truckers gathered with home made picket signs throughout the day. About a mile down the road at the entrance to the main rail yard where they work, the Union Pacific Intermodal Terminal, truckers lined the road braving the heat.

“Who will work for nothing? Nobody’s going to work at this rate. If the trucking companies can find a driver, go hire him. Nobody’s going to work at these prices,” said Navdeep Singh on the conditions fueling the strike.⁵¹ Very few of the Intermodal truckers did work as truck traffic out of the Union Pacific and Burlington-Northern Santa Fe rail yards fell by 95% of normal on the first day of the strike.⁵² Fueling the strike in Stockton was the increasing diesel fuel costs truckers pay out of pocket which had soared to \$2.16.⁵³ Along with increases in insurance and maintenance costs, independent-contractor truckers had seen fuel costs double, while rates paid for each load delivered remained flat. Also an issue were “wait times,” unpaid time that the driver spent at a delivery point waiting for the container to be unloaded. At that time drivers were only paid \$25 per hour after two hours waiting without pay. Altogether, the lack of increased rates in nearly 10 years combined with the sudden fuel cost spike hit a breaking point

⁵¹ *The Record*, April 27, 2004.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

once truckers began to lose money on each container load they hauled.

“There is going to be a massive strike”

The week before the strike inside the Union Pacific Intermodal Terminal Dewey Obtinalla, a Philipino Intermodal driver for several years, exited his truck after pulling up to a check-in point where drivers wait for the rail yard employees to direct them to their assigned container load. It's a short window of several minutes. A Sikh Indian driver he used to work with at a previous company approached him with a photocopied flyer in hand and told him, “there is going to be a massive strike launched because of the fuel prices.”⁵⁴ The flyer announced a call for a strike on Monday and the driver said that LA truckers were planning a coming strike as well.

Later in the week Obtinalla was outside the offices of his company late in the day when half a dozen drivers were gathered around a table in the shade of a tree to discuss the strike. All were planning on participating, though Obtinalla was hesitant to join recalling the violent attacks against strikers during labor conflict in the Marcos era Philippines.⁵⁵ He decided he would support the strike by staying home, but would not join the planned picketing at Roth Road. Two days into the strike he changes his mind and decided to join the picket after several phone calls from co-workers

⁵⁴ Interviews with Dewey Obtinalla.

⁵⁵ Ferdinand Marcos ruled the Philippines from his 1965 election to the 1986 overthrow of his US backed regime of martial law. Obtinalla was a participant in the opposition movement during the mid-1980's (Interview with Dewey Obtinalla). See David Joel Steinberg, Ed., *In Search of Southeast Asia, A Modern History* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1971), pp. 434-442.

and viewing the positive images of the strike on local television news.

The strike had been brewing for at least a week or more leading up to the action according to drivers. Word had been spreading through the use of Nextel cellular phones many drivers commonly use for their walkie-talkie, or mobile-to-mobile, function. An informal committee was arranged where two drivers from every company gathered to draw up a list of collective demands. The committee was composed predominantly of Punjabi Sikhs, but also included several Mexican and Philipino drivers as well. "They were our leaders," one driver recalled.⁵⁶ The demands were a 30% rate increase, a per mile surcharge linked to the cost of fuel and added onto payment for each load,⁵⁷ and that drivers would be paid at \$35 an hour after a one hour wait for unloading containers.

The Big Strike Erupts

"No one here is going to go on strike" one company owner berated his truckers in a meeting at the company office. Satinder Daljit Singh had been working in Intermodal trucking since 1999, a year after arriving in the US. He recalled his response, "We told you so many times what the problem was and you never listen to us. Now we are going on strike on Monday and you can ask me on Monday."⁵⁸ Based on comments from drivers describing the events of the strike, this exchange was likely similar to many

⁵⁶ Interview with Kulwat Singh.

⁵⁷ An issue of contention was that brokers whom the companies were contracted by were sometimes already providing this, but companies were pocketing either a portion or the full amount of fuel surcharges as additional profits rather than passing these along to drivers.

⁵⁸ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh.

conversations between drivers and company managers leading up to the strike.

In both interviews and press accounts, drivers stressed that the issues had simmered for some time. “California is the most expensive state to do business in. We’ve been talking with the companies for two to three months, but nothing has changed,” said one of the striking truckers, Gurdip Barring.⁵⁹ The effective disruption of the Intermodal industry sought to force the railroad operators to pressure local trucking companies and national logistics companies who organize shipments to increase rates offered to truckers.

While about 100 drivers continued to gather daily at Roth Road, others stayed at home awaiting the outcome and a few drivers avoided the scrutiny of co-workers by picking up container loads during the night. To circumvent the strike, brokers arranged the pick up of their loads through companies that hire drivers operating company owned trucks. Nonetheless the drivers continued to prevent enough containers from leaving the Stockton area rail terminals that by Monday, May 6, the beginning of the second week into the strike, Union Pacific officials imposed an embargo on all California bound container shipments to prevent a major rail system backlog from occurring.⁶⁰ At least two truckers were arrested for charges related to vandalism or intimidation of strikebreaking drivers. On the picket lines drivers organized collections towards their bail while several California Highway

⁵⁹ *The Record*, April 27, 2004.

⁶⁰ *The Record*, May 4, 2004. Note that the Union Pacific spokesperson’s statement that the embargo was cancelled at the last minute is corrected in a follow up article in *The Record*, May 7, 2004.

Patrol state police officer's cars overlooked the picket lines regularly.⁶¹

During the "Big Strike" as some truckers referred to it, a community was built as picketing at Roth Road or in front of the entrances to Union Pacific Terminal continued daily from eight in the morning to nearly five in the evening. Drivers carried home made signs, marching occasionally along the shoulder of the road, only feet away from passing traffic. "That was the starting point, but nobody knew that people would come together 100% ... it was amazing" when it worked, one driver recalled.⁶² Many gathered in smaller circles with others from their respective companies. Drivers came with cases of bottled water and prepared foods to share and for lunch truckers would arrange to have food brought to the picket lines, even hiring a taco truck to distribute food for free. Employees and managers from the Arrow Truck dealership across the street, which truckers numerous had purchased their rigs from, visited and donated cash towards food expenses. Even company managers who had once opposed the strike now appeared at Roth Road with a more supportive attitude and a wish to recruit drivers away from competing companies over to theirs. Managers stood to benefit by higher rates paid by shippers and could bolster their companies share of the market by coming out of the strike with a larger workforce and posed to take grab up the work of companies still on strike.

Playing an important role throughout the strike as a base of support for the drivers was the Sikh Gurdwara. "We are a community, we have a place, [a] facility for meeting," said one of

⁶¹ Interviews with Dewey Obtinalla.

⁶² Interview with Kulwat Singh.

the drivers.⁶³ Not only did the institution serve as a center point of the Punjabi Sikh community through which many drivers had long term social relations, but it also served as a valuable resource to their struggle. The Gurdwara allowed drivers to use temple supplies along with purchased food and prepare them in their large restaurant style facilities. The large library building on the Gurdwara grounds served as a meeting place for the Sikh drivers during the strike and afterwards as well. Overall the connection between the Gurdwara and the truckers added both a sense of legitimacy to their efforts⁶⁴ and continued the history of the Gurdwara as both a place of worship and platform for political activism.⁶⁵

Settlement and Reaction

By Monday, May 3 drivers from some companies began returning to work after their company had agreed to demands. As early as Friday, after a full work week into the strike, a few companies had faxed letters to drivers signaling their willingness to meet the demands if drivers returned to work on Monday. Over the weekend owners and managers of the 32 trucking companies in town met at the Country Kitchen restaurant on Lathrop Road to craft a coordinated response to the strike.⁶⁶ Companies began

⁶³ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh.

⁶⁴ Interview with Harjit Singh Gill.

⁶⁵ Bruce La Brack, *The Sikhs of Northern California 1904-1975* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), pp. 127-136.

⁶⁶ Interviews with Satinder Daljit Singh and Dewey Obtinalla. This is also consistent with *The Record*, May 7, 2007 coverage of the strike quoting a driver "All the companies had a meeting" in discussing how the settlement came about

asking truckers to vacate their parked truck rigs from company owned lots (companies provide space for drivers to park their rigs when not working, sometimes this is adjacent to company offices or in leased empty lots throughout the area). This tactic, removal of personal effects from company property, is used by companies during labor conflict to symbolize a more permanent severance of their relationship with employees and potentially signals a lockout of striking workers and the employers' intention to bring in replacement workers. Drivers did not seem threatened by this and quickly complied.⁶⁷

By Tuesday the signals were clear and companies were prepared to settle with the drivers. Companies "called their brokers and gave us a proposal Tuesday afternoon" said trucker Raj Singh.⁶⁸ Companies offered between 15 and 22 percent rate increases (the average being about 20 percent), 10 percent fuel surcharges to be passed along to drivers for every load and wait times would be reduced from two hours to one and the rate paid would be \$35 after the first hour and \$22 for each subsequent hour after that. On Wednesday nearly all the truckers resumed work again. Overall drivers felt a sense of confidence following the strike and drivers interviewed for this study in 2007 still felt that the some of the improved conditions and gains remained despite the effort to erode the gains following the strike.⁶⁹ One significant

as well as *Sacramento Bee*, May 6, 2007, reported that "Valley freight companies reached a deal to boost hauling fees and fuel reimbursements."

⁶⁷ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh.

