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Note

Each paper in this journal serves as an example of the scholarship being produced by the students at Birmingham-Southern College. As such, it attempts to reproduce each paper in the format of the discipline in which it was created. Consequently, there are minor inconsistencies of style throughout the publication. These have been retained as a subtle celebration of the diversity that makes Southern Academic Review representative of the liberal arts education found at Birmingham-Southern College.

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Ease, Power, and Love: George Herbert’s “Prayer (I)” and “Prayer (II)” as Complementary Works
by Sam Prickett

The sheer volume of George Herbert’s poetic output has led critical examinations of his poetry, by necessity, to focus a great deal of attention on a few individual poems while leaving many others relatively unexplored. Perhaps the most vivid illustration of this comes in the form of Herbert’s two “Prayer” poems, both published in his posthumous, culminating 1633 work The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations. Of the two, “Prayer (I)” is by far the most studied and anthologized, with much debate centered upon the meaning of the poem’s ambiguous structure and imagery. The more straightforward “Prayer (II),” meanwhile, is relatively ignored, often going entirely unacknowledged in scholarly examinations of Herbert’s oeuvre or even of The Temple itself. While there are certainly compelling arguments for the greater viability of “Prayer (I)” as the subject of critical study – the aforementioned complexity of imagery and structure and its numerous biblical allusions, for example – the dearth of scholarly work regarding “Prayer (II)” is especially confounding, considering the critical agreement that Herbert’s work, particularly The Temple, places great focus on the act of prayer: “a little more than half of these poems [in The Temple] are actually in the form of prayer,” notes one scholar (qtd. in Sherwood 3). If this is the case, then surely there is benefit in examining the two poems in the collection which Herbert explicitly titled “Prayer.” An analysis of both poems, the widely studied “Prayer (I)” and the less celebrated “Prayer (II),” reveals a surprisingly complementary relationship at work: a congruence in the structure of the two poems becomes apparent, which in turn provides a new lens through which critics might view “Prayer (I)” and lends greater relevance to the oft-overlooked “Prayer (II),” simultaneously providing us with a fuller, more comprehensive perspective of Herbert’s own views toward the act of communicating with God.

Beyond their titles and subject matter, the two poems appear to differ greatly at first glance. “Prayer (I)” consists of a series of appositive that describe the act of prayer in vastly different and typically abstract metaphors, which span from “Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear” (6) to “Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss” (9). “Prayer (II),” meanwhile, takes a much more straightforward approach. Its prayer is an explicit address to God, in which Herbert describes how easy it is for God to hear him, ultimately stating that prayer has such importance in his life that he would gladly relinquish all worldliness in order to keep communicating with God.

Within the text of The Temple, neither “Prayer” poem is given much prominence. Both appear as part of “The Church,” the larger of the book’s two sections, though they are tucked into relatively ignoble positions, separate from each other: “Prayer (I)” appears approximately a quarter of the way into the volume, while “Prayer (II)” comes shortly after the book’s halfway point. This separation between the two is reflected in critical discourses surrounding them: scholarly readings of one “Prayer” rarely consider the other. This typically occurs in favor of “Prayer (I),” which continues to fascinate critics with its vivid imagery and unorthodox structure. The poem’s abstract use of images has been noted by many critics: “One of the texts from The Temple centered on imagery is, of course, ‘Prayer (I),’ remarks Kay Gilliland Stevenson, presenting the prominence of imagery in the poem as an obvious fact (179). That critics agree the imagery is important, however, is not to say that they agree on the meaning or even the tone behind it. T.S. Eliot remarks upon the poem’s “gentle imagery” (17), while Christopher Hodgkins, in contrast, describes the poem in more dramatic terms, as “an ascending spiral of metaphors, all of them as remarkable for their brilliant peculiarity as for their bewildering diversity” (92). Chana Bloch, in Spelling the Word: George Herbert and the Bible, finds many “biblical images” present in the poem’s fourteen lines and remarks that awareness of these allusions is required to even begin to understand the poem: “The reader is expected to draw upon his knowledge of Scripture in order to expand the highly compressed phrases [of the poem] and render them intelligible,” she writes (87). This assumption that the poem is unintelligible without decryption has resulted in a general tenor of confusion in many critical responses to the text: Stevenson, who had asserted certainty about the importance of imagery in the poem, expresses a “problem in understanding [the imagery, because it is] complicated by the fact that many of the phrases that make up the poem are illogical, literally incomprehensible, [and] absurd” (179). This confusion extends to the poem’s very structure: “some critics have read ‘Prayer’ (I) as a list
of ‘apparently haphazard metaphors’ failing to define prayer adequately or as a poem ‘too large and elusive to fit a neat pattern,’” writes J. Stephen Murphy (21). Murphy himself interprets the abstraction of the imagery as being part of “an act of simultaneous narration; that is, [Herbert] tries to represent the experience of unity with God, the moment of the ecstatic experience, in the moment” (22). Hodgkins, meanwhile, reads the poem’s difficult nature as Herbert’s acknowledgement that “even at its dazzling best, this process [of attempting to translate an ineffable experience into language] can only bring us to know our ignorance, and to rely on God’s omniscience” (92). These greatly differing perspectives on the poem emphasize the almost overwhelming ambiguity of the text.

Critical opinions on “Prayer (II),” by contrast, are significantly less polarized. Marion White Singleton sees the poem as a reluctant rejection of worldly existence: “‘Prayer’ (II) shows that the relinquishment of worldly is still a halting process,” he writes, adding, “The positive drive for ‘destroying that which ty’d thy purse,’ sin, is contaminated by the worldly aspirations so hesitantly offered up in exchange for prayer” (139). Terry G. Sherwood largely agrees, remarking that the poem encourages “[lifting] the heart to God through conformity to the Sacrifice” by removing oneself from worldliness, which in turn exposes “the more general truth that in this way the believer can participate in the qualities of the godhead” (23). More essential, however, is Sherwood’s argument that “Prayer (II)” bears “an obvious structure” based around “ease, power, and love, introduced respectively in the first three stanzas” and underlined in the culminating final stanza (22), an assertion that will prove extremely useful in a comparison of both “Prayer” poems.

Critically, the two poems are rarely considered alongside one another. Matthias Bauer, in his essay “A Title Strange, Yet True: Toward an Explanation of Herbert’s Titles,” does group the two poems together by their title, but to no substantial effect, only stating the surface similarities between the two before shifting to focus on their differences: “In his ‘Prayer’ poems, for example, most obviously ‘Prayer (II),’ the text is a prayer and, at the same time, a poem about prayer. ‘Prayer (I)’ is an extended definition of the word that forms its title” (107). While Bauer deserves credit for being one of the few scholars to place the two poems within the context of the other, he fails to examine the full extent, particularly regarding the poems’ structure, to which the two “Prayer”s complement each other.

They key to structurally connecting “Prayer (I)” and “Prayer (II)” comes from Sherwood’s analysis of the latter’s composition, which declares the first three stanzas of the poem centered around the themes of ease, power, and love, respectively, before the three themes are culminated in the final stanza. Initially, this structure of four six-line stanzas appears to be incompatible with “Prayer (I),” which takes the form (with a few exceptions) of a Shakespearean sonnet. However, diving the poem up into its component parts – three quatrains and a concluding couplet – reveals a similar underlying structure in which Herbert analyzes three separate aspects of prayer before reconciling them all in the poem’s concluding lines. A closer analysis of the poems reveals that those three themes so integral to “Prayer (II)” are also depicted, in a surprisingly congruent (if much more abstract) manner, in “Prayer (I),” with the poem’s first quatrain centering on ease, the second on power, and the third on love, with the concluding couplet providing a culmination of the preceding three themes in a way very similar to the fourth stanza of “Prayer (II).” These similarities might be best exposed by comparing each stanza/quatrain of both poems.

The first stanza of “Prayer (II)” focuses upon the ease with which Herbert is able to communicate with God: “Of what an easie quick accesse, / My blessed Lord, art thou! how suddenly / May our requests thine eare invade!” (1-3). Herbert establishes the theme of ease in the first line of the stanza; the rest of the stanza is relatively straightforward, with Herbert providing an example of the simple effortlessness of prayer: “If I but lift mine eyes, my suit is made,” he declares (5). This emphasis on the ease of communication with the almighty manifests itself more subtly in the first quatrain of “Prayer (I):”

Prayer the church’s banquet, angel’s age,
God’s breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heav’n and earth (“Prayer [I]” 1-4)

The imagery of this quatrain lends itself to the thematic concept of ease, perhaps most explicitly in the second line’s “God’s breath in man returning to his birth,” in which the act of prayer is equated with the passive act of exhalation. The
first line’s image depiction of interaction with God as a “banquet,” meanwhile, anticipates “Love (III)” the concluding text in “The Church” portion of The Temple, in which Herbert’s narrator is persuaded by God to join a feast he feels he does not deserve; this depiction of interaction with God as, essentially, a free meal (as opposed to a meal that one has worked for) also contributes to the first quatrain’s subtle theme of effortlessness. So, too, does the image of “the soul in paraphrase” (3), a line which implies that the act of prayer has simplified Herbert’s soul from its original form. The mention of a “plummet” in the poem’s fourth line, meanwhile, refers to an older definition of “plummet” than our modern one, here meaning a lead weight used by sailors to test the depth of water in a process called sounding. Even so, the effortless connotations of the modern incarnation of the word remains relevant—though in this case, the plummet of prayer is not sinking through the water, but falling easily through “heav’n and earth” (4).

The second stanzas of both poems then turn the focus from ease to power. In “Prayer (II),” the power is that of the Almighty: “Of what supreme almighty power / Is thy great arm...” he writes (7-8). The personification of God’s power into an image of physical strength is reflected in the second quatrain of “Prayer (I),” though it is transformed in an attempt to mimic divine might:

Engine against th’ Almighty, sinner’s tow’r,
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear, The six-days world transposing in an hour,
A kind of tune, which all things hear and fear; (“Prayer [I]” 5-8)

The effortlessness of the first quatrain is immediately undone by the activity of “Engine against th’ Almighty” (5), which appears to depict the act of raging against God as an act of prayer. This theme continues in the next line with the image of “Reversed thunder” (6), in which prayer is depicted as an angry reply to the sonic manifestation of God’s power, thunder. This relatively violent imagery is continued with “Christ-side-piercing spear” (6), another depiction of prayer as an angry act against God, reflecting the penetration imagery of “Prayer (II),” which sees God “[tack] the center to the sphere” (9). Also present in both poems is God’s power over time as a manifestation of his power: “Prayer (II)” presents God as having the strength to make “all things live their measur’d houre” (10), while “Prayer (I)” bestows upon prayer a sense of control over the passage of time, evoking the Christian creation story: “the six-days world transposing in an hour” (7). The sublimity of divine power is cemented by the final line of the second quatrain, in which the sound of prayer is said to evoke “fear” in all things (8).

Then, in both poems, there is a shift. In the terms of “Prayer (I)’s” sonnet structure, it serves as a volta: the theme suddenly transforms from the violent awesomeness of God’s power to the softness of divine love. “Prayer (II)” presents this love in terms of Christ’s sacrifice:

Of what unmeasurable love
Art thou possesst, who, when thou couldst not
die, Wert fain to take our flesh and curse,
And for our sakes in person sinne reprove (13-16)

While “Prayer (II)” focuses on the freeing power of divine love, the supplicant of “Prayer (I)” also engages in an act of love with the divine, experiencing “Softness and peace, and joy , and love, and bliss / Exalted manna, gladness of the best” (9-10). The active, violent imagery of the previous quatrain has been replaced by calm, relaxed metaphors which begin to hint at the reconciliation that will make up the final couplet of the poem: “Heaven in ordinary , man well drest” (10-11) hints at a reconciliation between the divine and the earthly as a result of prayer, as does the imagery of “The milky way, the bird of paradise” (12), which brings together the colorless milkiness of the cosmos with the flagrant plumage of one of the earth’s most colorful creatures. There is no implied conflict between the two, merely a peaceful co-existence connected through the quatrain to the positive, reconciling power of God’s divine love.

The final stanza of “Prayer (II)” and the final couplet of “Prayer (I)” both serve the purpose of reconciling the three themes of ease, power, and love established in the earlier sections of their respective poems. Both do so, though the contrast between their apparent conclusions is fascinating. In “Prayer (II),” Herbert remarks that the qualities of ease, power, and love, with which he comes into contact through his prayerful communication with God, are enough to convince him to leave earthliness behind entirely:

...I value prayer so,
That were I to leave all but one,
Wealth, fame, endowments, vertues, all should go;
I and deare prayer would again together dwell (20-23)

In significant contrast to this, however, is the final couplet of “Prayer (I),” in which Herbert continues the third quatrain’s trend of combining the earthly and the metaphysical: “Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul’s blood, / The land of spices; something understood” (13-14). Prayer is here presented as both earthly and heavenly through the image of church bells reaching the cosmos, while the description of “soul’s blood” (13) is a combination of the metaphysical and the physical (not at all dissimilar to the imagery used in John Donne’s “Air and Angels”). “The land of spices” (14), meanwhile, is a fleeting image that seems to invoke the distant, foreign lands where spices are harvested (for Herbert, this was probably Indonesia or America) and combine it with the immediate, sensory experience of consuming those spices – the reconciliation of the distant with the intimate. The final two words of the poem, “Something understood” (14), seem to indicate the complete, unspoken conciliation of the physical and metaphysical as allowed and motivated by the divine ease, power, and love experienced in the act of prayer throughout the poem.

Here marks, quite obviously, a point of divergence between the two works: “Prayer (II)” seems to use explicitly stated qualities of divine ease, power, and love as a reason to reject earthliness and fully embrace God, while “Prayer (I)” uses those same qualities, albeit more subtly and implicitly, to depict prayer’s deeply unifying nature. These positions are not easily reconciled. One solution may come from J. Stephen Murphy, who argues that “Prayer (I)” attempts to speak “from another place and time than that of its human author because it is intended to capture, if not be, the moment of ecstatic union with God, as both the content and the form of the poem indicate” (27). Thus, perhaps, the perspective of “Prayer (I)” is necessarily different from that of “Prayer (II),” and thus Herbert’s reactions to the three divine qualities revealed by prayer cannot be the same. Or, perhaps, as Sherwood suggests, it is simply a matter of Herbert shifting his focus from himself to God: “for in praise the soul, by concentrating upon God and not its own motions, rises closest to its fruition” (24). “Prayer (I),” then, could be said to come from a perspective that is more unified with the divine – more enlightened – than the more self-aware narrator of “Prayer (II).”

These questions, while not easily answered, do serve to indicate the value of examining these poems, providing more meaning to their title than that of a shared subject. The poems’ congruence in thematic structure – their respective transformations through the divine themes of ease, power, love, and a combination of the three – raises significant questions about Herbert’s perspectives on the act of prayer. The congruence also supplies, more simply, a new lens through which to read one of Herbert’s most frequently examined poems – as well as a new perspective on one of his less appreciated works.
Leadership through Enforcement:
Birmingham-Southern’s Role in the Civil Rights Movement
by Maggie Ward

The Civil Rights era in Birmingham dominated the streets just blocks away from Birmingham-Southern’s campus. Students inside the gates were not extremely involved during the Civil Rights era, except for a few select students. The college was fearful of taking a side since it would influence not only the school’s enrollment but also their financial status. The actions of students Marti Turnipseed and Tommy Reeves during the Civil Rights Movement were rare examples of students who welcomed this upcoming change to the institution of segregation and who were actively involving themselves in the movement. Administrative responses to these students’ actions revealed the character of the school, and two main leaders made prominent decisions: Henry King Stanford, the college president and Cecil Abernethy, the dean after Stanford left the school. The school did not play an obvious role in the Civil Rights movement, but internally struggled with racial tensions that plagued the Birmingham area. The administrative titles that removed Marti Turnipseed from campus have the same power today, but they use their titles to remember previous regrettable choices. Henry King Stanford’s response to the petition to the governor signed by 95 students and Tommy Reeves’ choices to take an active role in the movement reflected Stanford’s administrative approach of supporting students no matter what, while Cecil Abernethy’s warnings and reaction to Marti Turnipseed’s choices reflected a different path. The choices made by the administration revealed the college’s place in the Civil Rights Movement, and its continued remembrance today shows its progression from its previous position of racial inequality and removal of freedom of speech.

Birmingham-Southern College was founded before the Civil Rights Movement even began. It was started in 1856 with the help of the Methodist Church. Southern University, located in Greensboro, Alabama, and Birmingham College merged to form Birmingham-Southern College on May 30, 1918.¹ It is located in northwest Birmingham, Alabama. Students and professors in the past

twenty years have studied its place in history throughout its existence, including the Civil Rights Era. A variety of recent students and professors’ participation in research was either out of their own personal connections with the college or in relation to classes offered by the school. Their research found that leaders’ choices dictated the Civil Rights Movement on Birmingham-Southern’s campus. Few students actively participated at the time, and the two students that did were both threatened by the college’s administration. Most academic papers tried to place Birmingham-Southern in the general context of the Birmingham area. This paper discusses previous findings and interprets other documents scarcely touched on, such as those papers that reflect documents such as the petition signed by 95 Birmingham-Southern students.

The historiography of Birmingham-Southern’s place in the Civil Rights Era is established primarily by historians related to the college, but is also covered in some local histories of the movement. But for Birmingham is a book written by Glenn T. Eskew talks about the Civil Rights Movement as a local movement. He also reveals that Birmingham-Southern connections are sprawled throughout the city, including connections with Ku Klux Klan members. Eskew also brings Stanford’s participation outside of the campus gates into the picture, which is something that is not seen in most of the works about Birmingham-Southern during the Civil Rights Movement. The discussion on the two students at Birmingham-Southern is mentioned, but ironically he does not use Marti Turnipseed’s name, but rather refers to her as “a white female student from Birmingham-Southern College.” Eskew focuses on the locality of the movement, and through this he reinforces the opinion that Birmingham-Southern as an institution did not actively participate in the movement, but it had representatives who did. Eskew teaches at Georgia State University. He gained his PhD and MA from the University of Georgia (of which his dissertation became But for Birmingham) and his BA from Auburn University. He has stayed in the South in both his professional and academic careers, so this must be considered when using his research. One must take his southern roots into account when reading his works.5

Ibid., 180.


Not all historians who research Civil Rights History are from the South. Another author who brings Birmingham-Southern into the foreground of the Civil Rights discussion is Mills Thornton in Dividing Lines. He discusses how Birmingham-Southern hosted a Race Relations Institute in 1955. Apparently the Institute was productive, but the Interracial Committee did not make as much progress as they wanted and fizzled out. He also discusses Stanford’s participation in the reopening of parks off campus.7 Thornton’s book gives a history of the Civil Rights Movement throughout Alabama and its place not only in the 1960s, but also in the pursuit of racial equality throughout the years. Thornton went to graduate school at Yale, and he published Politics and Power in a Slave Society from his dissertation. He studied under C. Vann Woodward who many historians “regard…as the great figure in our field during the mid-Twentieth Century.” Thornton began writing Dividing Lines after he finished Politics and Power. He primarily studied Selma, Birmingham, and Montgomery and their roles in the Civil Rights Movement as opposed to the national movement. This localized view was a new way to look at history. Edwin C. Bridges praises Thornton in the Alabama Review and discusses how Dividing Lines deserves more attention. Bridges also talks about his smaller projects, and Thornton’s job at the University of Michigan, where Bridges studied under him. Thornton’s academic career was not focused in the south, but his research was. His bias is not as strong as if he gained most of his higher education in the south, so he can be read as a fairly reliable source of the local movement in Birmingham. Southern bias is not a problem in most academic work, but taking it into consideration helps one better understand the author’s perspective on different subject matter.

Dr. G. Ward Hubbs is a current research librarian and the archivist at Birmingham-Southern College who has published a book entitled A Compelling Idea: Birmingham-Southern College. He reveals the origins of the school itself in the book and continues to the present. The book does not primarily focus on the Civil Rights Movement, but it is one of the few published works on Birmingham-

6 Ibid., 259.


8 Edwin C. Bridges, “A Tribute to Mills Thornton.”
Southern's history. The section on the Civil Rights Movement allows for a brief overview. Hubbs discusses the two aforementioned students, Tommy Reeves and Marti Turnipseed, and then exposes the leaders’ responses to each student. He also shows the importance of Eugene “Bull” Connor’s opinions on the matter. He reveals that Birmingham-Southern had some students who supported the movement, but also shows the fear tactic that the city used on the college and the students’ desire for normal college experience. Hubbs has been a part of the Birmingham-Southern campus since 1999. While not a student of the College, Hubbs’ education remained close to Alabama. He went to Baylor University in Texas for his undergraduate studies and then went to Queen’s University at Kingston for his M.A. Following that, he returned to Alabama for both his M.L.S. and his Ph.D. His interest in Alabama history is fueled by his educational career and his eventual placement as a professor at Birmingham-Southern.

Another professor who taught recently and studied Birmingham-Southern’s history during the movement was Dr. William E. Nicholas. He taught at Birmingham-Southern for thirty-eight years. Educated at Tulane University for every degree up to the doctorate level, Nicholas’ interest in the South is obvious. He began teaching at Birmingham-Southern in 1972 and remained there until 2010 when he became the James A. Wood Professor Emeritus of American History. His article, entitled “The Dilemma of the Genteel Tradition: Birmingham-Southern College in the Civil Rights Era, 1957-1965” discusses Birmingham-Southern in depth and its place during the Civil Rights Era. It focuses mainly on the two students involved, Turnipseed and Reeves. It also talks about the pressure by the Board of Trustees to remove any signs of tension within the school. He begins to show the difference between what the community wanted and what the people with money wanted. His main argument is about the financial persuasion that existed during the Civil Rights Movement at Birmingham-Southern, and his research is the most cumulative that is available about Birmingham-Southern during the Civil Rights Era in the city that surrounds campus.

Recent students also have shown interest in researching their school during this time. M. Brent Pritchard wrote an essay about ‘Southern’s place in the Civil Rights Movement for Dr. G. Ward Hubbs’ 300 level history class. In this essay he studies the place of African Americans throughout the history of the college so that he can study how “the development of civil rights…affected the life of Birmingham-Southern College.” Christy Dettmer also wrote an essay about the Civil Rights Movement at ‘Southern for Dr. Nicholas’ Plural America II class. Dettmer’s thesis argues the student and faculty reactions to the events in Birmingham and how they brought controversy both inside and outside of the gate. Jessica Missios wrote an article that was published in the Southern Academic Review about the same topic. Her studies explored Birmingham-Southern’s place in Birmingham during this time. All three of these students attended Birmingham-Southern College, so their opinions on the school are largely skewed based on personal experience. Pritchard remained in Alabama post-graduation and now works at Swagelok Alabama, which confirms his connection to the South. Both Missios’ and Dettmer’s current work and location are yet to be determined, but their connection with the college as alumnae confirm their Southern bias. Dettmer and Pritchard wrote for professors with immense knowledge of the subject, so they had the ability to reference them if need be in order to strengthen their argument. Dettmer, Pritchard, and Missios’ research revealed that leadership at the college was the main focus that is studied in Birmingham-Southern’s Civil Rights’ history.

One of the main leaders of Birmingham-Southern College at the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement was Henry King Stanford. He was not particularly active in the entirety of the movement, but he did find himself involved in local movements. On Birmingham-Southern’s campus he was the voice of equality and freedom of speech. He was born in Atlanta, Georgia, he graduated with his bachelor’s degree from Emory University, and he stayed there to determine, but their connection with the college as alumnae confirm their Southern bias. Dettmer and Pritchard wrote for professors with immense knowledge of the subject, so they had the ability to reference them if need be in order to strengthen their argument. Dettmer, Pritchard, and Missios’ research revealed that leadership at the college was the main focus that is studied in Birmingham-Southern’s Civil Rights’ history.

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to work towards his international relations master's degree. Stanford was the President of Birmingham Southern College from 1957 to 1962. Throughout his life, he was awarded a variety of honors including the Eleanor Roosevelt-Israel Humanitarian Award to Anti-Defamation League awards from Birmingham and Miami, he was recognized worldwide for his choices and active stance on a variety of issues. He was involved in higher education administration for most of his life. He died in 2009 after serving as the president for a variety of colleges before and after Birmingham-Southern, most notably University of Georgia and the University of Miami.\textsuperscript{18} Stanford was the more accepting of the two administrative leaders that are examined in this paper.

Stanford's desire for free speech was evident in his five year tenure at Birmingham-Southern College. He was praised for his attitude towards students voicing their opinions, and he also participated in the open parks movement as one of the four spokesmen in 1962. Bull Connor's actions when questioning Stanford's involvement in the open parks movement made Stanford respond, "I never had such an experience in my life."\textsuperscript{19} He was appalled at the legal practices that Connor enforced on the ideas of freedom of speech. He also let his students practice their freedom of speech. Students from Birmingham-Southern College signed a petition about students from Alabama A&M being expelled for praying on the state capitol steps\textsuperscript{20} and sent it to the governor, voicing their opinions on an extremely controversial matter: race. It stated: "...We feel that your inference in the affairs of the college through the State Board of Education was objectionable, unnecessary, and an infringement upon academic freedom.”\textsuperscript{21} The students expressed their opinions in a completely legal way. They used their freedom of speech by submitting this petition to the governor. Limiting this freedom goes against the legality of the nation's founding documents, but Alabama officials twisted a variety of laws to fit their agendas. Alabama officials did not support the students from Alabama A&M who were expelled in the same way the students did, so they decided to talk to Stanford.\textsuperscript{22} Stanford responded, supporting his students in their pursuit of equality. There was some backlash, but archival evidence reveals praise as well. In a letter correspondence with S.B. Barker, another academic leader, Stanford is praised for voicing his opinion on his students. “I want to assure you of the genuine appreciation in these dark days of such overwhelming ill-will to encounter this clear an understanding of the need for adequate self-expression.”\textsuperscript{23} Responses to Stanford were generally positive in their remarks.

Another letter written to him was by Daniel G. MacDonald, who worked at Howard College (which is now Samford University). MacDonald clearly praised and congratulated Stanford on his article, but was clear to say that “My opinions, however, are not necessarily the same as those of Howard College.”\textsuperscript{24} This general response could be seen throughout Birmingham: some people personally disagreed with segregation, but would not express it unless they could be trusted. Birmingham residents could lose their jobs and their safety be revealing controversial opinions. Financial obligations ruled a variety of choices throughout Birmingham, and academic institutions were not immune to these obligations.

Stanford was not afraid to reveal his opinions. At the convocation in March 1960, he expressed his general opinion on the matter. He reinforced his opinion of the necessity of free speech “All of you must know the kind of atmosphere I want to prevail on the campus. It is an atmosphere of free inquiry and free expression.”\textsuperscript{26} The students who signed the petition were nervous, but Stanford reinforced his belief of free speech. 95 of them wrote their names legibly and could have been prosecuted. He defended the right to petition. In his convocation speech, however, he discusses how free speech is not an excuse to be

\begin{footnotes}
\itemGlenn T. Eskew, 180.
\itemBirmingham-Southern Students, “Petition to Governor John Patterson: A Petition of Request,” petition, 1960.
\itemWilliam E. Nicholas, “The Dilemma of the Genteel Tradition.”
\itemS.B. Barker, letter to Henry King Stanford, March 17, 1960.
\itemDaniel H. MacDonald, letter to Henry King Stanford, March 17, 1960.
\itemGlenn T. Eskew, \textit{But for Birmingham}, 149.
\end{footnotes}
taken advantage. Stanford realizes that there could have been backlash towards not only the students who signed but also their families. He understands their fear in signing the petition and as the president wants them to know he has their back, but he wants them to consider the consequences their signatures could have caused. Schools in the south dismissed students for participating in movements or disregarding ordinances against integration. When contemplating his actions, he concludes, “I do not know what I would do if confronted with a similar situation [to choosing education or standing up for what was right].” 27 His answer to this question seems obvious with his Jefferson County Court Subpoena about “slander” in the New York Times. 28 He stood up for what is right, and he wanted his students to do the same. Stanford stood up for the students, but in no way was he oblivious to the risks they took for choosing equality.

The student that “acted out” under Stanford was Thomas “Tommy” Reeves. On April 2, 1960, Reeves went to Daniel Payne campus so he could talk to students who participated in a sit-in. The police were called by the president of the college when he found out there was a white man in one of the dormitories. The police waited outside for Reeves to come out, but he snuck out of a window and made his way to church. While he tried to leave church, he was arrested for vagrancy and “intimidating witnesses.” He remained in jail for a few days because contact could not be made with his family. The NAACP even offered to start raising money to bail him out. 29 When Eskew discusses Reeves’ arrest, he brings his black counterpart into the picture. Apparently, “The city filed vagrancy charges against all of the residents, an act that led to an ineffective FBI investigation.” 30 Reeves’ trouble was not over when he was released. When Reeves went to a barbershop right after his bail, the barber said something about FBI investigation.” Reeves’ trouble was not over when he was released. When Reeves went to a barbershop right after his bail, the barber said something about how ridiculous it was that a Birmingham-Southern student would participate in such a thing. Not knowing that Reeves was the student, the barber kept on talking. Reeves’ father wanted to pull him out of school for his own safety, but Stanford would not allow it. He did not want the segregationists to call this a win. When his Board of Trustees asked what he was going to do about Tommy Reeves’ participation in this matter, Stanford answered he would keep him safe but would do nothing against him. His reaction on this matter revealed part of his leadership qualities and his political stance. Stanford wanted his students to practice their rights of freedom of speech. Once Stanford left, students would not have this same protection of their choices and rights. Instead, they would be under the control of someone who did not want to stir up controversy, both in the Birmingham area and beyond. Stanford’s support of students was contrasted with Abernethy’s choices.

Stanford stood out as a face for equality, but like every hero he had an antithesis. Dean Cecil Abernethy was not a proponent of equality. Where Stanford defended students, Abernethy said he would do no such thing. In his convocation speech, he clarified that he will not support any illegality: “If any individual student of the college feels that he must take another position then he must do so as an individual citizen. And it is not possible for you to do this while you are a member of this institution.” 32 This speech, reprinted in the Hilltop News indicated a change in representation of the college. Stanford left in 1962, and just a year later Abernethy completely changed ideals and instituted what sounded like a zero tolerance policy to freedom of speech. Dettmer puts it well. “If students wanted to be a part of the school, they needed to assume the position and beliefs of the institution.” 33 Unlike years before, students could not express their opinions with reliance on the school to uphold their dignity. Under Abernethy, they had to claim their own personal entity rather than rely on the school. He would not stand for anyone who had different views than his own. Money ruled his decisions, and people with money in Birmingham did not like integration. Stanford’s lack of concern about money and politics left Birmingham-Southern in a tight situation with Birmingham officials watching and threatening their every move. 34 Abernethy wanted to keep both political and economic standards higher than moral standards.

Abernethy’s “trouble student” was Martha “Marti” Turnipseed. Marti Turnipseed, like Tommy Reeves, had Methodist plans and roots. Her father was a minister in the north, and post-graduation she went to Southern Methodist

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27 Ibid., 2.
29 Henry King Stanford, Campus Under Fire And Other Essays, (Columbus: X-PRESS PRINTING, 1999).
30 Glenn T. Eskew, But for Birmingham, 150.
31 Henry King Stanford, Campus Under Fire And Other Essays, 19-32.
33 Christy Dettmer, “The Position of the Birmingham-Southern Community During the Civil Rights Movement.”
34 William E. Nicholas, “The Dilemma of the Genteel Tradition.”
University for their divinity school. Both students were not originally “trouble makers,” but saw the inequality that existed in Birmingham and began to actively participate. Marti participated in a sit-in at Woolsworth’s in downtown Birmingham. She and seven other people attended this sit-in, and the store promptly closed as the police arrived. Birmingham was tense with sit-ins and peaceful protests happening fairly often under the direction of leaders who trained their volunteers to remain calm and collected. She participated in a peaceful protest that showed her rights, but these rights were not valued at Birmingham-Southern. As she returned to campus, she was called to talk to the dean of students. She was asked to rescind her enrollment.

Before Marti participated in a sit-in of her own, she wanted to see one in action. In a letter written to her parents in April 1963, Marti discusses going “sit-in hunting.” She wanted to see everything that was going on. Marti was not singularly involved in the Civil Rights Movement. As a member of the Birmingham-Southern community, she was part of Kappa Delta sorority and apparently a fairly social girl, “having dates with three different boys on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.”

She lived the life an average college student did, participating in both on and off campus activities. In the same letter where she discusses the sit-in, she talks about the recent Student Government Association elections. She also announces her new position as the vice-president of the M.S.M. council in the next year. Turnipseed reminisced over events and quotes that remind her of her parents, explained to them her new haircut, and seemed to be a fairly normal college student. Her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement came as a surprise to administrators. She became a voice that future administrative groups would ask how she felt on specific subjects that involved inequality and racial relations. The administration continued to have problems with racial relations in Birmingham. When asked, Marti told the administration that black students would not willingly attend Birmingham-Southern; they would not come without the school’s encouragement. She left the office for the last time after this discussion, never to return. The Board of Trustees was against integration up until it was legally required and necessary. This time federal money influenced this decision.

Integration at Birmingham-Southern College began thanks to the passing of the Civil Rights Act by President Lyndon Johnson. Money again was the motive for change, and federal funding was extremely important to the school. This Act applied to all schools that were influenced by federal money, whether it is public universities or students with federal loans. Federal funding was blocked until the school agreed to integrate. Birmingham-Southern had to agree to stop discriminating against anyone based on their “color, race, or national origin” or they would lose all federal funding for everything, including possible grants. The board of trustees agreed, and Phillips informed the faculty of this decision on January 20, 1965. Integration at this point was possible, but not probable since the Board of Trustees was not extremely supportive. The government made them integrate, but they were not pleased with these requirement. While legally the school was integrated, black students were not overly present at the school for years to come.

Other students realized the importance of the Civil Rights Movement during their time here, but they may not have held active roles. The 1964 edition of the Southern Accent wanted students to remember the year 1963 and all it held. It talked about remembering not their G.P.A.s and S.G.A. elections, but instead remembering “that ten blocks from you, America changed.” Students began to realize the importance of their place in the movement. This introduction also talks about the other events that happened during their school year, including the assassination of John F. Kennedy and “the Negro Revolution.” Students were not oblivious to what was happening around them, but their lack of participation reveals the fear that administration and police force instilled in their lives. Howell even addresses the students’ perspectives in his introduction, “It is really amazing, and frustrating, too, the mundane things which occupy us even in the midst of great and portentous times.” Remembrance of the Civil Rights Movement continued to grow and change as time went on, but looking at initial student opinions allows for one to understand the everyday

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35 Marti Turnipseed letter to family, April 1963.
38 Ibid., 25.
40 Ibid., 36-37.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
student’s life in the midst of everything that happened. Yearbooks and newspaper articles are great references for finding these opinions.

Reeves is not focused on in any of the remembrance of Birmingham-Southern’s place during the Civil Rights Movement because of his post-graduation involvement in the North American Man/Boy Love Association which attempts to lower the age of consent. He was involved in more organizations such as Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders along with working against the AIDS crisis, but bringing him into the current remembrance of Birmingham-Southern hurts the college’s reputation and also brings up the gay rights movement, something the world, which includes the college, is in the midst of learning about. He passed away in 2012. After he graduated he was ordained as a minister at Harvard University by earning his Masters of Divinity. The college is still coming to terms with the Civil Rights Movement, and highlighting Reeves would not help in their attempt of coming to peace with the movement.45

More recent remembrance of the Civil Rights Movement at Birmingham-Southern has revealed its initial wrongdoings. Birmingham-Southern, unlike many groups, is coming to terms with its problematic historical choices in hope of becoming a more equal place. Birmingham-Southern realized its choices in the past put some people against others, and throughout the past fifty years it has attempted to come to terms with its past. This was not always the case though. In February 2004, Birmingham-Southern, under the leadership of Neal Berte, hosted a remembrance of Civil Rights events called The Gathering. Panelists from all over, including FBI agents, Media professionals, and others involved in the justice system. The program described the event as “The Gathering: Civil Rights Justice Remembered” has brought together for the first time victims and families of victims, law enforcement agents, prosecutors, and media professionals to discuss their roles in six of the most historic civil rights era murder cases in the nation’s history and the circumstances that finally brought the killers to justice.”46 Legal choices reflected Birmingham’s place during the movement, and Birmingham-Southern happily hosted this event. They did not fully come to terms with their place in the movement until years later. This event


highlighted legal action within the entire Birmingham community rather than focusing on Birmingham-Southern as a legal entity. The focus on Birmingham-Southern students did not occur until years later, and mainly focuses on one individual student.47

In 2013, fifty years exactly from Marti Turnipseed’s sit-in, Birmingham-Southern hosted a community walk from campus to Kelly Ingram Park, the same route that Marti Turnipseed took in 1963. The march memorialized Marti Turnipseed and her actions and the campus’s reactions to her stance. The campus chaplain, Jack Hinnen, led a prayer that began with, “We confess to you that Birmingham-Southern did not get it right in 1963.”48 Realizing the school’s choices in 1963 were not great, the campus wanted to honor the students that did participate. 1,500 students, faculty, staff, and community members gathered to make the same walk that Marti Turnipseed did fifty years earlier, alone. This walk was organized by administrators, specifically General Charles Krulak, who held the same offices as those who originally defamed Marti Turnipseed for walking the same route. Birmingham area leaders such as the mayor, and Turnipseed’s brother spoke, showing the community aspect Birmingham-Southern desired.49 Administration changed its opinions multiple times on this matter, and General Krulak’s decisions reflected more of Stanford’s than Abernethy’s choices. The college is still coming to terms with its place in the Civil Rights Movement, but as time progresses their remembrance improves.