⁶⁸ *The Record*, May 7, 2004

⁶⁹ On the effort of the companies to erode the gain of the strike in its aftermath see Adam Welch, "Wobblies connect with truckers across west coast." *Industrial Worker*, August 2004. Sources for the article were gathered through trucker contacts.

legacy that some drivers reported was a permanent fuel surcharge added onto load rates which was calculated on a daily basis based on the average price of diesel in the state. This would have the effect of both shielding the drivers from the spikes and rising costs of fuel prices, but also the industry as well by eliminating the primary impetus behind the strike wave of 2004.

At Obtinalla's company, management had made what he thought to be an excellent offer on Friday and they agreed to begin working again on Monday. A week after the strike the manager called the dozen or so drivers together to meet at the office and asked them to have three drivers sign an agreement for the improved conditions. He asked Obtinalla to sign first, a Sikh trucker who was prominent in the strike second and another Sikh who was active with the Gurdwara third. Two weeks later the manager stated that he couldn't give all the money that he agreed to. When Obtinalla received his weekly check and saw the reduced pay, he went straight home, faxed in his resignation and signed with a new company later in the week.⁷⁰ This followed a typical pattern across the industry. Several weeks following the strike brokers began to pressure trucking companies to take on lower bids and reduce wait time fees, lowering load rates and conditions for drivers below the post-strike agreements. In response some

⁷⁰ Switching companies out of reaction to declining working conditions or out of hope for better conditions is a common and frequent practice in the Stockton Intermodal industry. In fact there were several reported cases and the case of the Kach strike below where the majority of drivers at a company would quit as a group after a disagreement with or ill treatment by a manager. It also served as a strategy to enact revenge as companies would quickly see brokers switch their agreements to another company if orders could not be filled due to lack of drivers.

truckers left the Intermodal industry for long distance hauling, also called over-the-road trucking.

Despite the climate of roll backs on the success of the strike, another battle almost erupted only a week after the strike. This time it was between the Union Pacific rail yard management and Sohan Singh, a key leader among the Sikh drivers. Singh was active in the Gurdwara and highly respected by Sikh drivers, who referred to him as a "*giani*," which mean 'anointed one.' Though in his late thirties, Sohan Singh commanded the respect as would a seasoned elder. During his charismatic and animated speeches in meetings, he also clearly evoked his connection to the Khalistan Sikh nationalist movement in India during the mid-1980's to early 1990's in India.⁷¹ "Even the workers who were unsure of the organizing effort were willing to take a chance because they trusted and respected him as a person and a leader," recalled one of the core IWW organizers Harjit Singh Gill.⁷² Inside the gates of the Union Pacific rail yard, security had caught him handing out Punjabi language flyers inviting drivers to a meeting at the Gurdwara library to discuss the aftermath of the strike, though he later claimed to Union Pacific officials that the flyers were promoting a religious function.

The area inside the rail terminals is directed by a web of employees who direct and guide truckers through the yard, as well as security officials who enforce yard rules related to safety. Small infractions might incur a 'ban' anywhere from 3 days to a week upon the first offense, though up to a month or even 'permanently' (which usually was forgiven after six to eight months). Common

⁷¹ The movement is discussed in more detail below. See footnote 55.

⁷² Interview with Harjit Singh Gill.

infractions resulting in short suspensions were speeding or running stop signs while longer term suspension would result from arguing with security personal, not obeying orders of the rail employees or with the accumulation of multiple smaller infractions. To the best knowledge of the drivers no written code or policies on discipline existed and penalties were dependant upon the often arbitrary discretion of the security personnel. Bannings of small lengths of time occurred on an almost weekly basis and at any given time several drivers in the industry face long term bans. While those with fluent English skills could sometimes talk their way into a reduction of the ban length or a warning, for the Sikhs this was much harder. Sikh drivers frequently complained that language and communication barriers were a constant source of friction in addition to the racism they felt from many of the predominantly white rail employees. As one driver described it, "They don't give us a chance to explain ourselves, you make a mistake, you're fired."⁷³

The effect was often a large reduction in a drivers income as they could only pick up container loads in the smaller Burlington Northern-Santa Fe yard or occasional loads not involving the rail yards. This sometimes forced drivers out of Intermodal work completely or to seek employment outside the industry temporarily. A ban also meant a phone call to the management of the drivers company and in an industry where company dispatchers control which drivers receives a load or not, reputation is a meaningful currency. After being caught distributing flyers inside the yard Sohan Singh faced an indefinite ban. The Sikh drivers responded by circulating a petition threatening a strike over the issue and began faxing these to the

⁷³ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh.

brokers. Following this, a delegation of three fellow truckers, the Stockton Gurdwara President and Singh's company manager was organized to plead their case before Union Pacific management. After a three hour meeting the manager relented, reversed the ban and offered his apologies to Sohan Singh.⁷⁴

The Rising of Oakland, Los Angeles and Port Truckers Nationally

What began in Stockton on Monday, April 26 galvanized truckers across the west coast and later in other parts of the country as reaction over issues similar to those faced by Stockton truckers came to a head in a series of massive work stoppages. On Friday, April 29, west coast port truckers erupted in protest strikes, bringing container traffic to a near halt. On May 6 and 7 Norfolk and Hampton, Virginia truckers set up pickets at their port gates. Over a month later, between June 23 and July 13, East and Gulf Coasts port were shut down in Boston, Savannah, Charleston, Miami, while the ports of New York, Newark, Baltimore, New Orleans Houston and again Los Angeles and Long Beach faced work stoppages and disruption.⁷⁵

Working out of the Port of Oakland, the nation's fourth busiest shipping point, is a multi-racial workforce estimated at 1,500 to 2,500 truckers hauling containers of imported goods mainly originating in China or other parts of Asia.⁷⁶ Rail and port officials in Oakland closely watched the strike in Stockton,

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ *Industrial Worker*, June 2004 and *The Dispatcher*, June 2004.

⁷⁶ AP, May 6, 2004 and Joseph Plaster, "Importing Injustice; How deregulation and Wal-Mart poison the Port of Oakland's neighbors and force poverty wages on its truckers," *SF Bay Guardian*, July 17, 2007

anticipating the strike to spread to their port as well.⁷⁷ Stockton Sikhs would play a key role throughout the Oakland strike. “When we won the strike we did go to Oakland. [They] didn’t strike right away, but they joined after Stockton was winning,” said one of the Stockton truckers on the Friday, April 30 launch of the Oakland strike.⁷⁸ Another claimed to be part of a group of five Stockton Sikhs strikers who visited the Port of Oakland during midday and passed out flyers to over 100 waiting Intermodal truckers.⁷⁹ Various truckers corroborate this statement. Ruben Lopez, one of the three key trucker leaders whom emerged out of the strike, seems to suggest in an interview that the strike was fueled by a flyer listing demands and drafted collectively by a group of Oakland truckers.⁸⁰ Given the contradictory statements of the Oakland and Stockton strikers, it is possible that both activities occurred independently and contributed to fueling the strike.

Also of note is that numerous Sikh truckers residing in the Stockton area do not work in the local rail yards, but commute into the Bay Area to work out of the Port of Oakland. Cross pollination of the strike through family, social networks and community ties are likely. The presence of Sikhs in the Oakland trucker strikes is also evidenced in fact that despite making up perhaps less than 15 percent of the haulers numerous news accounts quote Sikh surnamed truckers, further highlighting their prominence despite

⁷⁷ *Sacramento Bee*, April 29, 2004.

⁷⁸ Interview with Kulwat Singh. This is also supported by several comments made to me by drivers during my involvement with the Stockton truckers.

⁷⁹ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh and numerous informal conversations offer corroboration.

⁸⁰ *SF Bay Guardian*, July 17, 2007.

being a small minority within a multi-racial workforce.⁸¹ Additionally, out of three leaders that emerged during the strike—Ruben Lopez, Dealth Jean and Ervinder Dhanda, respectively a Mexican born Latino immigrant, an African-American and a Sikh.⁸²

In the Port of Los Angeles and the adjoining Port of Los Beach, the nearly 10,000 Intermodal truckers working out of the two busiest ports in the US are the largest concentration of Intermodal truckers in the US. In the media they would come to be seen as the symbol of the trucker strike nationally. Through a 2007 survey of Los Angeles area drivers, we know a fair amount of interesting details on the this huge concentration of truckers. They are predominantly Latino immigrants (96%) who speak Spanish as their primary language (92%), with two out of five claiming Mexican origin (42%), one third Salvadorian (32%), one eighth Guatemalan (12%), one in twenty Nicaraguan (6%) and finally one in 25 US born Latino, or Chicanos (4%). Ages vary widely, though three quarters reported being married and having children (76%). Interestingly, the majority of the truckers surveyed identified hauling good from the Los Angeles area ports as their long-term career with the majority having worked in the Ports for more than five years (55%), some even more than 20 years (6%), and five out

⁸¹ See *Oakland Tribune*, May 4, 2004 on Oakland port truckers as well as *Contra Costa Times*, May 29, 2004 for a strike of independent truckers outside Oakland hauling cement and asphalt following the port strike. The *Times* reports the cement and asphalt drivers “shout[ing] slogans in Punjabi, Spanish and English.” Additionally a printed contact roster of Oakland port strike leaders passed out on the picket lines and in possession of the author lists contact information for 69 drivers between 41 companies. Thirty of the drivers listed have clearly identifiable Sikh or Punjabi surnames.