In the Civil Rights Movement, Birmingham-Southern’s role in the greater Birmingham area leaves much to be desired. The administrative decisions reflected the school’s view of the freedom of speech that was expressed by a few students. Marti Turnipseed and Tommy Reeves’ actions were similar in that they displayed their opinions openly, but the punishment they received was less than equal. Stanford’s desire for freedom of speech for the students left Tommy Reeves without a scar, but Abernethy’s strict, community policy dismissed Turnipseed for a year. Both of these students displayed acts of courage by actively participating in the Civil Rights Movement, and the college today strives to remember them. Even in the past, the college realized that something drastic was happening just

47 Ibid.


49 Ibid.
around the corner. The college began remembering its wrongdoings within the past fifty years, and currently wants to show that it has changed. Birmingham-Southern College’s place during the Civil Rights Movement was important to the community within the gates, but did not have a huge impact on the world around them. The two leaders, Henry King Stanford and Cecil Abernethy used different tactics when dealing with student freedom of speech, and through this they revealed the campus’s values.

I used the following documents to come to terms with what was happening at the time at Birmingham-Southern. Many of these letters relay the same message of support towards Henry King Stanford. He supported his students’ freedom of speech. The following are letters to President Stanford along with his responses, the petition students signed to the governor, remembrances of students during the movement, and a convocation speech given by Cecil Abernethy. I have included both the initial letter and response from Stanford in the documents. These documents allow a rare look into the lives of students at the time, and they are the sources for many of the secondary documents that were analyzed. I kept the formatting the same, so any emphasis that is added was added by the authors themselves.

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A.1 Correspondence between Dr. Stanford and S.B. Barker
March 17, 1960

Dear President Stanford –

I have just been profoundly moved by your statement to the press in the Affair of the Student Petition. Considering the obvious garbling of the end of the article in the particular edition of the Birmingham News which I read, I trust that your quotation was a correct representation of the traditional academic point of view and stresses fundamental truths.

In this day of meaningless phrases issued by those who should be intellectual leaders this will stand out as a forthright statement. By one of those quirks of newspaper writing which so seldom operate to strengthen the interpolation of the self-righteous disclaimers of any responsibility on the part of administration of another institution emphasizes your willingness to be considered as a genuine liberal.

I am fully aware of the stigma and opprobrium commonly attached to such a title in this part of the country – some of which I will undoubtedly come your way – but I do want to assure you of the genuine appreciation in these dark days of such overwhelming ill-will to encounter this clear an understanding of the need for adequate self-expression.

I was not fortunate enough to read Dean Jolly’s statement of last week. Judging from some of your remarks, he should also receive whole-hearted appreciation.

I am taking pains to dissociate this letter from any semblance of institutional sanction. However, I should like to identify myself not only as a university professor, but as one who has achieved a fair amount of international reputation in a scientific field. That I am not without respect among my fellows here may be suggested by the fact that I am this year President of the Alabama Academy of Science and have in the past served as chairman of the Alabama Section of the
American Chemical Society and of our chapter of Sigma Xi.

Again, thanks from the academic community.

Sincerely yours,
S.B. Barker
1316 Alford Ave. Birmingham 9, Ala.

A.2

Dear Dr. Barker:

The brickbats which I expect momentarily will be all the more bearable because of your encouraging words. I am truly grateful for your letter.

I do not really believe what I have done is worthy of commendation. It is really an insult to our heritage as free people that the freedom to express an opinion either by word or by petition should have to be reaffirmed, but such are the pressures of community.

The statement in the \textit{Birmingham-News} of March 17 was correct except for the typographical exclusion of the freedoms of assembly, petition, and press. Also it seems that the \textit{Birmingham News} decided I had made an error in not placing the indefinite article before the word license when I said that “…academic freedom is not license….\textsc{sic}” The \textit{Post-Herald} of March 18 carries an error-free statement.

We were quite pleased to have you here on the campus at the time Dean Harry Carman visited the college. I hope that the pleasure of seeing you again will not be long delayed.

Sincerely yours, Henry King Stanford

B.1

Correspondence between Dr. Stanford and Daniel G. MacDonald


Thursday, March 17, 1960

Dear Dr. Stanford:

I congratulate you on your endorsement of Dean J. Ralph Jolly’s statement to the press as printed by the \textit{Birmingham News} in today’s edition. My opinions, however, are not necessarily the same as those of Howard College.

Very Truly Yours,
Daniel G MacDonald,
Inst. of Voice & Opera Howard College [Box 39]

B.2

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

It was certainly kind of you to send me a congratulatory word on my statement concerning the petition sent to the governor by our students. It is encouraging to know that you as a member of our academic community support my stand.

Thank you so much for taking time to send me a word of encouragement.

Sincerely yours,
Henry King Stanford

C

Statement at Convocation (3/23/60)


Events of the last few weeks have prompted me to rethink the role of our college in the midst of community pressures. The overwhelming pressure in any community is toward conformity. I had not read what cultural or social anthropology has to say about this phenomenon of human society, but I have eyes and ears and a modicum of common sense.
The college by its very dedication to the objective and rational pursuit of data, fact, information – knowledge, if you will – out of which one tries to construct a synthesis of truth, seems destined to run against the pressure of conformity. This town-versus-gown struggle has characterized the history of higher education, not only in this country, but in western Europe too.

All of you must know the kind of atmosphere I want to prevail on the campus. It is an atmosphere of free inquiry and free expression. That is the only kind of atmosphere that permits institutional integrity. As I have said on numerous occasions, I think this college ought to be an intellectual beacon and an academic conscience for the community and state. This is said with no pompous feeling of superiority nor with Pharisaical smugness, but it is a humble recognition of a most appropriate foal for us. You have been free to express yourselves in the college newspaper, even to make a fool out of yourselves if you wished. Last spring one of your [sic] criticized the administration so severely in a letter to The Hilltop News that a visiting reporter from Harper’s magazine, on reading the letter, asserted that it would be ground for dismissal in some other institutions he knew.

True to my convictions, I defended the right of 95 of you who write legible signatures and two of you who do not express yourselves on a matter of the most lively current interest. My defense of your right to petition was calculated. I knew the risks involved. The brickbats have come in, as well as words of encouragement. But I believe a reassession [sic] of the right guaranteed to every American in the First Amendment was timely.

However, the exercise of the freedom of speech, as reflected also in the concomitant freedoms of petition and press, ought to be considered from two standpoints. One is whether there is any limit to freedoms of speech in our society. Obviously there is. As Justice Holmes said, this First Amendment was not intended to give immunity for every possible use of language. Justice Holmes’s famous example of the man who yells fire falsely in a theatre is a case in point. He also pointed out that to make criminal the counselling of murder would not be an unconstitutional inference with free speech. There will always be a problem as to what the limit is, but rational limits are set to the exercise of freedom of speech, either by the individual or by supplementary law such as a law protecting against slander or libel.

The second consideration to be made in the exercise of freedom of speech is what affect the vigorous assertion or exercise of the freedom may have on the institution behind whose shield, or in the name of whose shield, directly or indirectly the expression has been made. In other words, here I introduce the note of responsibility. All of us temper our freedom of speech with self censorship [sic] continuously. Sometimes we do this out of motives of Christian forbearance or maybe out of motives of fear of reprisal. At any rate the element of regard for consequences is an indispensable part of the concept of responsibility. During these tempestuous times proposed expressions must be considered responsibly, that is from the standpoint of consequences. Some of you signed the petition were fearful, I understand, over the possibility that the names might have been published. There was certainly a good chance that they might have been. The Governor send photostatic [sic] copies of the petition and the signatures all over the state. You were worried about the potential effect upon the position of your family in the community. I still say that you certainly had a right to sign the petition and I defend you in this right, but the consequence of the actions was also a consideration to be made.

In these times we must consider the possible effect of proposed action upon an institution. The failure of survival of private liberal arts colleges over the next fifteen to twenty years is a matter of grave discussion in college circles. Obviously the community and the region need this kind of a college. In order to render a greatly needed service the college must be made ever stronger, both from the standpoint of financing and from competent faculty.

Also the effectiveness of the president of the college must be considered. I have been criticized by those who do not really understand the principle involved for being unable to control you. When does my defense of you make this point untenable for me? May I do more to advance the cause of academic community in some other post?
Chancellor Branscomb and the Vanderbilt Board of Trust had an unenviable decision to make several weeks ago. They decided to dismiss a student from the Divinity School who refused to sign a statement promising to desist from activities illegal from the standpoint of local ordinances. The Chancellor and the Board reasoned that they could not permit students of Vanderbilt to decide which laws they would obey and which they would not. I do not know what I would do if confronted with a similar situation. It was indeed an agonizing decision to have to make.

These are thoughts going through my mind as I survey the current scene from our, at times, otherworldly vantage point. And for the sake of civilization and humanity, thank God it is otherworldly.

Arthur Garfield Hayes tells the story about an old southern planter meeting a former slave on the street after the Civil War. The Negro’s appearance indicated as to how he was getting along that he was hungry and his roof was leaking, and that things were not nearly so good as he had them on the plantation before the war. The planter asked: “Then wouldn’t you rather be a slave?” To which the Negro replied: “Naw, Massa; there is a sort of looseness about this here freedom that I likes.” There is a looseness about this here academic freedom I like. Let us now treat it too loosely.

-Henry King Stanford.
words – to set them down. We’re in no danger of losing from our national history
exactly what happened and when, but this is the only book intended to help you
recall the way it was with you in that time.

“This is all very fine,” you may say, “but what of my specific life; what does this
actually mean to me?” It is really amazing, and frustrating, too, the mundane
things which occupy us even in the midst of great and pretentious times. After
everyone, as we all did, took a few solitary moments to evaluate the enduring
relevance in our individual lives of these events, after the secret interior cataloging
and filing was over, the surface flow of our lives went on as before. No one my say
in what exact direction or degree another’s life was moved, but there is no doubt
that each life was shaded in some way by the erratic mood and tempo of the past
year. If our recent history was the canvas upon which each inscribed his own tiny
and personal motif, we must all wonder what marks we left on that canvas, on
ourselves, and on each other.

Marti Turnipseed, Letter to Family, Written in April 1963

Dear Family,

I can’t believe it is Friday once again. Cookie and I are going to see “To Kill a
Mockingbird this P.M. It’s about time! By this time I ever do anything it’s out of
style. I went to town on Monday. I went sit-in hunting. I wanted to see one. It
was too funny. First I paid $2.50 in taxi fare (still no buses) and the I chased them
all over town. Finally I got wind they were in Britt’s. I tore out lickity-split to see
and sure enough when I came puffing up they had just been arrested. Everything
looked normal again. Anyhow I got to see a ghost town. All lunch counters
were closed and nobody was there. Police were in clusters on every corner. I was
walking down to Loveman’s when I looked to my left and saw the plain-clothes-
men seated in a car staring at me. I grinned! So much for my futile attempt to see
a sit-in.

Going backward – I think you all must see “Umbria” in Sawyerville. It is a
lovely, old southern mansion with acres of land and its own lake and graveyard
and woods and gardens. It’s owned by an old lady (her hair is dyed a flaming
red-pink, and she has sparkling blue eyes) and her old husband who “don’t say
nothing.” I saw “Martha” (goose) sitting on eggs and she hissed at me. I also saw
her “Andrew” (gander). The graves date back and are all covered in weeds. If we
ever pass that way, I’ll show you. I also got to see all the old places in Greensboro.
I never saw so many ante-bellum houses in one little town.

Tuesday afternoon, I got to hear Dr. Plumb, an English historian from Christ
College, Cambridge. He spoke on the 18th Century Gentlemen’s World Tour.
It was a fascinating lecture complete with accent. I don’t now his prominence,
or lack of prominence, but he sounded authentic. He wrote a biography of Sir
Robert Walpole.

I’m to be vice president of M.S.M. Council for next year. It’s “the” big just
because you have ALL programs. I am no longer president of Sunday School
class so I’ll have more time. Today I had a report due for Art history. I wrote on
the mosaics in Santa Sophia Church in Istanbul (Byzantine Art). I’ve learned
more history this way than ever before. It’s fun. I have tests all next week and I’m
worried but I’ll do my best and hope. Maybe a rock will fall on me and knock me
out for a week! hee hee.

Student Government elections were this week and I feel that a real victory was
won. An Alpha Tau Omega-Baptist and intellectual-was elected. I was overjoyed.
I’ve never seen such deference to the independents. Fifty percent of this school is
independent and they voted this time!

“I got sumptin’ to say and when I gets through I ain’t gonna say no mo,” Wasn’t
it wonderful (“To Kill a Mockingbird”)? I sat there and sobbed like a baby. I
thought the whole movie was so sensitively done. They caught the heart of the
book. Funny, Spence, but it reminded me of some of our adventures – not exactly
the same of course but we have some mighty good memories. I think we have one of those Fathers who was “meant to do unpleasant tasks for all of us,” don’t you?

I had my hair cut – a boy like cut which looks pretty cute it I do say so. My ears show. My ears show. I feel summer coming on and it’s a good feeling.

I’m glad you didn’t try to have two services on Easter. They say McCoy did that and the church looked kinda empty. I love the exhilarating feeling of 500 strong voices singing praise to God.

Love you all!

Marti


A Personal Remembrance of Student Involvement in the Civil Rights Movement at Birmingham-Southern College, 1957-1961
By the Reverend Margaret House Hankins, B.A. 1961

We did not do anything heroic and if you had asked we would have described ourselves as ordinary students, members of the Methodist Student Movement, driven by the passion of faith and a desire to correct inequalities that had recently become visible to us.

I arrived at Birmingham-Southern burdened by the prejudices and limited worldview of my parents, my small town neighbors and decades of fear and tradition. Perhaps the most pervasive burden was “our way of life,” a cliché that well-meaning whites used lightly to explain why integration should never occur. “Our way of life” had serious economic, educational and psychological implications, although these were rarely examined by the dominant community. Household maids worked for $1.00 a day in my early childhood while field hands were paid two cents a pound for picking cotton.

Other indignities were also imposed on African-Americans such as the expectation that when visiting a home of white folks, they were supposed to go to the back door, not the front. I remember waiting for Eunice, the woman who worked in our home, and racing to the front door especially on rainy days to call out, “Eunice, you can come in here.” The idea of separate doors and water fountains seemed strange to me when I was four years old and in my own little childhood way I wanted to make things easier for Eunice.

Prior to Birmingham-Southern I had almost no exposure to an opposing worldview. All the adults I knew seemed to hold the same perspective in regard to race relations. One exception was my Aunt Lonello Mathes, a Munford High School teacher who made friends with teachers in the separate African-American school and visited them in their homes. The only other challenge to my prejudice occurred at Camp Sumatanga where Nina Reeves planned a discussion at Senior High Camp on the topic of race relations. Our parents had visions of us praying under the cross on vesper point and would have been upset if they knew we were wading into deeper waters than the swimming pool carved out of the creek. During our evening discussion we were using time-worn arguments to justify segregation and one camper stood up and proclaimed, “If God had wanted the races to mix he wouldn’t have made blue birds and black birds and red birds. Birds don’t mix and neither should people.” Another camper, Elliot Wright who later attended Birmingham-Southern, jumped up and quickly responded, “We’re not talking about little birdies here. We’re talking about people and that’s a different matter. God created all people to be equal.”

I was stunned. I had never heard anyone, especially a teenage peer, respond to a prejudicial argument. Was there a crack in the wall of discrimination? Nevertheless, I put the discussion behind me until I arrived at Birmingham-Southern as a freshman in the fall of 1957 when I joined the Methodist Student Movement and immersed myself in the rich variety of courses offered.

One cannot discuss the Civil Rights Movement at Birmingham-Southern College without examining the religious and intellectual atmosphere that pervaded the campus in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. Birmingham-Southern was a classical
liberal arts college with a commitment to teach students to think, question and
reflect on ideas, literature, theology, the arts, and historical events. Almost every
class I took opened doors and windows to a broader vision of  the world. The
study of  art history revealed the interplay between art and society. My philosophy
professor, Dr. Bruce Weaver, would not accept easy answers to difficult questions
and always asked, “Why?” Our sociology professor placed Gunter Myrdals’
classic book ________ on the required reading list for a sociology of  race
relations class, a unique offering at the time. Dr. J. Ralph Jolly and others in the
department of  religion gently challenged the Christian fundamentalism that
undergirded racial segregation. Methodist Student Movement gatherings were
not only for fellowship and worship, but also for delving into the difficult issues of
the day: segregation, peace, and the human needs of  those around us.

In this intellectual milieu, I also had a powerful personal encounter with Isabel
Mateos Garcia, a student from Cuba, an active Methodist and a friend of  our
beloved “Señor” McNeill’s. A sideline to this story is the memory that young
women had to be locked in their rooms with the lights out by a certain hour. We
were to be quiet and getting our eight hours of  sleep after curfew. Housemothers
would check the halls to make sure that we were obeying the rules and failure to
do so would result in demerits. But the linkage of  racism and sexism is another
talk for another day.

One night Isabel and I were in my room talking. We knew we had passed the
magic curfew hour so we stuffed a blanket at the base of  my door to muffle any
sounds and to prevent the light from shining through. We were discussion race
relations in the south. I kept parroting the arguments I had heard all my life, one
after another, over and over again, and Isabel kept saying, “Yes, but…” As she
refuted each argument. And so our conversation went late into the night until I
was hit by a thought; no more than a thought, an insight, a feeling, a profound
change. I said simply , “I don’t have a case.” The conversation ended. Isabel
returned to her room and I went to bed and cried all night, knowing that my
life would never be the same. I view that evening as the moment of  my social
conversion.

With my new awareness I began to see, hear and experience things in my world
I had never observed before. I learned about the voting inequities in our country
from Dr. ______, Professor of  Sociology. “You mean the officials really move the
voting sites around to prevent people from voting?” I asked incredulously , as one
of  my ideals about my country was shattered. “Banks won’t give loans to black
people so they can buy land and houses?” Another ideal gone.

As I saw the injustices, I had some interesting conversations with my family. When
the SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) and SLC (Southern
Leadership Conference) newsletters started arriving at my home in Munford,
Mother was horrified and asked, ‘Margaret, where did we go wrong? We sent you
to a good Methodist college and now you are involved with these groups!” And I
replied, “Mother, you didn’t do anything wrong. From the time I could talk, you
told me that Jesus loves everyone. You taught me to sing. “Jesus loves the little
children, all the children of  the world…” The only thing that happened is that I
believed you.”

Another major breakthrough for me was attendance at the World Student
believe that Andy Lipscomb, Ann Love, Callie Betancourt, Klaus Jung and I
attended the conference where Dr. Martin Luther King was the featured speaker.
Dr. King had been characterized by Alabama media as an “outside agitator” and
I had never read one positive word about him. Mesmerized and inspired by his
powerful sermons, we returned home determined to do more than we had done
before.