⁸² *Industrial Worker*, August 2004.

of six drivers working for one company at a time (84%). The prevalence of drivers working for a single company and owning a single truck (of the 88% who do own their own truck 92% own only a single truck), helps drive home the fallacy of the independent contractor status, as a truly independent contractor would have multiple clients, shift from company to company.⁸³

On Tuesday, April 27 about 150 *troqueros*, the Spanish colloquialism truckers are commonly referred to as, rallied at Banning Park about 5 miles from the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports. Here drivers and activists drafted up a flyer with demands calling for a Friday, April 30 strike and began distributing it to those present. “The effort put into the mobilization was amazing, especially since the host did not have an organization nor a name for themselves or [their] movement,” said Ernesto Navarez, a long time activist in the port harbors and tax accountant for area truckers.⁸⁴

The called for April 30 shutdown exceeded expectations as the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles were reduced to 15% of their normal traffic and truckers rallied in Banning Park once again. Groups of truckers also staged dramatic actions such as freeway blockades and caravans to gain attention to their cause. At around 7:30am the morning commute came to a gridlock for seven miles on Highway 5, near the ports, as three truckers parked their rigs blocking all lanes. The California Highway Patrol had “intelligence that this was going to occur” according to a

⁸³ Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research at the request of the Change to Win Coalition, “Demographic Overview of Truck Drivers at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach,” (San Francisco: Greenburg Quinlan Rosner, 2007).

⁸⁴ Chris Kutalik, “Dockside Wildcats Halt Freight Traffic; Gas Prices Fuel Port Drivers’ Revolt” *Labor Notes*, June 2004.

spokesman and quickly arrested the three drivers as they attempted to flee their trucks to a waiting getaway car.⁸⁵ It took over a half hour for tow trucks, placed at the ready the night before by the California Highway Patrol, to remove the trucks from the freeway. Commuters were delayed up to three hours. Just as this situation was coming to a close another group of truckers, perhaps as many as 50, led a 5 mph convoy freeway convoy of trucks beginning east of downtown Los Angeles on Highway 10. Carrying banners on their rigs such as “The Rich Keep Getting Richer & The Poor Keep Getting Poorer,” they led the caravan over 20 miles south and exited near the harbor to join the rallying truckers at Banning Park.⁸⁶ Perhaps these actions could be seen as fitting within the two decade long tradition, which includes several separate attempts, of independent trucker organization in the Los Angeles harbors.⁸⁷

The Los Angeles port truckers, like many who would follow them in taking strike action across the US and even Canada, won a number of gains in increased load rates, the addition of a fuel surcharge to their load rates, and the reduction of unpaid wait times. In sum, “their network [was] been able to mobilize thousands of workers for short-term actions and to win substantial concessions on a firm-by-firm basis, but has been unable to develop an agreed-upon strategy or the power to force the port bosses to abandon the ‘independent contractor’ fiction.”⁸⁸

A Solidarity Unionism: Enter the Wobblies

⁸⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 2004.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ More on this can be found in Milkman and Wong “Organizing Immigrant Workers” in *Rekindling the Movement*, pp. 99-128

⁸⁸ *Industrial Worker*, June 2004.

From the early stages of the trucker wildcat that emerged on the west coast, members of the IWW (also nicknamed “Wobblies”) supported the strikes and made attempts to connect with truckers in different ports. Their newspaper, the *Industrial Worker*, offered prominent coverage of the west coast Intermodal strikes and criticized the Teamsters union’s lack of concrete support for the actions. A one page newsletter “El Troquero” was issued in July by a committee of the San Francisco Bay Area IWW summarizing the national impact of the strike movement and distributed in west coast ports.⁸⁹ Reading about these efforts online Stockton truckers contacted the IWW’s main office and were put in touch with Bay Area organizers who arranged for a July 28 meeting.

Founded in 1905 by left-wing unionists disenchanted with the exclusiveness and conservative ideology of the dominant American Federation of Labor, the IWW embodied labor radicalism in the US and numerous other countries for the next two decades. Inspired by a “vision of plain folk running society for their own benefit, without bosses, without politicians [and] without a coercive state,” the IWW led some of the most dramatic strike actions in US labor history and spawned a rich cultural legacy of working class oppositional politics.⁹⁰ In the mid-1920’s a

⁸⁹ The newsletter along with many of the articles cited here can be viewed at:

<http://www.iww.org/en/unions/iu530/truckers>

⁹⁰ Paul Buhle, “The Legacy of the IWW” *Monthly Review*, June 2005, Vol. 57 Issue 2, p. 26. Labor historian Paul Buhle provides an excellent short overview of the IWW’s rich legacy and radicalism in this piece. Philip S. Foner, *The Industrial Workers of the World 1905-1917; History of the Labor Movement in the United States, Vol. 4* (New York: International Publishers, 1965) and Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000) offers the most

combination of aggressive legal repression, internal strife, the defection of key leaders to the growing communist movement, the assimilation of immigrant ethnic groups and shifts in industry left the IWW greatly reduced as a force within the labor movement. By the 1950's the union lost its last major shop presence with the departure of Cleveland, Ohio metal shops over the union's refusal to sign the Taft-Hartley Act mandated anti-communist pledges, which denied the union access to the government sanctioned National Labor Relations Board.⁹¹ Surviving as a small labor activist grouping for many years, the IWW resurfaced in the mid-1990's and grew slowly while engaging in small campaigns. Today the union is a small alternative union of several thousand members, which still retains its radical ideology and maintains branches in most major US cities (along with a growing presence in Canada and Great Britain) and a scattering of contracted shops and active organizing campaigns.

An interview with Starbucks worker Alex von Schaick, involved in the IWW's high profile campaign among New York City baristas since 2005, keenly captures the union's organizing emphasis they describe as 'solidarity unionism.' "Rather than

accepted accounts of the union's history. Fred W. Thompson and Jon Bekken, *The Industrial Workers of the World: Its First One Hundred Years: 1905 – 2005* (Cleveland, OH: Industrial Workers of the World, 2006) provide a recently published official history of the union. A brief overview of recent organizing efforts of the IWW, including a collection of related press accounts, can be found in Harjit Singh Gill, "Modern Labor Militancy, The Recent History of the Industrial Workers of the World" (Master's thesis, New College of California, 2007).

⁹¹ For more on the effects of the Taft-Hartley Act generally and the role of the anti-communist provisions of the Act see Rick Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity; Consciousness, Action and Contemporary American Workers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 55-59.

focusing on winning majorities in every shop, we have used pressure tactics to resolve individual or store-wide grievances.” He continues to describe efforts which won the reinstatement of a fired co-worker, saying “even without formal union recognition from Starbucks, we were able to affect changes.”⁹² For von Schaick the IWW’s far reaching ideals are an alternative to “an age-old strategy [of mainstream unions] that refuses to acknowledge class conflict, lacks a vision of transforming the world of work, and encourages an alienated patron-client mentality among rank-and-file members, rather than an empowered, participatory one.”⁹³

As the IWW would become involved with the Stockton Intermodal drivers it was uniquely posed to play the role that it did for several reasons. First, as per agreement with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) under which the vast majority of west coast port workers are organized, the Teamsters union considers port truckers under their jurisdiction and remain

⁹² Alex Von Schaick, Interview by Andrej Grubacic, “Wobbly City: An Interview with Alex von Schaick” *Z Magazine*, May 2007, p. 17. For more on the concept of solidarity unionism see Staughton Lynd, *Solidarity Unionism; Rebuilding the Labor Movement from Below* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1992); a pamphlet compiling a series of columns in the IWW’s *Industrial Worker* articulating the concept, Alexis Buss, “The Union on Our Own Terms” (pamphlet, Chicago: Chicago General Membership Branch of the IWW, Education Department, 2005); and an organizer’s analysis of a solidarity union style campaign among Chicago bike messengers Colin Bossen, “Chicago Couriers Union: A Lesson for IWW Solidarity Union Organizers” *Industrial Worker*, August 2007.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 19. For more on the recent state of mainstream unions which touches upon the criticisms that von Shaick raises see Jim McNeil, “Work in Progress, The State of the Unions Two Years after the AFL-CIO Split” *Dissent*, Spring 2007, pp. 70-76.

largely uninterested in Intermodal rail truckers.⁹⁴ Stockton Sikh truckers were rebuffed when they contacted a nearby Teamsters local.

Secondly, as discussed the IWW does not believe that adherence to the legal framework of union representation is necessary and rather believes this process is often detrimental to worker organizing.⁹⁵ IWW organizers were not only willing to take on organizing with independent contractors but drew from recent experience with non-standard workers in the bike messenger industry which played a key role in the Stockton drivers deciding to join.⁹⁶ This organizing is also facilitated by the IWW's unique structure allowing members to join and pay dues directly to the union. This is in contrast to the typical arrangement of membership and dues collection by unions in the US which is managed by the employer through worker paycheck deductions following legal recognition under the established process of the federal National

⁹⁴ Pacific Coast Longshore Contract Document 2002-2008 between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association, Appendix, Memorandum of Understanding Between ILWU and IBT, pages 270-272. This document was originally signed July 20, 1961.

⁹⁵ As Fantasia explains in Chapter 6 'The Limits and Possibilities of Trade Union Action' in *Cultures of Solidarity*, p. 227, "the degree to which American workers can express their solidarity against the actions of their employers has been severely circumscribed by law, by the structures of industrial relations, and by their unions, which have accepted these limitations."