When I was returning from the conference, I went to the Greyhound Station to
catch a bus to Anniston, near my hometown. An attractive, well-dressed African
American woman and her beautiful little daughter were in line in front of  me.
I heard the ticket agent say, “Can I help you?” And again, “Can I help you,
miss?” I came out of  my daze to realize that he was taking to me, looking around
the woman and child. I responded, “She is next in line.” After all, wasn’t that
good manners? The first people in line are served first. In a rude, harsh voice
he replied, ‘Well, if  she wants a ticket she’ll have to go into the “_____” waiting
room.” I whispered a weak, “I’m sorry,” to the woman as she and her daughter went to the adjacent room.

We started making local connections with others who were working on the fringes of the civil rights movement. We received assistance and encouragement from Pastor Ellwanger, the pastor of a little African-American Lutheran Church near West End. I think that Tommy Reeves made the original contact with him. Several of us attended worship there from time to time. I was once asked to play the piano but a white girl from Munford, Alabama just didn’t fit the bill. Nevertheless, the people were kind and the Pastor said, “Slow it down just a bit.” We also attended the National Council of Christians and Jews, a group working for equality.

I believe that it was in 1960 when Governor James Patterson expelled 90 students from Alabama A & M for marching to the state capitol and praying on the steps. Can you imagine? Expelled for praying! Not throwing stones, just praying. Prayer must be a powerful and dangerous weapon. Dr. Martin Luther King visited Pastor Ellwanger’s parsonage and Tommy Reeves met with them to draft a petition protesting the governor’s actions and asking for reinstatement of the students. Our goal was to distribute the petitions throughout the Methodist Student Movement and Wesley Foundation organizations on every white college campus in Alabama and get 90 white students from each campus to sign the petition. I circulated the petition on the BSC campus and did in fact get 90 signatures but not without rejection and ridicule from many students. Other students agreed with the petition but were afraid to sign it. Fear is always such a deterrent to justice. The Sunday after the petition was published in local newspapers, I attended worship at First Methodist Church in Talladega with Betty Scruggs. The county judge, a church member, met us at the door and with a very red face said, “You girls didn’t sign that petition did you?” Again, I was aware of how much fear a little piece of paper with a few student signatures could arouse in the powers that be.

I seem to remember that Tommy and Andy were part of one of the first pray-ins at the park. The “girls” did not go because it was deemed too dangerous for us. The women’s movement had not yet taken hold. Tommy, who served as student pastor at a small church somewhere in or around Birmingham, was locked out of his church for condemning segregation in Birmingham. I think he was “confined to campus for his own good” following the confrontation at his church, but he would have to tell his story.

We were a small group of ordinary students searching for ways to participate in God’s transforming work in Birmingham, Alabama in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. We did not do anything heroic, but we tried to respond to the call we heard. The work is not yet complete, especially in a time when the Governor of the State of Alabama thinks outdated segregationalist laws need to remain in effect. I hope that our contributions served as a beacon to future students with a clearer and more courageous vision than we possessed and that the voices of BSC students will make a difference in the present time.

With hope and peace,
Margaret House Hankins
BA, 1961
M.R.E. Duke Divinity School, Duke University, 1963  
M., Div. San Francisco Theological Seminary, 1978

PS. Students I remember who participated in the WSCF Conference, the study group or worked on the petition:
Tommy Reeves
Andy Lipscomb
Margaret House
Ginger Wilson
Ann Love
Klaus Jung (A German exchange student)
Callie Betancourt
Betty Sulzby
I apologize to any students I inadvertently omitted.

Perhaps someone from BSC would like to contact the former students listed above and get their versions of our little story. Some of them may have more clarity about the details than I have shared.

I want to talk a bit to you this morning about a college, a community, and a student body. Each of these, by itself, is a strange sort of animal, and when you put all three of them together, you really have something.

Let’s take a look first at a college. A college is a charter, which almost no one ever sees; it is a board of control, which one seldom sees; it is an administrative staff, which one tries hard not to see; it is a faculty, which one sees on scheduled occasions; it is a student body, which one sees, as a body, once a week, except of course for special convocations.

Put this way, a college is hardly recognizable. But we know that we can all recognize this thing called a college. We are here; we live in it, some briefly, some for reasonably long periods, and others apparently forever. We can recognize it, even when we are not too sure exactly what it is. If we stay around long enough and use our senses, I think we can get a pretty good notion of what a college essentially, fundamentally is about.

What it is about, we say, is education, but there are a lot of contrary notions about an education. We argue about that all the time, and that, I think, is important— that we do argue about, disagree, discuss, put our ideas on the line, expose our opinions to controversy, to correction, to judgment. As a matter of fact, I am inclined to think that this gets us pretty close to the essential nature of a college. It is a place, I suggest, where we try to learn to think our way toward truth.

To the outsider this probably seems pretty helter-skelter, indirect, inefficient, time wasting. It is, however, the only way that complex, elusive, troublesome thing called truth can be approached. Truth, I suggest, is not a tidy package that can be placed in the hand, like a diploma, an answer in the back of the book, or even a strong feeling of conviction. Truth is, I believe, so complex, so difficult, so many sided that one spends his life in pursuit of it, ever hopefully, relentlessly, but never confident that we have captured it.

Well, college is supposed to make us relentless and to keep us hopeful by submitting us to processes that have, in the long run of time, been useful in helping men toward truth. These processes are not dramatic or glamorous and only on occasions are they exciting. They are hard, tedious, laborious, sometimes hazardous, and they are always slow, painstaking.

This, it seems to me, is the essential nature of a college.

And then there is a student body. Or rather, there are students. Students can be a body only occasionally and for purposes tangential
to the essential purpose of a college. It is the nature of man to organize and students must organize for one purpose, or another – for self-governance, for social pleasure, for domestic convenience. For the essential purpose, however, the student is alone, an individual.

This ambiguity the college must recognize and cope with to the best of its wisdom and ability. And there is another ambiguity the college must reckon with. Is a student an empire or a protectorate, a free agent or a ward, and if a ward, whose ward? Does the college stand in loco parentis, is [sic] place of the parent, to the student? This relationship varies. We send your grades directly to you, unless you are on probation or your parents request your grades. One thing does not vary, however. If you come to live with us, become a residential student, we have to accept the responsibility for your personal security. We are then, inevitable, in loco parentis.

And finally there is the community. Originally it was thought a good idea to place colleges away from communities, away from the temptations that might interfere with the essential purpose of the college; but with the spreading urbanization of the western world, this rural isolation is seldom possible. Oxford built walls around their colleges and lined the tops with shards of glass embedded in the cement. Town and Gown is an ancient phrase indicating a problem.

A college in a city has its advantages, however, as well as these traditional disadvantages. A college is so different from a city that it is hard for each to understand or even to sympathise [sic] with the other. A city is not searching for truth; it is searching for endurance. Our problems are almost as nothing compared to the problems of a city. To an outsider, a visitor from space, it must seem that all cities are built on destroying themselves, so great are its problems of survival, so complex are its problems of arranging for so many thousands of diverse human beings to live so compactly together.

To an insider, however, the problems are challenges and significant excitement. We get used to it, we see improvements, we hope and plan for more, and in the meantime we enjoy the conveniences, the comforts, and the luxuries.

But a college is not exactly either an insider or an outsider, or rather we are both at once. This ambiguity can and does lead to problems – for the college, for the community, and for the students.

A college has to be alert – a private college does – that the engulfing needs of a city do not alter the essential purpose of the college. And this college has been alert to that possible danger. We have carefully and thoughtfully considered our responsibility, our obligation, to the city's needs and within our abilities we have tried to fulfill them. We shall continue, as an institution, to make the kind of contribution we can make to a city that is a part of us and of which we are a part. A college also has to be alert that it itself does not abuse its privileges. A city is not a toy for our pleasure or a convenient specimen for our laboratory. It is a thing in itself, immense, complex, full of its own mortal dangers. It is not to be taken lightly, whimsically, or thoughtlessly.

This city in particular is now in the midst of a kind of revolution, a political, economic, and social revolution. It is however, a legal revolution, the only kind that ought to occur in a democratic society. It had its beginning in a legislature, continued at the public polls, and is now being litigated in the courts. The atmosphere is naturally tense. This city is entitled, I think, to work out its destiny in this peaceful and moderate way. This is also the position of the college as an institution in this city.

If any individual student of the college feels that he must take another position then he must do so as an individual citizen. And it is not possible for you to do this while you are a member of this institution. By electing to come to this college, you inevitably assumed the responsibility of representing the college. As long as you remain in statu pillari, you bear the name of the college, - on the campus, in the city, in your own homes. As members of the institution, you must abide by its regulations and you must obey the laws and injunctions of this community.
Your failure to do so requires us to discipline you.

To the extent that we do have to discipline, to that extent we have failed with you, in our essential purpose. If we have tried to teach you anything, we have tried to teach you that wisdom cannot come quickly, that self-discipline is the only means to it. Any other discipline is extraneous. Our greatest concern, outside this essential purpose of educating you, is for your personal security. This is a responsibility we cannot and will not shirk. Any action that the college has taken so far has been, for this purpose.

I want, in closing, to ask that you understand our mutual problems and to devote yourself to the central business of the college, while we wait in lightened tolerance and sympathy for this city to work out its crucial and agonizing problem. The city is entitled to that. The college is entitled to it. And you are entitled to it.

Ed’s note –

At the request of the Hilltop NEWS, Dean Abernethy added the following explanation of the college’s action in the past week. In accordance with the policy of the newspaper, he has withheld all names.

So that there may be no misunderstanding about the nature of the College’s action in dealing with the problems of last week, I am giving these clarifying details. On Wednesday, April 24, shortly after noon, the College received several calls from town that one of our students was in personal danger because of considerable mass reaction to her sitting-in at a local lunch counter. When the student returned to the campus, she was interviewed by the Dean of Students. She said that her action was taken upon her own initiative, alone, and without the knowledge of any member of the College staff. Subsequent reports from reliable sources confirmed the original information that her action was provocative in a tense community situation. When the student was interviewed the next day, administrative officers of the college could receive no confidence that the action would not be repeated. The College was clearly in no position to protect her from the personal danger involved in her action. The student voluntarily offered to withdraw from the College and the administrative officers of the College accepted her withdrawal. The student is now under no disciplinary action of the College and is readmissible [sic]. – Dr. Cecil Abernethy.

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Feminine Ties: The Influence of Politics on *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Gone With the Wind* by Smriti Krishnan

Literature is a powerful and tangible lens through which to view distinctive elements of a culture. The culture of the South has been studied from a variety of perspectives—it’s history is intertwined with a culture resistant to change, particularly in regard to its perceptions of gender and politics. Still, over time, elements of Southern politics have become deeply entrenched in the cultural output of the South. To that end, literature provides windows to view the politics of the South during specific periods of time in history, such as during the Reconstruction and the Great Depression. *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Gone With the Wind* are considered to be the two of the most iconic novels from the South (Cowan W.T., 2014). Both novels narrate memorable stories, but what is even more striking is how much each novel is representative of Harper Lee’s and Margaret Mitchell’s exposure to political events during their conceptualizations of the novels.

Southern politics were changing rapidly, especially during the 1920s and 1950s. The racial relationships between African-American and White female characters portrayed in the novels serve to reflect the ongoing politics of the time periods in which the novels were penned. At first glance, Mitchell’s novel seems to narrate the trials and tribulations of its heroine, Scarlett O’Hara. Yet, the novel weaves several political elements that exhibit the racist attitude more typically associated with the South within the context of Scarlett’s relationship with other characters. Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* also seems to be an unadulterated bildungsroman, a novel which traces a protagonist’s development and growth. These novels of formation often describe how the emotional turmoil of the protagonist leads to his or her enlightenment on a subject matter. Upon closer inspection, the interactions between its principal characters are atypical when placed in the context of not only the setting of the novel, but also when examined in light of the decade in which Lee wrote the novel. Lee’s novel seems to reflect an ongoing political struggle on the part of African Americans to be seen as equals. Subsequently, it is arguably demonstrative that there are political elements visible in the context of the female characters’ relationships.

As an author and biographical figure, Lee retains an air of mystery about her. It has long been questioned why she never penned another novel after *To Kill a Mockingbird*, or why she has not succumbed to the allure of a glamorous public life. While these questions remain unanswered, the question as to the inspiration of her novel is palpably found in her life. Lee was born in Monroeville, Alabama and was greatly influenced by her father, Amasa Coleman Lee (A.C.), who was both a lawyer and a member of the Alabama Legislature (Don, 2013). In fact, it is now a consensus that A.C. was the inspiration for Atticus Finch. Lee based Scout on her own personality, and *To Kill a Mockingbird’s* Maycomb County found inspiration in Monroeville. Much of the setting and characters are markedly drawn from Lee’s real life experiences—certainly, she was also inspired by rape trials during the early 1930s.

In 1933, Naomi Lowery accused African American Walter Lett of rape near a brick factory. Later, Lett was tried by a jury of twelve white men and of course, found guilty. Lett was sentenced to death, but the outcry from the Monroeville White community—who believed the accusations to be false—was so great that the governor delayed the execution of the sentence twice. While in prison, Lett heard the screams of six other inmates as they were electrocuted, and suffered a breakdown, wounding up in an asylum. Another Alabama case, the infamous Scottsboro Boys trial, also sheds light on how deeply miscegenation was feared. Two White women accused nine teenaged boys of rape on a freight train; a speedy, unjust trial led to the jailing of all nine boys. Eight were sentenced to death, but over the next few decades, the rape allegations proved to be false. The boys were paroled, released, or pardoned (Don, 2013). Lee acknowledged that the Lowery-Lett and Scottsboro Boys trials had jointly inspired Tom Robinson’s trial. There has also been speculation that yet another possible case that may have influenced Lee’s novel could have been the Emmett Till case. Fourteen-year-old Till was alleged to have flirted with a White woman; Till was later found murdered by the woman’s male relatives (Halpern, 2009). Elements of these cases can be found in Tom’s case, most notably the cultural terror at miscegenation as well as the pervasive injustice.

Miscegenation points to a deep-rooted fear that African American men would defile and rape White women at any opportunity presented. More so than the act of rape itself, the violation of the societal hierarchy is of paramount importance: an African American man dared to defy societal sexual dictates. The verdict in *To Kill a Mockingbird* hinges on the idea of mob justice; Tom Robinson is of course ultimately condemned not because of his alleged rape, but because of
the faulty perception of those who see only his color. Mob justice was a tangible element present in the Lowery-Lett, Scottsboro Boys and Emmett Till’s case studies; thus, it is not farfetched to assert that besides the idea of mob justice, other legal and political elements that occurred during Lee’s lifetime worked themselves into the fabric of her novel.

Moreover, Lee attended a year of law school before dropping out to pursue her writing. Hence, Lee not only had a reasonable exposure to politics as a child, but also a perceptible interest in politics because of her experience as a law student. Lee began to pen *To Kill a Mockingbird* in the early 1950s, and eventually published the novel in 1960 (Don, 2013). Set in a town in Alabama in the Great Depression Era, the novel is narrated from Scout Finch’s perspective. While Scout narrates from the perspective of a child, she remains on the fringe of the conflict for justice in which Atticus Finch is involved. Atticus is the archetypical man striving for justice against all odds: he knows he is destined to lose Tom Robinson’s case from the start, but chooses to nobly take up Tom’s case. At this juncture, it is important to recognize that Scout’s portrayal of her father is that of unadulterated adoration; tomboyish Scout is ready to fight whoever insults her father (“Rethinking Atticus Finch,” 2010). Her adoring view cannot be wholly discounted, but nor can it be wholly accepted: after all, Scout shows her readers the blindness of the justice system. Professor Monroe Freedman’s infamous proffered critique of Atticus also carries considerable weight, that Atticus did not rally against the unjust legal system in Maycomb (Halpern, 2009). Instead, he operated within the already existing framework of a racist system. Perhaps the inspiration behind Atticus’ personality is found in another puzzling real-life figure.

In 1947, Alabama’s governor “Big” or “Kissin’” Jim Folsom was elected, and except for one term in the early fifties, served until 1959 (Woodard, 2006). Naturally, Folsom was a Democrat as in the Solid South, the Democratic Party ruled the ballots. During this time period, the Democratic Party was predominantly associated with the idea of disenfranchising African Americans, both socially and politically. The “friends and neighbors” effect—where Southerners voted for the politicians who they could trust—was still prevalent (Woodard, 2006). Thus, Folsom’s victories in relationship to the friends and neighbors effect were surprising, especially in lieu of his political ideology: Folsom had publically embraced integration and was often openly friendly with African Americans. The self-professed “Little Man’s Big Friend” was not a proponent for the rights of African American’s rights, however. Folsom had a “white privilege” attitude towards African Americans (Gladwell, 2009). As result, he believed that Whites should adopt a paternal and compassionate attitude towards African Americans. Superficially, Folsom did his best to push his racial agenda forward. For example, he hosted an inaugural ball for African Americans after his second successful gubernatorial victory in 1955 (Gladwell, 2009). On the whole, Folsom’s shallow attempts to embrace integration is reminiscent of later political efforts to appease the growing push for the integration of African Americans.

Yet, Folsom’s “integrationist” efforts were somewhat slowed down because of the political implications of the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on the *Brown v. Board of Topeka* case (Woodard, 2006). This case sent rippling waves of apprehension to the Southern political arena. In 1957, a show of federal force for school desegregation took place in Little Rock, Arkansas when nine African American students entered Central High School (Winter, 2013). There was a backlash to desegregation after the 1954 *Brown v. Board case* and the Little Rock Crisis: Southern political victories became tied to stronger segregationists and states’ rights advocates (Freeman and Havens, 1976). As the governor of Arkansas attempted to assert the state’s independence against the desegregationist policies of the federal government, the idea of a unique Southern identity began to recrystallize. There was a resurgence of the Lost Cause ideology; it was believed that desegregation was seemingly a blight upon Southern politics (Malone, 2005). The Lost Cause believers fervently longed for the time prior to the Civil War, where the societal hierarchy was strictly defined. The lingering pangs of the nostalgia towards the Lost Cause ideology are portrayed in *To Kill a Mockingbird* as well.

Conversely, Southern politics began to become more deeply entrenched in its violent racial history. Folsom’s execution of more moderate Democratic politics concerning race began to trickle down as a greater radicalism in segregationist politics invaded Alabama. Thus, upon a closer examination, Folsom’s actions on behalf of the African American community seem to have another motive. The 1955 inaugural ball that Folsom hosted was not only an attempt to buoy the African American community’s trust, but also an attempt to integrate himself into the segregationist politics of the time (Gladwell, 2009). By having a separate inaugural ball, Folsom was emphasizing the idea of a segregated society within the political frame of gubernatorial politics.