⁹⁶ Colin Bossen, "Chicago Couriers Union: A Lesson." Also see "The 'Independent Contractor' racket" *Industrial Worker*, July/August 2004 and Erik Diffendaffer, "IWW Bike Messengers in 8-Day Transerv Strike" [Industrial Worker](#), December 2002.

Labor Relations Board and the signing of a negotiated collective bargaining agreement by both parties.

Another issue faced by independent contractors is that they are not considered employees and possess no legal right to union representation or the protections of labor law. They are also denied coverage by workers compensation, unemployment insurance, civil rights anti-discrimination legislation and even basic minimum wage, overtime and health and safety regulations. Because the pernicious use of worker misclassification to reduce employer cost, liability, and to stem unionization the use of independent contractor status is a growing and “pervasive” problem within the economy according to workers rights organizations that focus on non-standard workers such as the National Employment Law Project.⁹⁷

Because of this situation Teamster’s Port Division Director Chuck Mack, who heads the union’s port trucker efforts, fears that any attempt to organize truck drivers will be met with a lawsuit by shippers under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act which bars companies as well as independent contractors in colluding to set prices.⁹⁸ From this perspective the Teamsters have provided legal support for drivers but generally stood aside from and discouraged the

⁹⁷ Rebecca Smith, “Effects of the Misclassification of Workers as Independent Contractors; Testimony of Rebecca Smith, National Employment Law Project, Hearing Before the United State Congress House of Representative Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Income and Security and Family Support Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures” (New York: National Employment Law Project, 2007). Available at <http://www.nelp.org/docUploads/Misclassification%20and%20UI%20%20final%20051407.pdf>

⁹⁸ Cosmo Garvin, “Here Come the Wobblies!” *Sacramento New & Review*, January 13, 2005, p. 23.

strike actions of the truckers. Their past publicly stated organizing strategy for the truckers has been advocating legislation by the California Legislature to change the status of port truckers to employees and a corporate campaign to convince the port employers to drop the existing companies and switch to trucking companies already organized under the Teamsters.⁹⁹ More recently though, under the influence of the Change to Win labor coalition the Teamsters have shifted strategies and formed a national coalition with environmental and community organizations in numerous cities with the goal of advocating a transition of the current owner-operator diesel fleet in the ports to a more environmentally friendly fleet of company owned trucks. The efforts though face stiff opposition and threatened lawsuits from the California Trucking Association, which represents the owners of trucking companies and the Waterfront Coalition, which is an association of major retailers including Wal-Mart and Target.¹⁰⁰

‘Truck Driver Stop for Fill Up Application’

After an initial core of 54 drivers joined during the July 28 meeting, leaders such as Sohan Singh invited IWW organizers to spend two days in Stockton recruiting drivers into the union. The operation was staged under a tree in front of a truck dealership across the road from the dusty Roth Road field occupied by the strikers several months before. Spreading the word through Nextel phones and by CB radio, drivers also crafted a handmade sign with cardboard and a sharpie marker reading ‘Truck driver stop for fill up application for union’ to wave down passing drivers as they exited the highway towards the Union Pacific rail yard. Off the hood of a car and later with the help of a folding card table, nearly

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 25; and *Industrial Worker*, August 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Plaster, “Importing Injustice.”

90 drivers were signed up as dues paying members in this two day period, raising the member count to about 150 Intermodal drivers in the area. Those signing up were nearly 95% Sikh Punjabis though included a handful of immigrant Philipino, Latino, Cambodian and Assyrian drivers.

A meeting was quickly arranged at the library meeting room of the Stockton Gurdwara. A short stair case leads up to a landing and entrance of the building. At the bottom of the steps piles of shoes heap upon each other. Just outside the door is a cardboard box of head scarves for those not wearing a turban or head covering, which is traditional for Sikh Gurdwaras. Except for a covered altar in the center of the room and several small shelves of Sikh religious and historical books, the room was carpeted, spacious and devoid of furniture as is Sikh religious custom.

Debating the pressing issues facing them, drivers gathered in a large circle, in some places several rows deep, switching back and forth between English and Punjabi. Member Sukhbir Mukera addressed the meeting telling the story of how he received a lifetime ban after he attempted to dispute a ticket for running a stop sign inside the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe rail yard. Drivers drew up a plan of action, which included a petition that began circulating by the end of the meeting and a threatened strike. Also attending the meeting was Philipino driver Dewey Obtinalla, the only non-Sikh driver present, who arrived carrying a strike petition signed by his co-workers. Working at Patriot Logistics, a trucking company based out of Houston, Texas, he asked for the support of other drivers and the union in a planned strike.

“Really the First Time:” Early Victories and Patriot Strike

“Everyone was pretty much excited by it. It was only the second time ever [that a lifetime ban had been reversed],” said Sukwinder Singh, a four year trucker in his mid-twenties who had immigrated to the US at 16 years old. After being contacted by the IWW, Burlington Northern-Santa Fe manager Bob Tooke claimed to have no record of the incident with Sukhbir Mukera and that he was free to resume work immediately. African American driver Robert Wooten also contacted the organizers and was able to have his banning reversed as well. He attempted to have resistant Burlington Northern-Santa Fe officials document pre-existing damage to a container load he was about to haul when he was suddenly asked to see identification. Wooten refused in frustration and the official banned him in response.¹⁰¹ The quick victories immediately injected a sense of enthusiasm among the Sikh leaders who began spreading word of the banning reversals and recruiting more drivers to join.

As promised by Obtinalla, Patriot drivers launched a two day strike on Monday, September 13. Angered that the company had reneged on promises of the May strike, the roughly fifteen drivers composed of a majority Sikhs, three Philipinos and several Fijian Indians, drew up a list of fourteen demands. “The manager had promised us a new rate and a new contract June 16. After a couple months, he still accepted discount rates [lower rates offered by shippers]. This can cut our weekly pay by \$200 to \$300 per driver,” and these conditions “ignited these people to go with it [the strike],” said Obtinalla.¹⁰² After two days of striking, Stockton Patriot manager Casey Stevenson drove his pickup truck out to the

¹⁰¹ *Industrial Worker*, August 2004.

¹⁰² Joshua Freeze, “After Two Day Walkout, Rail Yard Drivers Win Demands” *Labor Notes*, October 2004 and *Industrial Worker*, October 2004.

Roth Road field to sign an agreement meeting three-fourths of the driver's demands which included small increases in basic haul rates and for hazardous materials and overweight loads, the reduction of unpaid wait time to one hour and the right to refuse loads without punishment.¹⁰³ The real victory for Patriot drivers came in curbing management's disrespect to drivers with incidents such as telling Indian drivers they were not allowed to speak their language in the company office.¹⁰⁴ Obtinalla recalled in a press article on the strike, "This is really the first time I've seen these kinds of demands negotiated. In the five years I've been in this business, my experience is that the managers won't do anything unless they see this kind of unity."¹⁰⁵

Company officials with Patriot Logistics later denied any negotiations took place. "It simply didn't happen. We have contracts with individual truck drivers. ... We would not sit with a group of truck drivers and negotiate and we certainly wouldn't talk to any union people," said Patriot Vice President of Marketing John Tucker. He also claimed that Stockton manager Casey Stevens being let go shortly after the strike was 'a private personnel matter.'¹⁰⁶

"What Unity Looks Like:" Rumblings at Kach and the Commander's House

Early one September evening, after the days hauls were finished, the twenty drivers for Kach Transportation passed around a sign up sheet on a lonely dead end street south of Stockton in

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *Industrial Worker*, October 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Garvin, "Here Come the Wobblies!," p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Manteca. Their trucks lined either side of the street and chain linked fencing ringed the end of the street and guarded dirt and grass lots of trucks and containers. One of these was the leased lot where Kach drivers parked their rigs while not hauling and often saw each other at the beginning and end of each work day.

The men huddled near one of the truck cabs, the tallest holding a Nextel cell phone on speaker mode. As IWW organizers from the Bay Area pulled up and joined the circle along with several drivers from other companies who had received word of the meeting, the negotiations were already underway. On the other end of the Nextel was the Stockton office dispatcher for Kach. The conversation would switch from English to Punjabi and was broken by long pauses as the dispatcher muted the phone to consult management. Two of the non-Sikh drivers, one Assyrian and another Philipino, would receive periodic translations from IWW organizer Harjit Singh Gill. Kach was the company leading the roll back of the one hour wait time gained during the Big Strike. While most trucking companies quickly made offers to resume business and get truckers back to work during the Big Strike, Kach was the last company to agree to a settlement.¹⁰⁷

In his late twenties, slender and nearly clean shaven with closely cropped hair, Hardill Singh, the tall spokesperson for the group was only able to garner minor concessions of a promise to consider returning to the one hour wait time in one month's time

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Satinder Daljit Singh. In a document faxed to drivers and signed by Kach Transportation General Manager Chris Roscom, "Kach Transportation Proposed Rate Increase 05/04/04" in possession of the author, the company promises 20% rate increases and \$35 per hour for driver delay after one hour (the "wait time"), among eight points detailing increased rates paid to driver and to take effect on May 31, 2004.

and a restoration of recently slashed hauling rates. The drivers then discussed the outcome, expressing their dismay that the company would follow through on reducing the wait time, but feeling positive that with all drivers present and their willingness not to be intimidated they had proved themselves to the company.

Following the close of the discussion Sohan Singh, who rolled up in his green rig mid way through the meeting, offered a five minute speech linking religious themes to the struggle of the truckers. “We come from a faith of struggle” he said in Punjabi and called for an October industry wide strike demanding a return to the agreements of the Big Strike along with further increases in the rates.¹⁰⁸ The decision to announce an October strike was made after discussion between Sohan Singh and two other key drivers who had taken on the role of the informal leadership committee among the Sikh truckers.

The next step in the campaign was hatched after Sohan and other Sikh leaders called off the October strike after sensing drivers lacked the cohesion needed to successfully call another industry wide strike barring an immediate crisis such as the rapid spike in fuel prices in April. IWW organizers had also stressed the importance of building connections between the union effort and wider layers of truckers beyond the core of 50 or so who had attended meetings at the Stockton Gurdwara in the last several months. Another concern was developing ties with the non-Sikh truckers, especially the large segment of Latinos who were disconnected from the strike movement earlier in the year. It was felt a mass meeting and social event of truckers held at a non-religious site would further these goals and with this in mind Sikh

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Harjit Singh Gill.

leaders and the IWW organizers set the stage for the largest gathering of Stockton truckers since the Big Strike.

Set on a small golf course and backed by the deep water channel of the Port of Stockton, the two-story Victorian style Commander's House is more likely to host a local wedding reception than a mass meeting of truckers. The gravel parking lot of the House overflowed as over 120 Stockton area drivers arrived on the evening of Saturday, November 20.¹⁰⁹ Mobile Indian caterers cooked in large, gas fired pots outside, serving food, while the largely Sikh, a few Latino and several drivers of other nationalities gathered in the main room. Notable was the presence of a group of five Latino drivers who had no or little previous connection to the union effort or the organizing of the Sikhs. They were also joined by a Spanish speaking IWW member who provided translation throughout the evening and Luis Magaña, a Stockton based community organizer well known in the Mexican immigrant community.

Flanked by a sound system, various truckers spoke over the microphone to a packed room seated on the floor.¹¹⁰ Several of the Sikh drivers recalled the unity among the truckers during the Big Strike and the importance of struggling together in contrast to the individualism prevalent among independent contractor truckers. Dewey Obtinalla spoke on the success of the Patriot strike and a Sikh driver spoke on his recent banning from the Union Pacific rail yard. One of the Latino drivers, Augustine Moreno, spoke as well:

¹⁰⁹ *Industrial Worker*, December 2004.

¹¹⁰ Among Sikhs, specifically for Sikh Gurdwaras or temples, the use of chairs for seating is considered a sign of elitism and a violation of Sikhism's principles of equality. The Sikh truckers insisted in carrying this practice over for the meeting.

I haven't joined before, but I'm joining right now, and four of us are also joining tonight. I know we should have done this before, but I'm saying this because we know we need to make it right now and get straight with you guys and say that we are one body and if I hurt you, I am hurting myself. Thank you for doing all of this and I want to recognize your work in the strike, you guys [Sikh drivers] showed us what unity looks like when you struck. I consider you guys to be my friends too.¹¹¹

While some Latino drivers such as Moreno supported the strike and joined the union the night of the Commanders House meeting, this was not typical. Based on my observations, interviews with community organizer Luis Magaña and trucker Marcelo Toledo and the strike of ATS drivers later in the narrative there is a significant lack of unity between the Latino and Sikh drivers due to perceived competition and language/cultural barriers. Often the Latino drivers referred to the sometimes turban donning Sikh drivers as *Arabes* (Arabs) and saw them as undermining conditions through their willingness to accept lower haul rates than other truckers. One Latino trucker interviewed described the Sikhs variously as *barateros* (cheapskates) and *alumbres* (literally meaning the fires, sparks or lights) who “*no se dejan nadie*” (figuratively meaning “they do not let anybody mess with them”).¹¹²

The last speaker was Sohan Singh who after giving a speech with similar themes as the one following the Kach meeting, renewed the call for a industry wide strike over the one hour wait

¹¹¹ Adam Welch, “Stockton Trucker Mtg. 11/20/04” unpublished internal report, (Berkeley, CA: San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch, 2004).

¹¹² Interviews with Luis Magaña and Marcelo Toledo.

and increasing the rates. He called for vote of support, twice in fact, and each time all hands in the room went up. As the meeting ended, the lights dimmed and gave way to a driver party and the sound of Bhangra beats (Indian dance music) played by a local DJ. Obtinalla described it as “One of the biggest party for all the truckers. There’s nobody [else] who made that party for us.”¹¹³

“They Can’t Convince Us Out of Fighting:” The Kach Strike and the End of the Union

The hoped for industry wide strike never emerged and no date was set by the Sikh leadership nor the IWW organizers. But at drivers at Kach were still stewing over managements unfulfilled promises, as the company was one of seven that had reneged on their agreement to keep unpaid wait times below one hour. With over 220 members across the Stockton area at this point, Kach was also one of several companies with 100% union membership. Drivers met the morning of Sunday, December 5 at a local truck stop outside Stockton to craft their strategy and elect a four person committee composed of three Sikhs and one Assyrian driver.¹¹⁴ They estimated that the company’s unfulfilled promises amounted to a \$1,000 per month loss in pay for each driver. Sending a fax to the company with their demands to return to the conditions previously agreed to, the committee gave management till Wednesday, December 8 to respond. “We sent them three letters asking them to take our demands seriously, but they ignored us. Our only choice was to walk off the job,” said one of the committee members on the launch of the December 9 strike.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Interviews with Dewey Obtinalla.

¹¹⁴ *Industrial Worker*, December 2004.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

Responding to the strike Kach management initially told drivers in a December 10 phone conversation that two strike leaders would not be “welcomed back,” though they later denied the statement. Dispatchers and management made calls to drivers falsely claiming that other drivers had returned to work and offering them extra loads should they return to work. But the twenty Kach drivers refused to yield. “All us Kach drivers are united in this strike and will not give up because of this intimidation talk from management. We are trying to feed our families and they can’t convince us out of fighting for that,” said one of the drivers singled out in management threats.¹¹⁶

Each day during the strike drivers gathered once again in the vacant lot on Roth Road off Highway 5. With picket signs erected on their parked cars, drivers kept their up their spirits by gathering around in circles, talking and telling jokes or playing cards in a van with fold down seats. As lunch time would approach drivers pitched in for soda and pizza. On two days IWW supporters arrived with cooked food, which was served off the bed of a one of the drivers' pickup trucks. In the afternoons, as the workday ended or slowed down, drivers from other companies would stop to talk and show their support., The new manager for Patriot even paid a visit on the first day of the strike in an attempt to hire the striking drivers directly off the picket line.

By Tuesday, December 14, four working days into the strike, management continued to refuse all attempts by both drivers and IWW organizers to negotiate. Kach drivers had previously agreed that if management refused to meet the one hour demand within five working days of striking, they would quit en masse. Drivers decided they would tell the company of plans to caravan to

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

company offices over two hours south in Fresno the next day to resign as a group. Management responded that if they came to the offices in Fresno the company would have local police evict them. Drivers called off the plan. But management agreed to meet all demands, most notably to pay a previously agreed 20 percent bonus on all loads, but not the central issue of the wait time. Lowering the unpaid wait time from two to one hour would have to wait until May 2005 when the company claimed they renegotiated their contracts with the brokers. Not willing to back down, the drivers rejected the offer and faxed notices of their resignation. "We told them it was too late. If they're going to muck about, we can find work somewhere else" said one of the Kach drivers after quitting.¹¹⁷

Despite the decision of Kach drivers to quit en masse in an attempt to put the company out of business or severely damage its reputation in the eyes of brokers, several of the less connected drivers began returning to work for the company. Kach management enticed them by offering nearly all the demands of the strike and occasional loads with a one hour wait time as well. This situation led to friction between the Kach strikers. The more pragmatic drivers felt that in end the demands were won, or nearly so, and thus provided no reason to refuse returning to work. The sentiment also arose that perhaps had drivers held the strike longer rather than taking such an aggressive stance, management would have soon caved within one or two days more. More militant drivers who made up the strike committee felt they made a principled stand and sacrifice in the strike and quitting and the former group's returning to work amounted to a betrayal of their collective decision. Broadly speaking many drivers saw the strike

¹¹⁷ Garvin, "Here Come the Wobblies!," p. 23.

as a victory for the most part.¹¹⁸ But for the leadership of the Sikh drivers, the strike raised the issue that ultimately the IWW had no special power to compel the trucking companies to negotiate and in fact companies resisted demands on principle when drivers conducted their action under the banner of the union.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile this point was underscored when drivers at ATS, a company with nearly all Latino truckers including Augustine Moreno, met during the Kach strike, presented demands and had several immediately granted.¹¹⁹ Moreno maintained some contact with IWW organizers, but kept his distance and did not invite them or the Sikh leaders to participate in their efforts.¹²⁰

The next issues that confronted the campaign was the banning of Kual Singh from the Union Pacific rail yard. The incident happened prior to the November Commander's House meeting, where Kual Singh announced his situation and appealed to other drivers for support. An older and religiously devout Sikh who spoke mostly in Punjabi, Kual Singh garnered a high degree of respect from many of the Sikh drivers, who felt compelled to take up his cause. An attempted January 2005 meeting between IWW organizers and the Union Pacific rail yard manager was delayed to late February and then again finally to March 8 by management. Sikhs leaders were not able to attend and the manager claimed Kual Singh had committed the highest level of safety violation by crossing a rail line that had a moving train, though more than one half mile down line from the point crossed.