The idea that the Southern politicians were federally mandated to
support desegregation was perhaps interpreted as an implicit reference to Reconstruction politics, when African Americans had obtained political power. Reconstruction politics refers to the period in the aftermath of the Civil War, when racial tensions between the legally emancipated African Americans and the traditional superior ideology of the Whites. The Southern political system had utilized Jim Crow laws to keep African American voters at bay through the use of poll taxes and literacy tests. Moderate racial politics did not seem to tally well with the renewed zeal of state segregationist politics, especially in lieu of the Little Rock Crisis. While Folsom’s moderate political rhetoric did not discourage segregation, his rhetoric leaned more towards the idea of accepting African Americans into mainstream society. Consequently, Folsom’s moderate views on race did not win him the 1959 gubernatorial election. A strong segregationist viewpoint seemed intrinsic to winning Southern states, especially a state like Alabama (Woodard, 2006). John Patterson succeeded Folsom, and staunch segregationist George Wallace later brought his powerful rhetoric into office: “Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever!” (Davis, 2014).

Applying the political occurrences surrounding Folsom to To Kill a Mockingbird, it is not surprising to see that Folsom’s views find a neat segue into Atticus’ character.

The aforementioned assertion can be supported by the fact that Lee was in Alabama throughout Folsom’s two terms in office and must have observed the ensuing political climate firsthand. Lee penned her work as a commentary on the racial hierarchy in the 1950s and 1960s, a response to the heightened national awareness of the race question (Halpern, 2009). Indeed, Atticus—as ideal as he seems—shares several similarities with Folsom. Most tellingly, Atticus is also a circumspect personality with respect to his behavior towards the African American race.

As mentioned, Atticus chooses not to transform the faulty system of justice in place; instead, he chooses to undergo the mockery of justice (“Rethinking Atticus Finch,” 2010). Atticus admits that he knows he will lose—but still does not exert any influence to change the existing system. Scout even compares Atticus with Cousin Ike Finch, a relative who constantly talks about the Lost Cause. Cousin Ike mentions that the South was “licked from the start,” but relives the Civil War frequently (Lee, 1960). Just like Ike, Atticus maintains faith in his lost cause—Tom’s case. His dialogue in the courtroom further demonstrates his contentedness to rely on the flawed legal system: he encourages the all-White jury not to judge Tom’s actions solely, but to imagine the situation if Tom were White (“Rethinking Atticus Finch,” 2010). Moreover, Atticus does not refer to the ironic segregation in the courtroom itself, allegedly a place where people of “all colors of the rainbow” can find justice: African Americans are seated in the balcony (Lee, 1960).

It is possible that his years of working as a lawyer have led to a “gradual desensitization” of emotions (“Rethinking Atticus Finch,” 2010). Atticus cannot be defined as an African American activist, because he does not pursue action for the support of African American equality (Gladwell, 2009). Just like Folsom, Atticus employs rhetoric which signifies that he accepts African Americans as citizens and human beings. Atticus does attempt to defend an African American accused of rape, much as Folsom prevented the death penalty from being meted out unfairly to African American men. On the other hand, Atticus also sets the tone for the relationship between Calpurnia, the Finches’ housekeeper, and his daughter, Scout. Scout treats Calpurnia in certain ways based on her father’s instructions, who is a palpable representation of Folsom’s racial views in politics.

Scout does not view Calpurnia as a compassionate figure at the beginning of the novel. This is mainly because Atticus supports Calpurnia in her punishments and verdicts towards Scout (Lee, 1960). Thus, Calpurnia is placed as the domestic head of the house, especially in regard to Scout’s behavior. While Atticus’ views about Calpurnia are fairly open—he says that Calpurnia is part of his family—Calpurnia’s domestic position is at odds with the existing social system in the 1930s as well as the 1950s (Bennett, 2007). Her special place underscores Atticus’ ambivalence towards race: he is open-minded enough to leave the entire running of his domicile to an African American keeper, but he never openly questions why segregation exists in Maycomb. At first glance, Atticus’s unusual level of trust with Calpurnia may signify his quiet challenge of the racial hierarchy. Still, while he places a great level of trust in her, he never advocates for others to similarly acknowledge the capabilities of African Americans.

Once, Scout brings home a poor peer (Lee, 1960). After commenting on his lack of table manners, Scout is ushered into the kitchen to eat her lunch alone accompanied with a spank from Calpurnia. Later, as Scout complains to her father, his only dictum is that Scout should realize how much Calpurnia works for them (Lee, 1960). Lee repeats this motif throughout, using the voice of Atticus: Calpurnia is a valuable asset to the family, even a part of the family, but is never completely acknowledged as equal to the family.
Lee deliberately leaves Calpurnia’s life outside her work for the Finches a mystery; readers only learn that Calpurnia has a son named Zeebo and that she can switch between two ‘dialects’ of English. Her age is not even made clear; perhaps the deliberate ambiguity signifies that Calpurnia’s character should be mainly viewed through the scope of her work. Attesting to this idea, Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw argues that “black woman’s subjectivity and injury are not recognized.” (Halpern, 2009). That is, the African American woman seems to fulfill the role of a servant without her character being fully fleshed out. At church, Scout is awed that Calpurnia is able to speak two “languages”—one kind of English with the Finches, and another kind with her fellow African Americans. Scout even asks whether she can visit Calpurnia’s house, to which Calpurnia agrees (Lee, 1960). However, Scout’s Aunt Alexandra prevents Scout’s visit (Lee, 1960). This scene could be representative of Southern politics’ slowly developing moderate views on race. Unfortunately, just like Scout’s ability to see Calpurnia in a positive light, slow-developing racial liberalism in the Solid South was cut short by the resurgence of segregationist politics.

Viewing the political atmosphere through a racially charged female relationship allows for a stronger culturally based understanding of politics. Traversing three decades back, *Gone With the Wind* similarly drew on the racial political elements of the 1920s. *To Kill a Mockingbird* examines racial relations from a child’s viewpoint; it is also quite thought-provoking to observe racial attitudes and relations from an adult heroine’s point of view in a different time period. Set in the aftermath of the Civil War, *Gone With the Wind* spans roughly twelve years and is the bildungsroman of Scarlett O’Hara. Mitchell was strongly influenced by real-life events as well.

As a wealthy debutante herself, Mitchell was influenced by her family’s quintessentially “Southern” racial and political views. Mitchell had a propensity for dangerous accidents—she would suffer accidents from riding and fire—because she dared to take risks. Eventually, she passed away in a car accident. Her early life was marked by stubbornness; much like her heroine, Mitchell preferred to pave her own path. The parallels between Mitchell and Scarlett are truly striking. For example, Scarlett’s three marriages reflect Mitchell’s three engagements and two marriages (Hanson, 1991). Mitchell poured herself into her protagonist, creating a character of almost flesh and blood.

She began to write *Gone With the Wind* in 1926, and published the novel in 1936 (Thomas, 2013). The politics of Mitchell’s time were also turbulent; America was recovering from the Great War and was plunged into the Great Depression within a decade. After World War I, a resurgence of Southern pride was evident in politics. The “trauma of lost sovereignty” of by-gone decades somehow seeped into the Klan’s activities (Sheley, 2013). The Solid South was firmly Democratic; local politicians often used the shield of White supremacy and Jim Crow to propagate their beliefs and win the ballots. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) terrorized not only African Americans, but Jews and Catholics as well (Goldberg, 2014). In fact, the KKK was instrumental in shaping local politics. The organization was touted as one that held up the values of the Democratic Party, especially the Party’s racial ideology. Of course, the Klan’s members were all Democratic. The Second KKK reassembled in 1915 in Mitchell’s Georgia; the First KKK had been conceived during Reconstruction. The structure of the First KKK affected the purposes of the Second KKK immensely.

During Reconstruction, African American politicians held office for the first time (Malone, 2005). The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments formally established the citizenship of former slaves, and African American male suffrage while the Klan continued to kill African Americans for even imagined slights. Just as the KKK was conceived during Reconstruction to stop African Americans from holding political power, the KKK of the 1920s targeted African Americans along with Catholics and Jews by highlighting their “anti-American, anti-Democratic” policies. The KKK shaped Southern politics to the extent that there was a perception that being Democratic was being American. Similarly, in *Gone With the Wind*, the Southern Whites are depicted as being fervent Americans because of their desire to curb the growing African American power in society. The KKK is upheld as an ‘organization’ that brings order to society as a whole, a remainder of the Old South where Whites were assured their socio-political power.

The KKK’s values also supported Prohibition and Protestant religious fundamentalism (Winter, 2013). Local Democratic politics were thus linked with religion. Furthermore, the KKK practiced culturally-based politics; that is, the Klan used racism as a means to direct local politics (Goldberg, 2014). Indeed, the Klan’s anti-Catholic rhetoric formed Mitchell’s protagonist: though Scarlett O’Hara belongs to a well-placed Catholic family, she too subscribes to White supremacy. Mitchell negates the idea that Catholics could be anti-Democratic with Scarlett’s Catholic upbringing and typical White superiority viewpoint. In the novel, Scarlett is the representation of racial integrity and purity; her family
Moreover, Mitchell was heavily influenced by pro-Klan rhetoric. For instance, there is historical evidence that demonstrates she read The Clansmen, authored in 1905. Later, the film The Birth of a Nation released in 1915, based on The Clansmen, also underscored the positive perception of the Klan (McAlexander, 2013). Both novel and film were cultural vehicles that portrayed the Klan as saviors of not only the South in general, but also as the organization that upheld the values of the “Old South” by harming African Americans. The First Klan’s influence on Jim Crow and African American disenfranchisement was significant, because both Jim Crow and widespread disenfranchisement still existed in the 1920s during the time of the Second Klan. The Klan’s intimidation was one of the factors that contributed to the paucity of African-American voters in the 1920s. However, the resurgence of the Klan’s creation myth gave wings to the Second Klan’s influence (Sheley, 2013). The flavor of elusiveness combined with the Klan’s fervency to adhere to the preservation of the social hierarchy solidified the support for the Klan’s actions. Mitchell’s views on the KKK remain ambivalent: she thought that the KKK was a necessity, though she might have not agreed with the group’s violence (Sheley, 2013).

Another political influence on Mitchell’s novel could have been the beginning of the Great Depression political agenda. The economic crash of 1929 had called for a change in politics at the national level. The electoral victory of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932 reaffirmed the values of the Solid South. Roosevelt was Democratic and needed the support of Southern Democrats to pass his New Deal; as he garnered a strong Southern constituency, the First New Deal legislation passed through successfully (Woodard, 2006). With the establishment of New Deal legislation, the New Deal Coalition also formed (Freeman and Havens, 1976). This was an informal organization of interest groups who supported the New Deal legislation. The New Deal Coalition was instrumental in affecting Roosevelt’s electoral success (Davis, 2014). Roosevelt’s enforcement of the New Deal had effectively shelved some of the South’s concern over social values: Whites were still prioritized by the federal government in comparison to African Americans. The South’s solid affinity for the Democratic Party was more firmly reestablished. This environment of renewed interest and pride in Southern Democratic loyalty affected Mitchell’s novel. Her novel showcases not only the Southern pride inherent in the White strata of society, but also displays the link between the Democratic Party and the White society in the tangible forms of Scarlett and Mammy.

Scarlett is a seemingly proper Southern belle, who is reprimanded for her often unladylike behavior by her caretaker, Mammy. Mitchell’s portrayal of the loving but strict Mammy is racially stereotypical—even including a description of Mammy’s protruding lips (Mitchell, 1936). Here, the theory of intersectionality makes an appearance. Theorists argue that race is not independent of gender; rather, gender shapes the perception of race (Halpern, 2009). Scarlett’s inferior perception of Mammy is enhanced by Mammy’s self-perception and substantiated by the socio-political hierarchy of the time.

Mammy acknowledges that it is difficult for her to control Scarlett. Here, there is an interesting subversion of power: Scarlett believes herself to be superior to African Americans. Yet, she is often bullied by Mammy into following the appropriate societal dictums of the time. Scarlett does not acknowledge Mammy as truly one of the ‘other’ African Americans either. In fact, Scarlett views Mammy as another realist, almost as a reflection of herself (Mitchell, 1936). This interpretation is given credence when a striking similarity between the two women is noticed: both are disenfranchised. Mammy is politically and legally disenfranchised, and Scarlett legally disenfranchised (Sheley, 2013). Even after the War, when Mammy knows she is no longer politically disenfranchised, she insists on staying with Scarlett’s family out of a deep loyalty. Scarlett shows a similar passion and loyalty towards the family plantation, Tara.

Within the framework of Scarlett’s relationship with Mammy, Mitchell also includes several passages on politics during Reconstruction. The carpetbaggers and scalawags, the changing governments of the South, and even the Fourteenth Amendment do not change the relationship between Mammy and Scarlett (Mendelson, 1981). Both of the women share a love for the plantation of Tara and the Lost Cause. Scarlett views Mammy as a refuge, and thinks of Mammy even when the love of her life abandons her (Mitchell, 1936). Mitchell’s depiction of Scarlett and Mammy is that of a stereotypical relationship between a White charge and her nurse (Byron, 2010). Hence, Scarlett and Mammy’s relationship reflects the White supremacy ideology of the 1920s as well as the desperation of the early 1930s. Scarlett’s attachment to her nurse and to the Lost Cause is representative of the way Southern politics closely allied themselves with racial ideology during the 1920s. The positive way that the KKK was viewed during the 1920s is also present within Scarlett and Mammy’s relationship.

After Scarlett is molested by a couple of men, a group of Klansmen rides...
out to avenge her against the evil Negroes who dared commit this act against a White woman (Mitchell, 1936). The KKK is romanticized in this scene, much as the Southern Democrats valued the KKK in local politics during the 1920s. Yet again, the element of miscegenation presents itself quite potently. Interestingly, lynching was a form of vengeance employed against those who had committed acts of assault more so during the 1930s instead of Reconstruction. During Reconstruction, lynching was a form of violence carried out against African Americans who held political power. Mitchell uses the Klan’s lynching as a plot device, because it would resonate strongly with her readers of the 1930s (Sheley, 2013).

Mammy is not even mentioned during this romanticized scene concerning Scarlett’s avengement, nor is Mammy mentioned in relation to any negative ideas about African Americans. The message is clear: the KKK targets the African Americans who do not know their inferior place in society and politics. Mammy thus inadvertently represents the Solid South as well; she remains entrenched in her role as a former slave while the South also continues to remain firmly Democratic (Byron, 2010). Scarlett is desperate to recapture the vestiges of her life as the mistress of African Americans; she clings to Mammy, and in turn, to the White racial superiority of the Old South.

In essence, To Kill a Mockingbird and Gone With the Wind demonstrate the influences of Southern politics within the context of the relationships between principal characters. Lee and Mitchell wrote their novels incorporating elements of the politics of the 1950s and 1920s, respectively. There is evidence to demonstrate that Lee used the persona of politician Jim Folsom to contribute to the foundation for Atticus Finch’s views regarding race. Atticus’ daughter, Scout, follows her father’s racial ideology in her treatment of the family housekeeper, Calpurnia. The strong element of underlying localism and segregation hearkens back to 1950s politics, when the friends and neighbors effect, the Brown v. Board case, and segregationist rhetoric were contributing factors to a political victory.

Meanwhile, Mitchell’s Gone With the Wind reflects the White supremacist politics at the height of the 1920s, and romanticizes the actions of the KKK as upholders of the former socio-political hierarchy of the South. Scarlett and Mammy reflect the racial ideas of the South, and even chaotic Reconstruction politics do not affect their relationship. The portrayal of Southern politics based on female protagonists is thus fitting for both novels, providing a powerful, dynamic backdrop to examine relationships in the contexts of gender and race.

Works Cited


After asking his readers to contemplate the sound of water and the jumping of frogs, Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694) made a name for himself as Japan’s premier poet (Hamill 1). The tranquil simplicity and haunting stillness of his haiku poetry has garnered a reputation worldwide as the quintessential Japanese verse form. However, the terseness of the form has led some scholars to question whether the haiku, with its emphasis on the concrete and essential, can really tell us anything about the poet in the same way Western poetry is often read as commentary by the author (Yasuda 126). But to take such an approach with Bashō would be a disservice to a work laden with social and cultural indicators. Not to mention, as a samurai’s son, servant, teacher, wanderer, literary critic, and Zen Buddhist, Bashō was among the most interesting of personalities (Carter 57). His religious preferences in particular are especially prevalent in his work, and scholars have debated for years whether one can read Bashō’s poetry as religious poetry (Foard 2). However, these debates have often focused on Bashō’s personal history without much regard for the poetry itself. In general, it is his haiku poetry in general, and its aesthetic qualities in particular, that I believe are most suitable not only for discerning Bashō’s religious sensibilities, but, more significantly, for typifying religious experience, especially in the case of Zen Buddhism. In this regard, I believe that a study of the Japanese aesthetic quality of sabi, as found within The Narrow Road to the Interior, will allow us to understand the qualitative experience of an enlightened mind, as understood within the Zen Buddhist tradition, in a way that goes beyond linguistic concepts.

There are several reasons why I chose to examine sabi in the context of Zen. As will be addressed later in the essay, Bashō was a known practitioner of Zen Buddhism, and his early studies in Edo, along with his later reputation as a spiritual cult figure, suggests that Buddhism was a central element in Bashō’s life (Foard 1). Therefore, we are justified in attempting to read Bashō as a Buddhist. Secondly, sabi, defined generally as “lonely beauty” or “objective, non-emotional loneliness,” is an aesthetic that, compared to the much more nebulous concept of wabi-sabi, has been given little scholarly attention in terms of Bashō’s work (Hume xv; Ueda 154). More importantly, sabi coincides especially well with...
Zen sensibilities, and, as an aesthetic mode, sabi allows us to explore certain experiences in a way that goes beyond linguistic understanding. Just to give an example, consider the range of responses a reader might have to the following verse:

The horse turns his head—
from across the wide plain,
a cuckoo's cry. (36)

Regardless of whether we understand or can articulate what the poem is “saying,” we can all agree that the poem moves us in a way that rational argumentation cannot, and it is this non-linguistic capability that offers an interesting opportunity for accessing the religious experience.

The haiku we just addressed was taken from Bashō’s Oku no Hosomichi, “one of the major texts of classical Japanese literature” (Yuasa 7). Its title is translated in English as either The Narrow Road to the Interior or The Narrow Road to the Deep North, and I will be citing from the Sam Hamill translation. Written in the form of a haibun, a literary style in Japan that combines prose and haiku, Oku no Hosomichi is the travel diary of Matsuo Bashō written along his journey on foot through the northern provinces of Honshu during the spring of 1689 in Japan’s Edo period (Hamill 6). The Oku in Oku no Hosomichi refers to the name of the mountainous interior region of northern Honshu, and hosomichi is translated literally as “narrow path” or “narrow lane” (Nakao 168). The diary was revised from 1690 to 1694 and published in 1694 (Hamill 6). The text includes works and meditations not only by Bashō, but also by his traveling companion and student, Kawai Sora (Yuasa 10).