¹¹⁸ Interviews with Satinder Daljit Singh and Dewey Obtinalla.

¹¹⁹ *Troquero*, Stockton edition newsletter published by the San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch of the IWW, February 2004, in possession by the author.

¹²⁰ Colin Bossen, "Organizing Department Formation Committee Survey with Adam Welch" (unpublished document of transcribed interview), Long Beach, CA: Organizing Department Formation Committee of the IWW, 2005.

Kual Singh claimed he was confused by conflicting signals rail yard employees gave which caused him to cross the track. But the manager refused to budge. After hearing of the result, Sikh leaders insisted that IWW organizers retain a lawyer and threaten Union Pacific with a lawsuit. They asserted that another driver who committed the same offense had successfully used the tactic, but any further details on the specifics of the case were unobtainable.

A volunteer lawyer connected to the union was brought to meet with the Sikh leaders and informed them that unless there was grounds to allege discriminatory business practices by the rail yard (as truckers cannot seek protection under work place civil rights protections due to their non-employee status) the banning was simply the decision of the rail yard to run their business how they saw fit and stood no chance for a successful legal challenge. At this point the Sikh leadership balked at the need for a union if the issue of Kual Singh's banning could not be resolved without striking. By late March 2005 the Sikh leaders communicated that they no longer wished to carry on their involvement with the union.¹²¹

As the meaningful relationship of the between IWW and the Stockton Intermodal truckers rested on a careful alliance between the union and the leaders of the Sikh drivers, the decision of this core to end their involvement with union sealed the fate of the union campaign. More focused on the steady stream of bread and butter fights, initiated by the Sikh leadership and buoyed by the broader layer of militant drivers who emerged from the Big Strike, and pulled in every direction by the flood of individual grievances brought to them, IWW organizers faced great difficulty and devoted too little time to the creation of infrastructure ensuring a lasting union presence in the constantly shifting industry of

¹²¹ Ibid.

Stockton Intermodal trucking. Though the actions, victories and spirit evoked by the Big Strike and the union campaign still carries on in the memories of the drivers to this day, even if a lasting union presence did not.

4. From Ghadar to Khalistan: The Radical Sikh Tradition in Stockton

*Let us run together a new government
Where there will be no one big or small.
All together will be equal,
Everyone will have the same rights.
Let there be no question of high or low.
Let everyone have a job.*¹²²

Small circles of Sikh drivers remained following the Saturday afternoon trucker meeting at the Stockton Gurdwara library. Each wall offered dozens of framed pictures of Sikh gurus, martyrs to British colonialism and Khalistan fighters brandishing weapons and bandoleers. IWW organizer Harjit Singh Gill recalled a conversation with Sohan Singh after one of the many weekend afternoon meetings, “He said something about you can tell if someone is a trouble maker by the way they tie their turban. To me that was a reference to the struggle and how the folks that were involved in the struggle would tie their turban.”¹²³ The style is referring to a simple, round shaped turban conforming to the head

¹²² Ved Prakash Vatuk, *Thieves In My House; Four Studies in Indian Folklore of and Change* (Bhairavanath, India: Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan, 1969), Chapter III “Protest Songs of East Indians on the West Coast, U.S.A.,” p. 77.

¹²³ Interview with Harjit Singh Gill.

as opposed to the more common elaborate styles. The style is also reminiscent of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a prominent figure of the Khalistan movement discussed below and celebrated as a martyr in framed pictures in the Stockton Gurdwara library and langar (the traditional free cafeteria of Sikh temples which is located in the basement of the Stockton Gurdwara).

In this section of the manuscript I will draw historical links between Stockton's Sikh truckers and the historical, political and social experiences of Sikh's in both Northern California and more recent events within the Punjab region of India. I believe that any substantial analysis of the Stockton Sikh truckers would be lacking in overlooking this. In the early twentieth century, Sikhs formed a key part of the radical Indian diaspora that stretched across the globe with its call of resistance and revolt in opposition to British colonial rule. A key center of this community was no doubt found in the Stockton Sikhs who were members of the anti-colonialist Ghadar Party and likely gathered in the very same room in the 1910's as the truckers met to plan workplace actions in 2004. More recently during the mid 1980's and early 1990's the Stockton Sikh community played a role in supporting demands for a separate Sikh state in the Punjab region (the historic homeland of Sikh's in India) and denouncing the atrocities of the Indian government surrounding the armed conflict which emerged.

Key in drawing together these connections is in understanding the role of collective historical memory and how these interlink to social struggles. This type of memory extends beyond the span of individuals and their personal recollections (though these might play a role as well) and is best seen as a collective repository of traditions, ideas and sentiments that influences groups, leaving a legacy years and generations after

events occur. An excellent example of this in the context of the American labor movement is Peter Rachleff's work on the 1985-86 Local P-9 strike. The 1,700 members of Local P-9 of Austin, Texas belonged to the United Food and Commercial Workers working as meat packers for Hormel. These workers led a grueling and defiant strike against both the concessionary demands of the company and the indifference and sabotage of the union's national leadership. Rachleff's *Hard-Pressed in the Heatland* is an account of the Local P-9 strike in a company town against a determined corporation. Though the strike spawned widespread solidarity from rank and file labor activists throughout the US, the national leadership of the UFCW refused to officially sanction the struggle and even went so far as to undermine solidarity efforts and accepting increased production at other unionized facilities during the course of the strike.¹²⁴

In looking at this struggle Rachleff draws upon the history of what he calls Local P-9's "militant predecessor," the International Union of All Workers. Founded in 1933 until it's merger with the CIO in 1937, Hormel meat packers formed the independent union's "initial base." Incorporating workers of nearly all occupations from several cities and towns and led by a coalition of political radicals such as former IWW members, Trotskyists and Communists, the IUAW left an important legacy of labor radicalism along the lines of what labor historian Staughton Lynd calls "alternative unionism." This is a tradition characterized as "democratic, deeply rooted in mutual aid among workers in

¹²⁴ Peter Rachleff, *Hard-Pressed in the Heartland; The Hormel Strike and the Future of the Labor Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1993), pp. 27-28.

different crafts and work sites, and politically independent.”¹²⁵ Despite the fact that Rachleff found little evidence of memory or knowledge of the history of the IUAW among Local P-9 Hormel members, as multiple generations had passed between 1937 and 1985, he draws a clear link between the periods. “We were struck by the degree to which history seemed to be repeating itself,” he remarks.¹²⁶ This suggests that collective memories of struggle can live and extend beyond the context of the length of memory for specific events.

‘The Turbaned Tide:’ The First Sikhs of the San Joaquin Valley

Sikh migration to the US cresting between 1907-1910, never reaching more than a total population of 6,000. Acting as the center of Sikh social, spiritual and political life for the exclusively male immigrant population was the Stockton Gurdwara,¹²⁷ established in 1906 and with the inauguration of the building in 1915.¹²⁸ Sikhs worked predominantly as agricultural laborers and organized themselves into self-sufficient housing and work gangs and were paid near the lowest wages. According to a 1910 Immigration Commission report looking at the average wages paid in agriculture by race the wage hierarchy stood as follows: White American, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, East Indian and Mexican.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Staughton Lynd, Ed, “*We Are All Leaders;*” *Alternative Unionism of the Early 1930’s* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1996), pp. 2-3.

¹²⁶ Rachleff, *Hard-Pressed in the Heartland*, p. 28.

¹²⁷ La Brack, *The Sikhs of Northern California*, pp. 79, 114, 127.

¹²⁸ See *The Stockton Record*, June 11, 1984 and for the 1915 dedication of the original temple see November 22, 1915.

¹²⁹ Jogesh C. Misrow, *East Indian Immigration on the Pacific Coast* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1971 [1915]), p. 17.

Also, as many as half of the population were veterans of the various British Army units station around the globe at the time.¹³⁰

Maia Ramnath writing on the Indian diaspora describes the conditions in the Punjab region pushing Sikhs to immigrate abroad during this period as rooted in the colonial policies of the British:

Inflexible colonial policies exacerbated recurrent famines by commandeering food production for commercial export, while efforts to restructure land-tenure systems in a direction more conducive to capitalist agriculture forced many small landholder into mortgage and wage labor. This economic destabilization also contributed to a wave of popular uprisings in 1907.¹³¹

During this same period Sikhs faced the harsh racism of an increasingly violent anti-Asian movement along the Pacific Coast, which was particularly strong in California. Riots by organized groups of anti-Asian white workers opposing the growing 'turbaned tide' erupted in Seattle, Evertt, and Bellingham, Washington in 1907 in which Sikhs and East Indians were driven out forcibly.¹³² Political leaders also took note of the anti-immigrant agitation as well, introducing in 1913 and 1914 several

¹³⁰ Maia Ramnath, "Two Revolutions: The Ghadar Movement and India's Radical Diaspora, 1913-1918" *Radical History Review*, Issue 92 (Spring 2005), p. 10.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 24.