The text opens with a beautiful but wistful meditation on life:

The moon and sun are eternal travelers. Even the years wander on. A lifetime adrift in a boat, or in old age leading a tired horse into the years, every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home. (32)

This passage is rendered even more impactful when we consider that part of the reason Bashō was making his pilgrimage was to take his mind off the infirmities that were plaguing him in his old age (Hamill 41). From the opening passage then, we can see that Bashō’s desire to escape pain through wandering and his acknowledgement of life itself as pain suggests a contrary disposition; and it is this sadness tinged with acceptance that is the characteristic attitude of sabi. As such, the opening passage is foreshadowing sabi as the text’s main aesthetic. Given sabi’s central role in Oku no Hosomichi as well as the text’s status as one of Bashō’s most important works, it is suitable then that we concentrate on the text for our study of sabi. This study also focuses on the haiku in the text because they are not only the text’s main attraction, but, as a literary form, haiku are considered the most condensed and intuitive of all of Bashō’s haikai — the term denoting all haiku-related literature including travel prose (Haiku Society of America). And it is the haiku’s intuitive qualities that may allow for an alternative understanding of the Zen religious experience. As such, the study will begin with a look at the form’s instinctive capabilities, followed by an examination of the particular type of sabi found in Bashō’s work. Then once we’ve identified the emotions and attitudes of Bashō’s sabi aesthetic, we’ll begin examining sabi within the context of the Zen tradition, beginning with the critical discussions on reading Bashō as a Buddhist. From there we’ll explore specific concepts that the Japanese use to talk about enlightenment within the Zen tradition and follow these discussions with specific examples from the text that allows us to experience these views. As such, I’ll hope to show how an investigation of sabi with respect to the affective qualities assigned to it in Japanese thought represents a potentially new approach to understanding the qualitative dimensions of enlightenment.

We can begin by examining just what is meant by the haiku’s intuitive qualities. That is to say, the haiku is unusual in that its condensed form allows for an immediate triggering of insight. In “Approach to Haiku,” Kenneth Yasuda describes this insight as the haiku’s sense of “power, a power which is similar in some respects to that of painting” (126). He further defines the poem’s power as an intuitive sense of perceiving, a “non-judgemental, amoral, non-verbal, and uncritical” moment (Yasuda 126). In other words, the haiku’s power lies in its ability to connect readers to means of perception outside of linguistic or conceptual modes. And it is precisely these affective qualities that represent a potentially new approach to understanding the qualitative dimensions of enlightenment. The words of the poem do not function merely to convey semantic information, but also to generate affect. A poet is considered skillful because he has a unique ability to use language in such a way that it establishes a direct course to emotions with minimal conceptualization. And, as we will later see, it is these non-conceptual experiential qualities that mark a point of contact between the sabi aesthetic and Zen understanding.

But what exactly characterizes the sabi aesthetic specific to Bashō’s poetry? I believe the best way to get a sense of Bashō’s sabi is to explore its affective range within the context of its traditional understanding in Japanese
aesthetic theory. To give a taste of the aesthetic, consider the following verse that describes the ancient helmet of Sanemori, a legendary soldier from Tale of the Heiki who died on the battlefield:

Pitifully—under
a great soldier’s empty helmet,
a cricket sings. (61)

Whatever wistful helplessness and impotence we might associate with this legendary figure is immediately undercut by the void beneath the helmet and the pitifulness of the insect. There is a kind of hollowness felt as the helmet transforms from the essential accouterment of a proud warrior to the humble abode of an insect. The poem leaves us with the haunting realization that even the mightiest must one day be reduced to nothing.

A similar effect is felt in the poem written after Bashō embarks on the boat destined to take him away from his home and friends:

Spring passes
and the birds cry out—tears
in the eyes of fishes. (31)

There’s a sense of lament in the inevitable passing of the seasons, but the feeling is tempered in the recognition that all of nature, whether in the fish or birds, is mourning with us. The attribution of human emotion to nature transforms a human expression of sadness into an almost universal emotion. In consequence, ordinarily external events such as the passing of the seasons or the lonely cricket crooning on an abandoned plain become identifiable human in their expression of sorrow. In many ways, this transformation process is similar to Makota Ueda’s assessment that the sabi in Bashō’s work is akin to an objective loneliness, an “impersonal atmosphere created by natural landscape” (154). J. Thomas Rimer espouses a similar definition when he discusses the non-human or “non-emotional” loneliness of Bashō’s haiku (254). And while the feeling is undeniably that of anguish, there is also a sense of oneness with nature and an acceptance of the world for what it is. These dual-emotions, the feelings of utter desolation tinged with qualities of acceptance, is a defining quality of Bashō’s sabi.

Many of Bashō’s poems are also noteworthy for their coarseness. Consider the following verse that addresses some of the most revolting aspects of reality:

Eaten alive by lice and fleas
—now the horse

Again, there is a sentiment of sorrow in identifying with Bashō’s abject lowness. But there is also a sense of repugnance when the horse urinates and in the thought of one’s flesh being consumed by insects and vermin. Despite these cringe-inducing qualities, there is also a strange sense of consolation and resignation in the act. There is a relief in the recognition and acceptance that we too are merely animals subjected to biological processes, and the proximity of the horse merely heightens the connection. As such, the emotions of acceptance that characterize the previous poems are also found in this case.

Through these examples, I’ve come to understand Bashō’s sabi as a simultaneous transcendence and embrace of a changing natural world characterized by emotions of loneliness and tranquility. Having explored the affective qualities of sabi, we can now began to look into the connection between Bashō and Buddhism; and to specifically see whether it’s even justified to read Bashō as a Buddhist. The question is certainly riddled with complications. While it is known that during his stay at Edo Bashō studied under the Zen master Butchou (to the point that he seriously considered the life of a monastic,) the degree to which he embraced these teachings isn’t conclusive (Aitken 13). For example, Robert Aitken notes that even though two of Bashō’s students practiced zazen under their respective Zen teachers, Bashō himself didn’t recommend the practice explicitly to his students during their Haiku training (12). Similarly, Sam Hamill remarks that while Bashō admired Zen teachings, he found the Buddhist theology and ritual unnecessary, suggesting that Bashō’s outlook was more akin to a Zen-like philosophy rather than the Zen religion (xxv). Moreover, Hamill insists that Bashō personal literary values, or his “Way of Elegance,” would have made it difficult to follow religious laws or popular customs, another essential element in traditional Japanese Zen (xxv). Additionally, even though Bashō and his fellow travelers wore Zen robes and stopped at Buddhist religious sites and temples, it was likely that they were only partially motivated by spiritual concerns since these temples were also a vital source of food and lodging (Hamill xx).

However, the evidence favoring the interpretation of Bashō as Buddhist is also compelling. To start, it was not unheard of for Zen monks to practice poetry. For example, the Sōtō Zen school founder, Dōgen, often wrote exceptional poetry and other poetry-like philosophical texts (Parkes 82). And even though one may argue that a poet’s emphasis on human emotions might preclude him or her from a Buddhist-like detachment, themes of loneliness or alienation constitute a
central element in much of Dōgen’s poetry (Heine 20). More significantly, Bashō’s encounter with Zen philosophy in Edo wasn’t just a religious infatuation, but a lifelong commitment, and we see him furthering his Zen studies nine years later in the Fukugawa district (Hamill xxvi). Even in his literary works, there is much evidence of a continuing Buddhist devotion. Bashō does not seek out religious sites solely for purposes of shelter in *The Narrow Road to the Interior*, but more likely for spiritual purposes as illustrated by his visits to sites like the hermitage ruins of famous Buddhists such as Ungo Zenji (Hamill 224). Bashō was also a fervent admirer of Saigyō, a legendary monk-poet from the 12th century whose poetry he quotes throughout the text and whose style and thematic content are very similar to Bashō’s own (Hamill 223).

However, in light of any confirmation from Bashō himself that *The Narrow Road to the Interior* is a Buddhist text, the debate cannot be resolved conclusively. What we can do, though, is note certain similarities between the aesthetic qualities of Bashō’s works and specific Zen ways of knowing and examine these points of connection. To give an example of how these views are related, we can first look at a few Zen concepts beginning with transience. However, in order to understand transience, it’s first necessary to examine the Buddhist concept of *samsāra*, and how it relates to Buddhist epistemology. According to Buddhists, the world itself is best understood as a state of constant flux (Prebish 303). This flux, known as *samsāra*, refers to the cycle of death and rebirth of the individual as he or she hovers between the six realms of existence (Prebish 12). For the Buddhist then, reality ultimately is nothing but a cycle of perpetual change. However, as a result of misunderstanding, ordinary human existence is characterized by *dukkha* (suffering, anxiety, dissatisfaction) and impermanence, or *aniyata*, the perception that “all things originate, have duration, and decay” (Kasulis 43, Prebish 287).

Despite the nuance of these religious concepts, they still cannot take us beyond a linguistic mode of understanding. However, we noted earlier how one of the strengths of the haiku form was how it can potentially offer intuitive non-conceptual ways of understanding the world. As an example, let’s reconsider the “imperial dreams” haiku from earlier and see how it embodies the Buddhist concept of impermanence, but in a much more immediate way:

*Summer grasses:*
*all that remains of great solders’*
*imperial dreams.* (18)

Here, the sadness of the aesthetic is comparable to the sadness of *dukkha*, and the inevitability of death is commensurate with the inescapability of *samsāra*. But the celebratory wording of the “imperial dreams” haiku also evokes a lingering desire for permanence (18). As we recall, this active embrace of transience is another essential aspect of Bashō’s sabi.

This mixed response is also very similar to the Zen concept of “emptiness,” a later Buddhist idea first introduced by Nāgārjuna (CE 150-250), one of the early Indian founders of Mahayana Buddhism, but later developed and redefined in terms of its relationship with *Buddha-nature* by Dōgen (Kasulis 38). According to Dōgen, to experience Buddha-nature, or ultimate reality, we must first transcend the conceptual realm of *samsāra* (Abe 49). However, Dōgen insisted that we should not merely transcend the conceptual realm, the realm of being, because the idea of transcendence, associated with non-being, is still rooted in conceptual thought (Abe 50). In other words, Dōgen asserted that the dualities of being and non-being are ultimately empty, hence the expression emptiness, because they exist only in relation to one another (Abe 50, Kasulis 44).

This negation of dualistic perception is also known as the doctrine of non-duality. According to Dōgen, the problem of *samsāra* can only be resolved by a simultaneous transcendence and return to samsara since an enlightened individual negates the dualities that divide the two (Abe 50). The enlightened individual, then, aware of the relative nature of being and nonbeing, straddles both realms simultaneously and is able to affirm the truth that samsara and *nirvana*, the supposed liberation from samsāra, are ultimately one and the same (Kasulis 24). In other words, Dōgen, along with later Zen thinkers, believed that we should not deny our subjective experiences, but that we should understand them as an essential characteristic of *Buddha-nature* (Railey 5). Looking at sabi in terms of non-duality, we can see that it offers an insight into a non-dualistic worldview because it typifies the emotions of a mind that’s both detached and attached at the same time, a mind that is both wistful and tranquil. Returning to the “imperial dreams” haiku, what makes the poem such a great avenue to Zen understanding is how it can show us our idealizing tendencies in the most concrete way through the juxtaposition of “imperial dreams” with the disintegrated corpses of the soldiers (11).

Another point of contact between Zen and sabi is a characteristic of *Buddha-nature*, what Yuriko Saito, refers to as its “thoroughgoing egalitarianism” in his “The Japanese Aesthetics of Imperfection and Insufficiency” (382). This
leveling view results from the realization that Buddha-nature, as ultimate reality, makes no distinction between high or low, beautiful or ugly, or base or refined (Saito 382). According to Saito, Zen masters often communicated the idea of Buddha-nature through aesthetic means, often by elevating the mundane and ordinary in their works (382). Such a positive worldview is also embodied in the Japanese tea ceremony, with its preference for simplicity and flawed vessels and procedures (Saito 382). This sort of counter-thinking is also a very prominent feature in Zen writing, such as that of Master Dōgen (Saito 382). This style of writing is even found in the earlier Chinese form of Zen, known as Chan Buddhism. When Chan master Yūnmen Wényǎn was asked by a fellow monk “what is Buddha?,” he brusquely replied “a dried piece of shit” (Lieghton 449). By equating the true nature of reality with the most repulsive elements of existence, Yūnmen was likely hoping to break his disciple’s attachment to more idealized conceptions of religious truth.

Returning to an earlier haiku, we can now see how Bashō’s sabi evokes a similar conception of Buddha-nature through the horse poem:

Eaten alive by
lice and fleas — now the horse
beside my pillow pees. (49)

Again, the verse is notable not only for its intuitive experience of the mundane and repugnant, but also for its juxtaposition with the preceding prose passage. In the text, the previous stop in Bashō’s itinerary was the great temples halls of the Chūson Temple. During the description, Bashō emphasizes the temple’s “jeweled doors” and the “gold pillars of the Hall of Light with its magnificent images of the three buddhas” (48). Bashō then remarks that despite “the endless winds and rains of a thousand years, this great hall remains,” suggesting the transcendental nature of existence, Yūnmen was likely hoping to break his disciple’s attachment to more idealized conceptions of religious truth.

As we’ve seen, through a study of sabi as found in Bashō’s The Narrow Road to the Interior, we’re able to bring ourselves closer to a Zen way of understanding the world in an immediate intuitive way. Through a study of Bashō’s sabi aesthetic, with its characteristic detached longing for permanence, we can better understand why critics like R.H. Blyth believed that the practice of Zen and the practice of poetry produce a seamless union (66). That’s to say, a study of the sabi aesthetic in the context of Zen is important because it shows us what it is like to actually experience the paradoxical relationships of enlightenment, not merely through a conceptual framework, but through an emotional occurrence. As such, this approach emphasizes the much more important experiential aspect of religion. But we still must address the question of whether it’s accurate to equate the poetry of Bashō with the essential religious
experience of Zen. And it is this question that an aesthetic approach is unable
to provide a satisfying answer, since there really isn’t a way to verify the contents
of the mind of person as they are experiencing enlightenment. That’s to say, the
first-person enlightenment experience remains inaccessible. However, if we limit
our discussion to the ways in which Zen tradition has talked about enlightenment,
as we have done, then we can see how sabi could be considered an emotional
expression of this enlightenment tradition. As such, we can see how sabi not only
allows us to approach Zen modes of experience, but how it can also help us, in a
model evocative of Zen training, to translate those emotional experiences into a
daily embrace of transience.
When attempting to elicit fear from an audience, many authors turn to graphic depictions of blood and gore, relying on the reader’s disgusted shock to aid in procuring the desired reaction. Others choose to take a more subtle approach, deceptively leading the audience by the hand as the action winds along calmly. Suddenly, the author reveals the reality of the plot, ripping away the illusion of normalcy and leaving the reader stunned and deeply disturbed by the drastic change of events. Shirley Jackson’s short story “The Lottery,” written in 1948, is an example of the latter writing technique. “The Lottery” offers a quick glimpse into the daily life of a small, unnamed town as the occupants busily organize an important—but unspecified—event. The narrative leads the reader around the town, introducing key characters, detailing various preparations, and illustrating the general atmosphere as the inhabitants await the nearing occasion. By the end of the story, the reader experiences a mixture of curiosity and suspense regarding the exact nature of such an important town meeting. However, this interest quickly turns to horror when the reader suddenly realizes the mysterious event is actually a ritualistic sacrifice wherein a victim is chosen at random—by a lottery.

Due to this violent change in tone, many critics at the time of publication gave “The Lottery” scathing reviews. Certain readers sent Jackson hate mail to express the fear and disgust elicited by her writing—even her own family disapproved. As Jackson recalled, “my mother scolded me: ‘Dad and I did not care at all for your story in The New Yorker,’ she wrote sternly [...] ‘Why don’t you write something to cheer people up?'” (“The Morning” 1470). Critic A. R. Coulthard summarizes the strong disapproval surrounding the text when he states, “‘The Lottery’ is [...] a grim, even nihilistic, parable of the evil inherent in human nature.” Other critics attribute the fear and discomfort experienced by Jackson’s readers to the shocking violence illustrated in her story. However, society’s attitude toward graphic depictions in the media proves that this is not the case.

Throughout history, people have demonstrated a remarkable willingness to overlook violence. War is glorified, even romanticized, and public executions
have been considered entertainment for centuries. In modern times, this desensitization towards violence is often manifested through vivid depictions of blood and gore that pervade the cultural mindset in film, literature, and music. When the text was published in 1948, World Wars I and II had recently been displayed throughout various forms of entertainment and had desensitized the general population to war and death. The connection between violence and entertainment is further supported by the tone of the aforementioned hate mail. As Jackson notes, “People at first were not so much concerned with what the story meant; what they wanted to know was where these lotteries were held, and whether they could go there and watch” (“The Morning” 1470). Thus, it is evident that the sense of apprehension elicited by “The Lottery” does not stem from its violent content. Rather, the fear is rooted in a disorienting sense of isolation that permeates the text as a result of Jackson’s refusal to implement a stabilizing concept of time within the story. By describing a culture in which ancient and modern elements crash together, Jackson creates a town that does not fit within any historical era. The reader is unable to place this society at a definite point on the historical timeline of civilization, isolating it entirely and implying that, without outside influence, the brutal and senseless actions will continue unimpeded.

The suffocating atmosphere of isolation that Jackson subtly weaves throughout the text results from the unknown chronological setting of the story. This lack of historical mooring can be seen immediately in the opening lines when Jackson writes, “The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green” (“Lottery” 587). The reader is given the day on which the story takes place, but this small assistance is the only piece of information regarding the plot’s specific location in time that Jackson provides. The half-recorded date emphasizes the reader’s lacking knowledge: Both the day and the month are specified, but the text does not include the year, a vital piece of information when determining the plot’s setting. By describing a culture in which ancient and modern elements crash together, Jackson creates a town that does not fit within any historical era. The reader is unable to place this society at a definite point on the historical timeline of civilization, isolating it entirely and implying that, without outside influence, the brutal and senseless actions will continue unimpeded.

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In order to stave off the growing unease, the reader may begin to search for clues leading to an approximation of the town’s chronological setting. Initially, the fact that Jackson does not explicitly provide the year in which “The Lottery” takes place does not seem to pose a serious issue. Many authors casually mention important, recognizable moments in history, such as wars, inventions, or publications, in order to insinuate the general era in which their text is set, rather than pinpoint an exact time. Collecting these hints allows the reader to gather enough information to orient the story firmly within the realm of “Past,” “Present,” or “Future.” However, Jackson does not include enough information in her story to point towards a specific era of history. Instead of mentioning a few key details to aid in constructing an idea of age or newness in regards to the town, Jackson blends aspects of ancient society with aspects of modern society. This chaotic combination ensures that the narrative does not lead to a substantial historical anchor, disconnecting the setting from the outside world, and ultimately depicting a town incapable of fitting into any single point in time.