¹³² La Brack, *The Sikhs of Northern California*, pp. 70, 98. For more on the ideology of 'free labor' held by whites and racial formation immediately prior to the turn of the 20th century in California see Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines; The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

proposed bills in the Congress along the lines of the Chinese Exclusion Act though applied to East Indians¹³³

Three key incidents effecting Sikh immigrants would play important roles in shaping their consciousness in relation to their experience abroad: The Komagata Maru incident, the passage of the Asiatic Barred Zone Immigration Act of 1917 and the 1923 Thind Supreme Court case. In 1914 Gurdit Singh chartered the Japanese steamship the Komagata Maru and led 276 ticketed passenger, mostly Sikhs, to test immigration law in Canada. They reasoned that as British subjects under the British Commonwealth they would be entitled to free entry. Authorities denied them outright and responded by passing laws to prevent this in the future. In what became known as the Komagata Maru incident, the events were seized upon by Ghadar Party activists, discussed below, to show the injustices of British colonialism.¹³⁴ Next was the passage of the Asiatic Barred Zone Immigration Act of 1917 which effectively “barred any East Indian leaving the US from re-entering the country unless he could prove that he was in a legally exempted class ... [making it] risky to leave the country even for a short period.”¹³⁵ Finally, under the Naturalization Law of 1790 and its 1870 amendment, naturalization was limited to “free white persons” and former slaves. Sikhs argued successfully in the lower

¹³³ Joan M. Jensen, *Passage from India; Asian Indian Immigrants in North America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 31.

¹³⁴ La Brack, *The Sikhs of Northern California*, pp. 141-142. According to Ramnath, “Two Revolutions,” p. 13, Ghadar activists set off to meet the passengers in Japan with literature and arms to organize them to revolt upon their return to India. British authorities were forewarned which resulted in a shoot out killing twenty passengers and a few police officers and two hundred arrested. The rest disappeared or managed to escape.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

courts that they were technically Caucasians and therefore legally entitled to naturalization. Reaching the Supreme Court in 1923, Sikhs were stunned when the ruling handed down stated that the criterion for ‘white persons’ was the “understanding of the common man” based on skin color, instead of previously accepted notions of Caucasian ancestry. The decision then “set the stage for a concerted campaign to rescind already granted citizenships” by authorities who by 1926 stripped 42 of the 69 East Indians granted citizenship up to that point.¹³⁶

Ghadar Means Revolt: Sikh Radicalism and the Ghadar Party Legacy

On November 1, 1913 the first issue of *Ghadar* newspaper appeared announcing: “WANTED: Fearless, courageous soldiers for spreading ghadar in India. Salary: death. Reward: martyrdom. Pension: freedom. Place: the field of India.”¹³⁷ The term “ghadar” variously means ‘revolt,’ ‘mutiny’ or more broadly ‘revolution’ in the Punjabi language. The Ghadar movement conjoined in California a layer of radical Hindu intellectuals based out of San Francisco with rural Sikh laborers working in the lumber yards and farms of the Central Valley under a multiplicity of ideologies that brought together “at different points elements of nationalism, left-wing radicalism, and religious or ethnic revivalism.”¹³⁸

Founded as the Pacific Coast Hindi Association, the movement became synonymous with the name of its newspaper; as key Ghadar figure Har Dayal declare, “Our name is identical with

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 153.

¹³⁷ Ramnath, “Two Revolutions,” p. 13.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

our work.”¹³⁹ Through the group’s newspaper and extensive propaganda, the Ghadar movement forged together what Ramnath terms “a prototypical Benedict Anderson-style print community” among the global Indian diaspora¹⁴⁰ and linked itself to similar anti-colonial movements across the globe. Outside of publishing and educational activities, the organization raised funds, organized guerilla and weapons training and after the outbreak of World War I recruited and sponsored hundreds of Sikhs from across the Central Valley to participate in a series of ill-fated uprisings against British rule.¹⁴¹

What is most important in our brief look at the Ghadar period is the movement’s connection to the Stockton Sikh community and legacy of radicalism. In his ethnographical work on the Stockton and Yuba City-Marysville Sikh community *The Sikhs of Northern California 1904-1975* anthropologist Bruce La Brack discusses the intertwined nature between the Stockton Gurdwara and the secular Ghadar Party, who were “composed of the same membership and supported by the same people” though maintained themselves as separate organizations.¹⁴² One author looking at the East Indian community in North America, Joan M. Jenson, provides a explicit examples drawing the connection between the Stockton Gurdwara and political activity:

The gurdwaras soon became a place where political discussions occurred, political newspapers were read, and contributions were

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities; Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (New York: Verso, 2006).

¹⁴¹ Ibid. and La Brack, *The Sikhs of Northern California*, p. 142.

¹⁴² *The Sikhs of Northern California*, p. 128.

solicited for independence plans. No sooner had the gurdwara been established in Stockton than an Indian nationalist spoke there, asking for funds to pursue a scheme to establish headquarters in Japan for a freedom movement. Sikhs gave him a generous donation.¹⁴³

Also important in this framework is seeing the Ghadar movement as part of a homegrown response to Sikh's experience with the racism of American society and as workers occupying the bottom rung of the racial and economic hierarchy. As both La Brack and Ramnath touch upon, East Indian saw their position in US society as tied to their subject status under the British and "rather than reacting to the local white citizenry who were the immediate cause of their legal and extralegal oppression, they transferred their anger to the British colonial government."¹⁴⁴

We can also gain further insight into the character of the Ghadar movement through the published folk song of the Ghadar era. Rooted in the "Indian rural popular tradition," South Asian folklorist Ved Prakash Vatuk compares the songs to the role of American labor movement songs sung at public meetings, used to recruit followers and transmitted orally. Many carry similar themes to other folk traditions born out of revolution and resistance to foreign domination, such the Mexican *corrido* and Irish resistance songs.¹⁴⁵ While the verse opening this section gives a sense of the spirit of radical egalitarianism present within the Ghadar movement and which connects with themes in Sikh doctrine, the

¹⁴³ Jensen, Joan M., *Passage from Indian; Asian Indian Immigrants in North America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988.

¹⁴⁴ Ramnath, "Two Revolutions," p. 26.

¹⁴⁵ Ved Prakash Vatuk, *Thieves In My House; Four Studies in Indian Folklore of and Change* (Bhairavanath, India: Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan, 1969). Chapter III "Protest Songs of East Indians on the West Coast, U.S.A.," p. 67-68.

verse below allows us a look into Sikh self-perception and again reinforces the connection between the oppressed social status of East Indians in the US (or throughout the global East Indian diaspora for that matter) and the foreign rule of their homeland:

The whole world calls us black thieves,
The whole world calls us “coolie”
Why doesn’t our flag fly anywhere?¹⁴⁶

A final connection worth drawing which links to the main narrative surrounds the leading Ghadar figure Lala Har Dayal. A luminary of the Ghadar movement, Dayal abandoned an Oxford scholarship for political reasons early in his life and after several years of travels briefly took up a position as a lecturer on Indian philosophy at Stanford after his 1911 arrival in San Francisco. An eclectic revolutionary who combined spiritual and political philosophy, Don Dignan describes his ideology as a “distinctive amalgam of western anarchism and Hindu revivalism.”¹⁴⁷ In addition to his ties to his ties to the anarchist movement, such as with the Magón brothers of the *Partido Mexicano Liberal*, Dayal lectured on behalf of the IWW and even served as the secretary of the San Francisco branch.¹⁴⁸ This provides an interesting connection between the Ghadarites of the 1910’s and the Sikh truckers who would join the IWW in 2004, but the question remains of whether a relationship existed between the radical unionists of the IWW, who rejected the racial exclusion of the mainstream labor movement, and the Sikh laborers of the Central Valley?

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁴⁷ As cited by Ramnath, “Two Revolutions,” p. 21.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

The Wheatland Strike of 1913 erupted one month into the harvest at Durst Hop Ranch outside Marysville. In a series of mass meetings thirty members of the IWW rallied a 3,000 strong multi-ethnic workforce speaking twenty seven languages against the outrageous living conditions and pay. According to accounts East Indian were present during the strike as well.¹⁴⁹ This strike established the IWW as “the militant spokesman for the agricultural worker in California for the next ten years.”¹⁵⁰ Because of this prominence by March 1914 the union had forty locals and five paid in California with an estimated membership of 5,000.¹⁵¹ Ramnath is concludes that although IWW members formed connections with prominent Ghadarites while jailed together during their mutual war time persecution, the likelihood of Punjabi Sikh laborer’s participation in the radical labor movement can only be speculated on. She points out that “although the Punjabi’s were in all the right places at all the rights times to coincide with the peak of IWW activity, their tendency to live together in separate enclaves perhaps made them less likely to become part of any mass multiethnic labor mobilizations”¹⁵²

“No Longer a Dream:” Stockton Sikhs and Khalistan

As of the writing of this manuscript you can still attend the various festivities celebrating Sikh holidays at the Stockton Gurdwara and amid floats parading down the street pulled by truck

¹⁴⁹ Greg Hall, *Harvest Wobblies; The Industrial Workers of the World and Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2001), p. 48.