Evidence of Jackson’s mixture of ancient and modern qualities can be found riddled throughout the text of “The Lottery.” For example, the reader can look to the ritualistic practice of the lottery itself. At first, Jackson’s descriptions of the town’s preparations for the lottery seem to allude to a modern society, potentially set in the 1940’s when the story was first published. School has ended for the summer, a fact that suggests that this society, whatever year it may exist in, maintains a school system that appears to parallel modern educational systems. In addition to following the current school model, the town seems to adhere to the same formula that most modern towns abide by, allotting time and resources for extracurricular activities in order to enhance the atmosphere of community. This structure is supported when Jackson writes, “The lottery was conducted—as were the square dances, the teen-age club, the Halloween program—by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities” (“Lottery” 587). This quotation mentions several annual “civic activities” that the town hosts, and introduces the reader to Mr. Summers, a man characterized predominately by his responsibility to organize such events, suggesting that he is well-practiced at his job. Jackson creates Mr. Summers to function as a representation of the social hierarchy that exists in every community, thus increasing the sense of modernity present in the town’s structure.
In addition to the structure of the town itself, certain descriptions of the inhabitants also exhibit traits that come across to the reader as distinctly modern. For instance, the men of the town gather together, “speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes” while the women are described as “wearing faded house dresses and sweaters” (“Lottery 587”). The mention of tractors implies that this society has access to current tools and technology, a suggestion further supported by the women’s modern clothing choices. Jackson goes on to mention current practices and commodities utilized within the town, including a safe, a post office, blue jeans, “the Martin grocery,” and “Mr. Summer’s coal company” (“Lottery” 588). These references lead the reader to attempt to place the events of “The Lottery” within the confines of a timeline. However, while Jackson constantly incorporates modern imagery into her descriptions, she also includes intimations of an ancient time. Therefore, it is impossible for the reader to determine a chronological setting in regards to the town itself, once again increasing the texts’ sense of isolation through fear.

Among the many inclusions of modern imagery pervading the text, Jackson also illustrates a sense of antiquity, as is evidenced in her careful description of the ritualistic lottery. The reader is informed from the start that the lottery system has been in place since the town’s early existence, and that many aspects of the ritual have been lost over time. As Jackson writes:

At one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. (Lottery 588)

Not only has the original ritual been altered over the passing of time, but even the objects used in the ritual have changed. As Jackson points out, “the original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born” (“Lottery” 588). The lottery system has been in practice for so long that the town has lost the original meaning and significance behind the ritual. Even the oldest man in town is young in comparison to the lottery.

As the quotation above illustrates, the black box is the physical manifestation of the ceremony, and its description provides insight into the townspeople’s current beliefs regarding their ritual. The box is old and shabby, “no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained” (“Lottery” 588). The box suggests the longstanding implementation of the lottery, but the townspeople refuse to replace it, reasoning that “no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here” (“Lottery” 588). By examining this quotation, the reader is able to see the disconcerting conclusions that can be drawn about the practice of the lottery ritual.

The town’s obsession with tradition, evidenced by their willingness to blindly cling to the minutiae of a violent and senseless practice, becomes increasingly morbid as the story progresses and the truth unfolds. Not only is the reader made aware of the fact that tradition is valued above rationality, but it also becomes apparent that in Jackson’s fictitious town the lottery system will continue to survive, even once it has been stripped of purpose or logic. Therefore, the reader is forced to assume that the town will not realize the horror of their own actions. All hope of reform is placed in the possibility of an outside influence, one that will never come, as the isolated nature of the text suggests.

While it is evident that the lack of time within the text is the factor that creates a sense of isolation that eventually leads to fear, in order to understand why such isolation elicits fear at all, the reader must consider the implications of such a situation. Jackson makes it apparent to the reader that the event of an outside force influencing the town’s actions is impossible. There is no hero in this story, no one to step in at the last moment to stop the mindless violence that the town has practiced to the point of desensitization. Such an isolating lack of help can even be seen in the familial relationships depicted in the town: As critic Mary Ellen Snodgrass points out, “Jackson emphasizes the alienation of the victim, who progresses from beloved wife, mother, and townswoman to a targeted outsider as her killers mass into a mob.” The long-standing tradition of the lottery has permeated the town’s collective mind to the point where even familial bonds are meaningless. The isolation of the town is mirrored on an individual level in the desperate isolation of the victim.
The primitiveness and desperation associated with the lottery procedure proves that the townspeople are, at this point, incapable of sparking the reform necessary to overthrow an event that is so deeply ingrained within their culture. Jackson simultaneously points out the inhabitants’ lack of desire to reform as well as the unlikely event of a heroic figure catalyzing a reformatory spirit when she fleetingly mentions other villages that practice similar lotteries. The reader is taken aback to learn about such places through the characters’ conversations, as can be seen when Jackson writes, “‘They do say,’ Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, ‘that over in the north village they’re talking of giving up the lottery.’ Old Man Warner snorted. ‘Pack of crazy fools,’ he said” (“Lottery” 590). This quotation is significant for a number of reasons. Not only does it demonstrate the contemptuous feelings held toward the idea of abandoning the lottery system, thus illustrating the close-minded ruthlessness of the town, but it also reinforces the reader’s isolation-inspired fear.

By allowing the reader a glimpse of false hope at the mention of other towns, Jackson initially seems to be shattering the crushing sense of isolation that has been established through the lack of historical time within the text. This sudden hope opens the possibility for an outside influence to stop the senselessly violent ritual. At the very least, there is now the potential opportunity to find a better way of living elsewhere. However, such hopes are quickly shown to be impossible, as is evident when Old Man Warner goes on to state, “‘Used to be a saying about ‘Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.’ First thing you know, we’d all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There’s always been a lottery’” (“Lottery” 590). The connection made between the occurrence of the lottery and the state of the town’s crop supply indicates that this ritual has strong ties to fertility and food—in other words, the lottery system feeds into the participants’ basic instinct to survive.

Critic Amy A. Griffin further explains this concept when she writes, “Many ancient cultures believed that growing crops represented the life cycle, beginning with what one associates with the end—death […]. Jackson weaves seasonal and life-death cycle archetypes, which coincide with vegetation rituals, into the story.” Jackson’s inclusion of neighboring villages initially seems to counteract the stifling sense of isolation, offering both the hope of a lottery-free life and the possibility of a saving influence reaching the town. However, in actuality, such mention only serves to depict the perpetual nature of the lottery as a deeply ingrained aspect of society, intertwined with ideas of life and survival. Additionally, the fact that other villages practice the same lottery system insinuates that they are isolated within their own community due to a similar lack of historical reference points. Thus, the sense of isolation is actually strengthened by the existence of other towns, as is the fear elicited by the realization that there truly exists no one to end such senseless violence.

Jackson’s reader experiences strong feelings of shock and fear while reading “The Lottery” due to the lack of information provided about the town’s place within the world’s historical timeline. The clash of modern and ancient imagery, culminating in the lottery itself, eliminates the reader’s ability to accurately determine when the plot is set, ultimately leading to the realization that the story is unable to exist within the general framework of the world’s history. This inability creates a sense of isolation that pervades the entirety of the text and is strengthened by the marked absence of available information. The reader does not have any knowledge pertaining to the history of the town other than a handful of details that relate solely to the establishment of the lottery system. In addition, the text suggests that the town does not regularly interact with any neighboring societies—the only evidence given as to the mere existence of other villages can be found in offhand comments made by townspeople while discussing alternate versions of the lottery. Initially, these comments give the reader hope that there are outsiders capable of ending the barbaric ritual, but this hope is almost immediately extinguished. The reader quickly realizes that these outsiders are under the control of the deeply ingrained lottery system as well, emphasizing the dark similarities between the neighboring villages and the main town: Chronologically displaced and thoroughly isolated. By eliminating any sense of historical time in relation the town, Jackson successfully isolates the events of her text, inspiring a sense of fear in the reader that is caused by the knowledge that no help will arrive to stop such a horrifying display of violence. Ultimately, the time displacement within Jackson’s short story acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy, ensuring that the lottery system, despite its barbarianism, will continue.


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**Library Award Selection**

Sponsored by the Birmingham-Southern Library faculty and inaugurated in 2015, the annual Award for Excellence in Library Research recognizes the paper written by any current first- or second-year student that best demonstrates an advanced understanding and appropriate use of the Library’s services and collections.

**Synthesis of the sodium Trans-[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate(III)] (KP1339) trihydrate. Comparison of KP1019, Me₄N[RuCl₄,ind₂] and KP1339 trihydrate**

by Ante Rebic

**Abstract**

Indazolium trans-[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate[III]] or KP1019 has shown excellent results *in vitro*, *in vivo*, as well as in clinical trials in fighting different cancer cells. Although the drug itself is effective in fighting cancer, many of its mechanism characteristics are still unknown. One of the difficulties of working with the drug is its low solubility in water and plasma. Since the drug needs to be administered intravenously, it needs to be soluble in aqueous solutions. One approach to this problem is exchanging the cation in the salt. In the place of the indazolium cation, sodium has proven to increase the drug’s solubility by 35 fold. This study attempted to synthesize sodium trans-[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate[III]], or KP1339, following the procedures from previous studies. The synthesized salt and the synthesized intermediate Me₄N[RuCl₄,ind₂] were both analyzed and compared to KP1019. Based on the NMR, UV-vis, and electrochemical data, it was concluded that the intermediate Me₄N[RuCl₄,ind₂] was of high purity while the KP1339 was not as pure. Changes were suggested in the synthesis procedure.

**Introduction**

Cancer is the second deadliest disease in the United States, and it is on the way to becoming the most lethal one.¹ Over the past decades, some of the most common cancers, such as testicular, bladder, ovary, and lung cancer have been treated with cisplatin, a platinum-based chemotherapeutic.² Recent studies have shown that ruthenium-based anticancer drugs have the potential to be more effective than current chemotherapeutic agents. One of the most promising
ruthenium-based drugs is \textit{trans-}[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate(III)] (Figure 1), also known as KP1019, which has already shown successful results in the phase I clinical trials.\textsuperscript{3} This drug, which is a salt, could be a better solution for the patient treatment due to the lower toxicity of ruthenium which targets only cancer cells because of its proposed mode of action.\textsuperscript{3,4} This prevailing theory states that the drug might be activated by the reduction of the ruthenium center once inside the fast-dividing cells.

One of the disadvantages of the KP1019 salt is its low solubility in water. With a solubility of less than 3 mM in water and 0.3 mM in plasma, KP1019 needs to be dissolved in large amounts saline fluid to get the desired amount of the drug in the patient.\textsuperscript{3,5,6} This problem could be solved by exchanging the indazolium cation for the simpler sodium ion in the salt. The complex process of the synthesis of the sodium \textit{trans-}[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate(III)] trihydrate, Na[RuCl\textsubscript{4}ind\textsubscript{2}] \cdot 3H\textsubscript{2}O (Figure 2), also known as KP1339, from KP1019 has been described in previous studies.\textsuperscript{6} The study claims that this salt has 35 times greater solubility (0.018 mol/L) than the original compound, and that it could be a better candidate for the patient treatment.\textsuperscript{6} However, the most recent study shows that the KP1339 does not have the same level of cytotoxicity as KP1019 and is not as effective in cancer cell apoptosis.\textsuperscript{7} Based on the different nature of the salt, KP1339 does not have the same rate of cellular uptake as KP1019 and ends up in different parts of the cell.\textsuperscript{7} Moreover, after the cellular uptake, approximately \textbf{90\%} of KP1339 was found in the nucleus.\textsuperscript{7} Nevertheless, another study done only on KP1339 showed that KP1339 has better cellular uptake in vivo when applied with electroporation.\textsuperscript{8} Mice and rats' membranes showed higher permeability when stimulated with electricity.

This study aimed to further investigate the chemical and biological properties of KP1339; we attempted to reproduce its synthesis. Following the guidelines from the previous studies, we attempted to synthesize the salt, and the results of the NMR experiments (\textsuperscript{1}H, \textsuperscript{13}C) as well as IR were used to compare the compound to the previously published results.\textsuperscript{6} Since KP1339 trihydrate cannot be synthesized directly from the KP1019, tetramethylammonium \textit{trans-}[tetrachlorobis(1H-indazole)ruthenate(III)] had to be prepared first. After the successful synthesis of the KP1019, Me\textsubscript{4}N[RuCl\textsubscript{4}ind\textsubscript{2}] was synthesized by exchanging the indazolium cation for the tetramethylammonium cation. The purity of this intermediate greatly impacts the purity of the final product. Therefore, the intermediate products were also analyzed, and the results of the NMR and IR spectra were compared to the previously published results.\textsuperscript{6} After the pure Me\textsubscript{4}N[RuCl\textsubscript{4}ind\textsubscript{2}] was obtained, KP1339 was synthesized by exchanging the tetramethylammonium cation for a sodium ion.

**Experimental:**

\textbf{KP1019 (H1Ind[RuCl\textsubscript{4}ind\textsubscript{2}])}

KP1019 was synthesized following the procedures from previous studies.\textsuperscript{9} Ruthenium(III)chloride trihydrate was purchased from Pressure Chemical Co. and indazole was purchased from Acros-Organics. RuCl\textsubscript{3} \cdot 3H\textsubscript{2}O (3.89 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of 20mL of 12M HCl and 20mL of ethanol. The solution was refluxed under nitrogen gas for an hour and then cooled below 40°C. Ethanol was removed from the solution using a rotary evaporator. To dilute the solution, 12M HCl was added to bring the solution to a final volume of 40mL. Indazole (3.16×10\textsuperscript{3} mmol) was dissolved in 60mL of 12M HCl and heated to 70°C. Previously prepared ruthenium solution (40mL) was added to the hot indazole solution and heated to 80-90°C for 15 minutes. After the heating, mixture was cooled to the room temperature and filtered using vacuum filtration. The obtained solid was stirred in 150mL of water for 2 hours. Following the stirring, the solid was once again filtered and washed with no more than 50mL
of ice-cold ethanol and no more than 50mL of ice-cold diethyl ether. The solid was then left to dry in a vacuum desiccator for 24 hours. After weighing out the product, percent yield was calculated to be 93.3%.

The purity of the synthesized compound was determined through UV-vis and cyclic voltammetry experiments. Cyclic voltammetry was performed on a BASi EC Epsilon using Pine carbon patterned electrodes using 25mL of approximately 2mM solution. UV-vis spectrophotometry was carried out on a Hewlett-Packard diode array spectrophotometer by using a 0.3mM solution of KP1019.

Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)]

Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)] was synthesized according to the procedure from a previous study.⁶ Tetramethylammonium chloride was purchased from the Acros-Organics. Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)] (Figure 3) was synthesized by dissolving 3.36 mmol or 4-fold excess of tetramethylammonium chloride and 0.84 mmol of KP1019 in 150mL of methanol. The mixture was stirred for 30 minutes and filtered using a vacuum filter. Although the study performed by Peti et al. suggests washing in deionized water to remove the excess of tetramethylammonium chloride, methanol was used instead. This was done because it was determined that tetramethylammonium chloride is more soluble in methanol than in water.

Also, when the compound was first synthesized, it turned black overnight, and it is believed that water caused a contamination. Furthermore, the waste of the filtration was not contaminated with water and was put in a cold bath to stimulate the further precipitation of Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)]. After the second filtration of the solution, rotary evaporator was used to remove the excess of methanol, and the concentrated solution was put in a cold bath once again to maximize the yield. All the solids were dried in a vacuum desiccator for at least 48 hours. Yield of the synthesis was 304mg (65.4%) in two filtrations combined. NMR (¹H and ¹³C), UV-vis and IR analysis have been performed on the synthesized Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)] to test the purity of the compound. NMR data was collected on a JEOL 300 MHz spectrometer by dissolving the compounds in D₃-acetonitrile (0.75mL). UV-vis spectra were collected using a Hewlett-Packard diode array spectrophotometer by making a 0.3mM solution Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)] (4mg) in 25mL of 0.5M KHP pH4 buffer.

KP1339 trihydrate (Na[RuCl₄(ind₂)]⋅3H₂O)

KP1339 trihydrate was also synthesized following the procedure from Peti et al. Previously synthesized Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind₂)] (100mg) was dissolved in 200mL of water. Dowex 50WX2 acidic cation exchange resin preloaded with sodium was added in excess to the solution. The mixture was stirred for 25 minutes and then filtered using vacuum filtration. The filtered solution was frozen with a dry ice-acetone bath and lyophilized for the next 13 hours. Lyophilization, or freeze-drying, is a process of extracting a solvent under a low temperature and low pressure. This process allows the solvent to sublime off of the desired product. Impurities in the collected compound were indicated by a total mass of five times the theoretical yield. The collected solid was left to dry in a vacuum desiccator overnight. NMR investigations were done on the compound to test its purity. The compound was dissolved in D₃-acetonitrile (0.75mL) and 1H data were collected. Although KP1339 trihydrate was more soluble than KP1019, on occasion the solutions had to be filtered using glass wool or cotton because they were too cloudy for the NMR spectra to be collected. Cyclic voltammetry was performed using a BASi EC Epsilon with Pine carbon patterned electrodes on the sample by dissolving 28mg of KP1339 trihydrate in 25mL of 0.5M KHP pH 4 buffer, making an approximately 2mM solution. UV-vis spectrophotometry was done using a Hewlett-Packard diode array spectrophotometer by making an approximately 0.3mM solution of KP1339 trihydrate (4mg) in the same KHP buffer.
Results:

The three synthesized compounds can be distinguished by their appearance and solubility. Although based on the same ruthenium center, all of these salts have different colors, as seen in the Figure 4. Going from left to right, KP1019 was obtained as a brown powder and Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind)_2] was collected as an orange voluminous powder. The most voluminous compound was the lightly brown colored KP1339 trihydrate powder.

Figure 4. Synthesized compounds. From left to right: KP1019, Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind)_2], and KP1339 trihydrate.

Figure 5. 2mM solutions of the synthesized salts in 0.5M KHP pH4 buffer. From left to right: KP1019, Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind)_2], and KP1339 trihydrate.

Figure 5 represents the solutions of the synthesized salts. While the KP1019 and Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind)_2] share a similar brown-red color in the solution, the KP1339 makes a rather transparent yellow solution. It was noticed that Me₄N[RuCl₄(ind)_2] has a good solubility in water, but it had to be broken up into smaller pieces and sonicated several times before all of the solid would dissolve. Sonication is a process of applying sound waves to break up the larger particles. KP1339 trihydrate readily dissolved in solution and didn’t have to be sonicated but, as mentioned before, solutions did have to be filtered with glass wool. Furthermore, KP1339 trihydrate has proven to have the best solubility, while the KP1019 is least soluble in aqueous solutions.