¹⁵⁰ Hyman Weintraub, “The I.W.W. in California: 1905-1931” (Master’s thesis, University of California Los Angeles, 1947), 81-82.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁵² Ramnath, “Two Revolutions,” p. 27.

rings or all day lungar, you might hear the chant over the Gurdwara loudspeakers: “*Khalistan Zinbabad*” meaning “Long live Khalistan.” Meaning “land of the pure,” Khalistan, was a separatist movement to create a Sikh nation-state out of the Punjabi speaking areas of India during the 1980’s through the early 1990’s. The movement was fueled by economic instability in the predominantly agricultural region of the Punjab brought about the western implemented “Green Revolution” during the 1960’s through the 1980’s, shifts in central government policies causing widespread unemployment and resistance to early peaceful mobilizations by Sikhs to seek cultural recognition and redress from the central government. Following Operation Blue Star, a controversial June 1984 assault by Indian military forces on Sikh militants lodged in the holiest site of Sikhism, the Harmandir Sahib or Golden Temple, the region erupted into violence for nearly a decade as Sikh militants took up guerilla warfare and the Indian state waged a bloody campaign of counter-insurgency and repression on the populace.¹⁵³

While the Khalistan movement has quelled inside India, today the concept still holds currency among many within the Sikh diaspora and especially the Sikh community of the Stockton

¹⁵³ For an overview of the development of the movement and its origins see Hamish Teleford, “The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, No. 11. (Nov., 1992), pp. 969-987; on the impact of the Green Revolution in the Punjab see Vandana Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution; Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics* (London: Zed Books, 1991); for an excellent inside account of the guerilla struggle and the perspectives of the militants see Joyce J.M. Pettigrew, *The Sikhs of the Punjab; Unheard Voices of State and Guerilla Violence* (New Jersey: Zed Books, 1995); and finally for documentary advocacy work on state repression in the Punjab see Jaskaran Kaur, *Twenty Years of Impunity; The November 1984 Pogroms of Sikhs in India* (London: Nectar Publishing, 2004).

Gurdwara. When the conflict reached its peak following the Operation Blue Star and the pogroms against Sikhs that erupted across India following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh body guards, Stockton Sikhs played a leading role in voicing their protest. Shortly after the events, the Stockton Gurdwara was designated the central location for all political activities by Sikhs within North America.¹⁵⁴ The Gurdwara became a hub of information, fundraising, protest coordination and meetings of Sikh leaders from surrounding communities and across the US and Canada. Later that year, on the Sunday of November 4, 1984 about 150 Stockton area Sikhs carpooled two hours away to Yuba City, north of Sacramento, for a pro-Khalistan march. With many carrying unsheathed swords, local police estimated the participants at 5-7,000.¹⁵⁵ Midday eight months later on the weekday of June 6, 1985, in what would become an annual ritual for years to come, a crowd of 300 Sikhs converged on the San Francisco Indian consulate to commemorate the anniversary of the siege of the Golden Temple. Much of the crowd was made up of women, some with children in their arms or by their side. Many donned saffron garments as well, the traditional color of martyrdom in Sikhism and carried handmade picket signs. One of the signs read: "Khalistan, No Longer a Dream... Its A Reality."¹⁵⁶

Today the dream, the idea of Khalistan, even if not a nation-state, continues on as a concept of shared identity and tradition. For many of the truckers though, the issue is likely somewhat closer to home. Many of the truckers are married men between thirty-five and forty-five who immigrated to the US after

¹⁵⁴ *The Record*, June 11, 1984.

¹⁵⁵ *The Record*, November 4, 1984.

¹⁵⁶ *The Record*, June 7, 1985.

completing all or some high school and a few having completed a college education prior to immigrating. This would place them between 11 and 21 years of age during Operation Blue Star in the Punjab and in the prime age group to be targeted by police for false arrest, detention and torture, which was widespread in the region following the events of 1984 and the placement of the state of Punjab under central government rule.¹⁵⁷ Likely their ability to immigrate to the US demonstrates their resources to leave the situation, but nevertheless the likelihood is high that the social turmoil that the Punjab underwent effected at least some of the male immigrants in this age range directly or indirectly. My ability to find multiple formal or informal interview sources on this topic, yet alone to elicit a detailed response, was unsuccessful. One interview participant with few prompts made clear his involvement with social movement activities (which he called the “*morcha*” which translates to ‘facing the enemy’ and is used to mean a mass political campaign or demonstration)¹⁵⁸ that preceded the armed conflict. But for obvious reasons he would only offer further that he left the Punjab and sought political asylum in the US. Another more politically conservative interview participant though disagreed and said that many drivers who participated in the strike were not born in India or left before the conflict started, which true at least in part.

5. Concluding Remarks

Overall this project is not simply a study around a particular question, an ethnographic account of a series of events or a

¹⁵⁷ Pettigrew, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, p. 11.

¹⁵⁸ W. H. McLeod, *The Sikhs; History, Religion, and Society* (New York: Columbia University, 1989), p. 56.

sociological analysis of a particular worker struggle (and it would likely fall short of each of these frameworks by themselves), but an effort fueled by all these approaches that seeks to create both a social history narrative of events as well as placing them in a context through which we might better understand and begin to ask questions about how we understand the terms, context and meaning of how and why workers struggle. It addresses notions of worker self-organization and consciousness, grassroots unionism, flexible labor conditions in a global economy and the terrain in which these all interact.

Future steps to expand this manuscript would be a wider sample of interviews from the Sikh drivers as well other ethnic groups of drivers. Especially insightful would be the addition to the narrative of the Sikh leaders who declined to be interviewed due to their perception that no purpose would be served given the end of the union effort. The inclusion of drivers from Oakland and the Los Angeles area would also richen the narrative as well and allow a broader story to be told. A particularly interesting theme which emerged, that I was only able to begin to touch upon in my investigation, was the relations and perceptions between the Sikh and Mexican drivers. This is also an important theme, for in my view the difficulties of these groups allying was an important factor in the organization and will be in any future attempt to unite Stockton Intermodal truckers. Also unique about this theme is that though extensive ethnographic literature exists on the intermarriage of Sikh men and Mexican women during the inter-war period,¹⁵⁹ there is no literature on their relations in a labor/workplace context. Additionally, further archival work could stand to be done on the

¹⁵⁹ See Chapter 4 “The Mexican Interlude: Intermarriage and Cultural Compatibility” in La Brack, *Sikhs of Northern California*, pp.168-204.

political economy and history of labor in the Central Valley; Intermodal trucking and its interrelation to the logistics industry and global economy; and the radicalism of the Ghadar and Khalistan movements and contemporary links to the Sikh community. All these are future directions this research could be expanded in.

Conclusions

Wrapping together the themes of this work I would to offer three conclusions that I believe are amply supported in the above narrative. The first is the growing role that Intermodal truckers play in the integrated global supply chain of goods in the US which amplifies the power of these workers when they bring an overstretched transportation network to a sudden halt. As larger segments of our economy shift towards just-in-time models of production and consumption and the US is more dependant on import goods, Intermodal port and rail trucking will be increasingly relied upon. While shippers and logistics firms are able to reroute containers through alternative rail heads and ports, they cannot circumvent Intermodal transportation as a whole. A fragile and crowded transportation infrastructure which is easily disrupted is evidenced by Union Pacific's May 6, 2004 embargo on all containers shipped to California as a result of the Intermodal trucker strike in Stockton. Intermodal truckers have an increasing ability to leverage the power of their relationship to the economy and press their demands by bringing the movement of goods to a halt. Demanding increases in pay, changes in the conditions and even an end to the sham 'independent contractor' status prevalent in the industry, lies in the ability of the truckers to exercise this power by uniting across regional, ethnic and cultural lines.

Second, is that a fair assessment of these events would recognize the leadership role played by the Punjabi Sikh drivers who led the Stockton strike, initiated the Oakland strike and played a part in catalyzing the larger strike wave across the US. By all accounts, the Sikhs who constituted the overwhelming majority of the Stockton Intermodal industry agitated for, organized and led the strike of April 26 to May 4 to a successful conclusion. During the union campaign a core of Sikh leaders who emerged from the strike in conjunction with the IWW continued to provide the broader leadership, support and motivation that allowed the successful Patriot and Kach strikes to take place. We can also see this leadership role in the Oakland strike, whereby despite their small numbers, we can see through press accounts as well as other sources that Sikhs played a disproportionate role. Overall the Sikhs truckers of Stockton played a significant leadership role within the Intermodal industry of northern California during 2004.

Finally, I would like to draw connections between the struggles of the Stockton truckers and the historical, political and social experiences of Sikh's in both Northern California and recent events within the Punjab. The radical and homegrown legacy of the Ghadar movement as a response to British colonialism, but also shaped by Sikh experiences under America's racial realities stands out clearly. The Khalistan movement is still within memory of the older generation Sikhs, but also remains a living concept that carries on within the Stockton Sikh community today. Both the ideas of Ghadar and Khalistan though draw upon "the powerfully militant traditions of the eighteenth century [in Sikhism], replete with stories of prodigious bravery, noble suffering, and willing martyrdom."¹⁶⁰ The degree to which the legacies or direct

¹⁶⁰ McLeod, *The Sikhs*, p. 117.

experiences of these social and political struggles frame, shape or directly influence the actions of the Sikh truckers as workers remains a debatable question that cannot be reached empirically when looking at any mass of individuals, but to deny this influence would be a fallacy. Clearly historical links of ideas and traditions among Stockton Sikhs played a role in shaping the character of the Sikh truckers and their actions.

What the future has in store for the Intermodal truckers of Stockton and especially the Sikh truckers remains unclear. Should a future crisis or major organizing campaign within the industry take shape, what will their response be? Will the same layer of militants will step up again and play a similar role, or will their disillusionment with the union campaign require a new layer to step forward? The Intermodal truckers of Stockton will have to reach their own answers to those questions, but I hope that this manuscript's work of documenting and examining their effort will help provide a deeper understanding of their struggles, day to day issues, and history. But above all I hope it can offer a vision of the possibilities workers have in coming together to change and transform their daily reality and how we look at that process.

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