KP1019 (H1Ind[RuCl₄(ind)_2])

Both CV and the UV-vis data (Figures 6 and 7) were consistent with previously reported results, and it was concluded that the synthesis of the KP1019 was successful. Figure 6 shows the typical graph of the cyclic voltammetry of KP1019. Going from the origin to the right, the first upward peak at approximately -0.25V represents the reduction of the Ru(III) to Ru(II) in the compound. At approximately -0.1V the negative current peak represents the oxidation of Ru(II) to Ru(III). The small distance between these two peaks with opposite directions suggests that the first reduction is reversible. Furthermore, another oxidation peak can be found close to the 0.7V and it represents an irreversible oxidation because there is no corresponding reduction peak in the return cycle.

Figure 6. Graph of the cyclic voltammetry of the 2mM solution of KP1019 in a KHP pH4 buffer. Observable are one reduction and two oxidation peaks.

The data from the UV-vis spectrophotometry experiments indicate that KP1019 is indeed what was synthesized (Figure 7). Four significant peaks at 325, 375, 425, and 550nm are visible. UV spectra could not be seen because of the KHP buffer absorbance in that region.

Figure 7. UV-vis spectrum of the 0.3mM KP1019 in 0.5 KHP pH4 buffer.
Comparing the data collected to the ones previously published by Peti et al. it was concluded that the synthesis of \( \text{Me}_4\text{N}[\text{RuCl}_4\text{ind}_2] \) was successful and that the collected solid had a high purity.

The CV data of \( \text{Me}_4\text{N}[\text{RuCl}_4\text{ind}_2] \) in Figure 8 has the same oxidation and reduction peaks shown in KP1019 (Figure 6). Two large peaks of opposite directions at -0.3V and -0.15V represent the reversible reduction and oxidation, respectively. Again, there is a small irreversible oxidation at approximately 0.55V. It is important for this data to be identical because they correspond to the same metal center.

Just like the CV data, UV-vis spectra of \( \text{Me}_4\text{N}[\text{RuCl}_4\text{ind}_2] \) presented in Figure 9 is similar to the KP1019 spectra (Figure 7). With 4 significant peaks at 325, 375, 425, and 550nm this spectra almost completely matches the KP1019.

While the IR data support the purity of the drug, \(^1\text{H}\) and \(^{13}\text{C}\) NMR data confirm it. Figure 11 shows the large peak for the cation at 3.107ppm (12H) and the smaller peaks of the anion as follows: 4.487, 3.200, 2.758, 2.500, -7.306, and -12.724ppm. Each of the peaks associated with the bound indazole ligand represents two protons. The last two peaks were very wide and the peaks had to be enlarged so they could be seen. Two larger peaks observable at 1.934ppm and 2.146ppm correspond to the acetonitrile solvent residual peak and water, respectively.\(^{11}\) There were no peaks associated with the free indazole. Carbon NMR spectra, not included, show the carbon peaks of the compound at: 58.260, 97.367, 113.059, and 117.447ppm. The peak at 117.447ppm was the largest one.

It was shown that using methanol to wash in during the filtration of the solid out of the solution gives better results than water. While the methanol did dissolve excess of tetramethylammonium better and didn’t contaminate the product, the collected compound had to be dried over 48 hours for all of methanol to evaporate.
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**Figure 11.** $^1$H NMR spectra of the $\text{Me}_4\text{N}[\text{RuCl}_4\text{ind}_{2}]$ in D$_3$-acetonitrile. Two last peaks are too broad to be seen and are increased in the image above them.

**KP1339 trihydrate (Na[RuCl}_4\text{ind}_{2}]$·3H$_2$O**

**Figure 12.** Graph of the cyclic voltammetry of the 2mM solution of KP1339 in a KHP pH4 buffer. Observable are one reduction and two oxidation peaks.

**Figure 13.** UV-vis spectrum of the 0.3mM KP1339 in 0.5 KHP pH4 buffer.

KP1339 trihydrate cyclic voltammetry data (Figure 12) as well as UV-vis spectra (Figure 13) are similar to the data collected for other salts of the ruthenium metal complex. The same peaks that were observable in KP1019 (Figures 6 and 7) and $\text{Me}_4\text{N}[\text{RuCl}_4\text{ind}_{2}]$ (Figures 8 and 9) spectra are still present in the KP1339 trihydrate data. One difference that was noticed is the smaller size of the oxidation peak in Figure 13, which could suggest irreversibility of the reaction in this compound.

However, IR spectra of the KP1339 trihydrate (Figure 14) did show different results. The spectrum has much more noise and more peaks. Also, it seems that the spectra have an overall downward slope. Selected peaks are at: 654, 748, 838, 846, 922, 966, 1009, 1042, 1084, 1153, 1242, 1302, 1481, 1541, 2339, 3323 cm$^{-1}$.

**Figure 14.** IR spectra of the solid KP1339 trihydrate.

NMR data collected was also different than expected (data not shown). The peaks were much smaller and had to be enlarged. A peak associated with tetramethylammonium salt can be observed at 3.058ppm. Larger peaks that were seen before with other ruthenium complexes and correspond to the indazolium ligands are at: 4.497, 3.561, 3.202, 2.757, and 2.501ppm. Other known marked peaks are 2.167ppm (water) and 1.935ppm (solvent residual peak). Other unknown marked peaks are at: 1.707, 1.583, 1.262, and 0.874ppm.

**Discussion**

An analysis of the data from all three compounds revealed some similarities and differences between the compounds. UV-vis and cyclic voltammetry have shown the most similar spectra throughout all three compounds. UV-vis spectra of each species (Figures 7, 9, and 13) show 4 significant peaks of which the first two correspond to the buffer solution and the other two correspond to the compound itself. Since the spectra of all three compounds have the peaks at same wavelengths, it is believed that the absorbance is caused by the ruthenium complex anion, which is the same in all three salts. Cyclic voltammetry further confirms this assumption. Reduction as well as oxidation peaks of each compound are at the similar potential values which indicates that ruthenium central atom is the one that is being reduced from...
Ru(III) to Ru(II) and then oxidized from Ru(II) to Ru(III) in all three compounds. Similarities between the graphs indicate that the ruthenium surroundings are most likely the same, and that the ruthenium complex anion is the same in each compound.

As previously mentioned, the procedure was modified and methanol was used as a wash-in during the filtration. Original procedure states that water should be used but it was shown that when water is used, the compound gets contaminated overnight by the hydrolysis of the chloride ligands. It was also shown that when methanol is used, the final product has the same purity as described in the previous study. In the end, using methanol is more convenient because tetramethylammonium dissolves better in methanol than in water, and because the solution was made in methanol which allows the wash from the filtration to be crystallized again, and therefore increases the yield of the synthesis.

Although the previous study does not mention that the Me₄N[RuCl₄ind₂] might be a hydrate, from the ¹H NMR spectra (Figure 11) it can be seen that there is significant amount of water in the compound. Since the compound was dried over the course of 4 days, it is believed that this compound is in a yet-to-be-identified hydrate form and that further studies should be performed to confirm this. In the ¹³C spectra the largest peak corresponds to the tetramethylammonium peak.

The Me₄N[RuCl₄ind₂] was synthesized with high purity, but the same cannot be said for the KP1339 trihydrate. From the NMR (Figure 15) as well as the IR spectra (Figure 14) it is visible that the compound has many impurities, and that it differs from the previously published data. In the ¹H NMR spectra (Figure 15) it can be seen that the tetramethylammonium is still present in the compound (3.058 ppm). This indicates that not all of the ions have exchanged in the compound. Therefore, a modification of the procedure is proposed. Primarily, mixing the Me₄N[RuCl₄ind₂] with Na⁺ Dowex beads in water should be done several times with several filtrations using new Dowex beads each time. This would be optimal to increase the number of exchanged ions in the salt and completely remove the tetramethylammonium ion. However, the salt should not be left in aqueous solution for too long due to the possibility of hydrolysis of the chloride ligands. Secondarily, Milli-Q water should be used in the process of ion exchange to further reduce the amount of contamination since everything that is in the solution will remain in the solid. Finally, the lyophilization process should be performed for a longer time, preferably more than 16 hours and up to 24 hours for the optimal results. Further studies should be concluded to perform the synthesis in a higher purity environment and the procedure for the synthesis needs to be expanded.

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Katniss Everdeen vs. Bella Swan: Identity Antidote for Young Women Readers
by Samantha Grindell

Stephanie Meyer’s Twilight Saga became one of the most popular series for young adult readers after its release in October of 2005. Twilight and the following books in the saga, New Moon, Eclipse, and Breaking Dawn, sold more than 100 million copies internationally, and “three of [the books] spent a total of 143 consecutive weeks on the New York Times Bestseller list” (Veal). The series is about a typical human girl, Bella Swan, who becomes romantically involved with a handsome and charming vampire, Edward Cullen. The courtship is complicated from the beginning because of Edward’s thirst for Bella’s blood. The majority of the first book centers on the budding romance between the two characters and culminates in Edward finally giving in to his feelings for Bella. The next three books follow Bella’s journey to becoming immortal so she can be with Edward as long as possible. Throughout the books, Bella consistently demonstrates that she will do whatever it takes to stay with Edward, despite the danger he poses to her life every moment they are together.

Many female readers who avidly follow the series see the romance between Bella and Edward as a “portrayal of a ‘true love’ relationship that triumphs over all obstacles and gives meaning to life” despite the unhealthy nature of the couple’s interactions (Gaarden 205). However, there is a growing group who sees the novels as dangerous to young girl’s psyches, because of the series’ “regressive gender ideology” and Bella’s lack of identity outside of her relationship with Edward (Gaarden 205). Disputers fear that impressionable young women will see Bella and Edward’s relationship as normal despite its extreme nature and will want to emulate the romance, including Bella’s underdeveloped persona, leading females backward rather than forward in the struggle for equality with their male counterparts.

Providing an alternative for those opposed to Bella and Edward’s example, a new series with a completely different type of female protagonist emerged three years after Twilight. The Hunger Games, a dystopian survival story by Suzanne Collins, was released in September of 2008, and during the next two years, the second and third books in the series, Catching Fire and Mockingjay, were released. It quickly became one of the most popular young adult series in
The Hunger Games takes place in the distant future in Panem, a fictional country that exists in what was once North America. Panem is divided into thirteen districts, with each district responsible for providing a different resource for the country. All of the districts answer to the abusive Capitol, the government base. At one point in the history of Panem, the districts rebelled against the Capitol. The war was extremely violent, but the Capitol came out victorious after it used nuclear weapons to destroy District 13 and all of its inhabitants. To punish the districts for rebelling, the Capitol conducts a televised competition called the Hunger Games every year. During the Games, two tributes from each district—a boy and a girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen—are selected in a lottery to fight to the death in an enclosed arena designed by the “Gamemakers.” The entire event is televised, exploiting the deaths of twenty-three young people every year for the entertainment of the Capitol citizens. The first book focuses on Katniss’ participation in the Games, and the second and third books follow Katniss’ journey after the Games when she refuses to follow the inhumane rules the Capitol imposes on Panem. Seventy-four years after the first Hunger Games, Katniss volunteers to be a tribute for District 12 after her younger sister, Primrose, is picked to participate in the Games. She is immediately defined as the protector and source of strength in the novel, a position most readers would admire, and she continues serving in this role after the Games when she rejects the Capitol’s inhumane rules.

A comparison of Bella and Katniss demonstrates that Katniss has a stronger sense of self than Bella. Meyer presents Bella as the ideal woman, but her character actually disempowers women because of her dependency on the men in her life for fulfillment and her helpless attitude in her relationship with Edward. Furthermore, as Debra Merskin points out in her article “A Boyfriend to Die For: Edward Cullen as Compensated Psychopath in Stephanie Meyer’s Twilight,” Edward’s character “flies under the radar of contemporary concern for girls’ psychic and physical well-being,” despite his controlling and dominating nature in his relationship with Bella (Merskin). Bella ties her life irrevocably to Edward’s by marrying him, becoming dependent on a man who makes her unhappy much of the time. Her codependence on Edward signifies a lack of self-esteem, which is concerning because a healthy self-esteem is key to confidence in contemporary life decisions. Katniss’ healthier mental state can be seen through a comparison of the two protagonists’ relationships with stereotypical gender roles, their differing attitudes towards self-sacrificial tendencies, and their experiences with romance.

One of Bella’s biggest character flaws is that she is depicted almost entirely “using typical gender stereotypes” (Owens 124). Whereas Katniss plays both traditionally female and male roles throughout The Hunger Games series, Bella rarely strays from acting as Edward’s subservient. She is the classic damsel-in-distress, requiring protection from disaster on countless occasions. Meyer shows Bella’s weakness throughout the series, and sends the message to readers that Bella’s actions are ideal. For example, Bella is “constantly described as fragile and breakable,” with translucent skin and an extremely thin frame, appearing as though she could shatter at the slightest of movements (Eddo-Lodge). To fill Bella’s much-needed role of guardian, Edward makes it his job to protect Bella (an ironic fact considering that his very existence puts her in danger), shielding her from a world that is waiting to destroy her. When she falls apart, Edward is there to put her back together again. For instance, when there is an experiment involving blood at their high school, Bella faints upon seeing the blood. Edward has to carry her to the nurse and back, embodying the classic image of the knight in shining armor saving the weak princess. Small tableaus like this scene occur throughout the series, making the soft and powerless female protagonist appear to be the ideal type of woman.

The truly problematic facet of Bella’s accordance with stereotypical gender roles is that she is rewarded for acting helpless. The wealthiest and most attractive boy in school falls in love with her and gives her a fairytale romance, making it seem as though behaving without ingenuity creates immediate success in life. At home, Bella occupies her time by “cooking for her father, doing homework and household chores” (Eddo-Lodge). She leaves all the “manly”
tasks to her father and Edward, never going out of her feminine comfort zone. Bella eventually chooses “early marriage and motherhood over college and a career,” not because she does not have ambitions in life, but because she forgoes all other ambitions that do not involve Edward (Gaarden 205). Her sacrifice of independence for love is uncommon for young girls in the 21st century, creating an understandable fear that Bella’s decision will create a downward trend in the number of women in college and the workforce because of false ideas about love and identity. If Bella had always wanted to be only a housewife, her situation would be different because she would be fulfilling her goals; it is her forgoing of her personal hopes, such as attending college or visiting her mother, to be with Edward that is troubling. Bella constantly reaffirms anti-feminist gender roles for women, essentially encouraging girls to forget their own dreams and become “defined by the men” around them in every way (Eddo-Lodge).

Compared to Bella, Katniss is more relatable to an adolescent girl because she adopts traits that are both typically feminine and masculine. No one can be expected to embody only feminine or only masculine qualities all the time, making Katniss more realistic and attainable because of her complexity. Collins’ presentation of Katniss as a strong role model who embodies both masculine and feminine traits is not a revolutionary idea; on the contrary, society was pleading for a heroine like Katniss. In the past decade, Americans have felt a growing dissatisfaction with conventional female heroines. Laramie D. Taylor and Tiffany Setters proved the American dissatisfaction with the traditional female character through a study examining the characteristics of female protagonists that male and female viewers prefer in films. They showed different movie clips “that featured a female protagonist who was either highly attractive or less attractive and either highly aggressive or not aggressive” (Setters and Taylor). The study proved that both women and men reacted most positively to attractive and aggressive female protagonists, demonstrating a societal hunger for the Katniss type of heroine over the Bella model. One could argue that the desire for an attractive protagonist negates the idea that society is ready for a protagonist that defies gender role ideologies: However, the desire for an attractive protagonist actually proves that the American public wants a heroine that behaves in both traditionally masculine and feminine roles, becoming a mix of both gender identities rather than isolating herself to one.

Much of Katniss’ gender identity exists in an androgynous state because of the lifestyle she was forced into after traumatic events in her childhood. Her father died when she was young and her mother fell into a catatonic state of depression after he passed, leaving Katniss to care for herself, her mother, and her sister, Prim, at the age of 12. After a brief time in which Katniss and Prim all but starved, Katniss learned how to hunt using her father’s bow and arrows, providing meat and other natural resources of food for her family by illegally scavenging in the woods surrounding District 12. Hunting is not traditionally deemed to be the job of a woman due to early evolutionary roles of men as hunters and women as gatherers, highlighting a part of Katniss’ identity generally deemed masculine by American society. Her strength with a bow becomes her advantage during the Hunger Games because she uses it to obtain food and kill deadly opponents, leading to her survival. This direct reward for crossing gender lines shows Collins appreciation of anti-traditionalist attitudes regarding the sexes, teaching young girls that behaving against stereotypical gender roles demonstrates strength rather than weakness.

Despite her tomboyish qualities in much of The Hunger Games, Katniss is also able to fit extremely well into her expected female gender roles. The feminine part of her identity allies with Taylor and Setter’s study on ideal protagonists, because Katniss “conform[s] to stereotypical conceptions of female beauty” that Americans value in aggressive protagonists (Setters and Taylor). Katniss is described as beautiful, which is shown through the love of two boys, Gale and Peeta. The initial attraction the boys feel towards Katniss is because of her beauty, but much of her feminine appeal still exists alongside her masculine traits and does not discount her strength. For example, in Catching Fire, Katniss warns Peeta that she is going to flee District 12 with her family and wants him to accompany her. He agrees, but claims that “[he doesn’t] think for a minute [Katniss will]” due to her tendency to face situations head on rather than run from them (Collins, Catching Fire 183). Peeta finds Katniss’ bravery appealing, as well as her willingness to deal with her problems, but he is also willing to support her plans regardless of whether he approves. Alternately, Edward just wants Bella to obey him. Gale is less attracted to Katniss when she tells him of wanting to run away, showing that her bravery is a key part of the attraction she holds for men. The freedom Collins gives Katniss to behave however she feels liberates her and allows her to follow her ambitions outside of her relationships. Because of this freedom, Katniss becomes a leader in her country and eventually becomes a wife and mother. Unlike Katniss, Bella is limited to the domestic sphere. Although Bella did not desire to pursue a political career, she was never given the option...
of having one after choosing to marry and have children with Edward. Bella’s marriage stifies her potential, while Katniss is able to have personal and public success because of her powerful and complex personality.

Another concerning part of Bella’s identity – or lack thereof – outside of her relationship is her wish for “her own self-sacrifice for the benefit of those around her” (Eddo-Lodge). Bella sees handing herself over to the villain or committing suicide as viable options for protecting her loved ones. For example, in Twilight, an evil vampire named James decides he wants to kill Bella. Bella, Edward, and the rest of his vampiric family develop a plan to trap James and end his threats. However, before the plan can be fulfilled, James calls Bella and plays a recording of Bella’s mother screaming. Bella thinks the recording is actually her mother and agrees to let James kill her if he does not harm her mother. She meets James alone and discovers her mother is nowhere to be found. Rather than being upset that James tricked her, Bella is simply relieved, thinking to herself, “[i]t would soon be over. Charlie and Mom would never be harmed, would never have to fear” (Meyers, Twilight 210). Her complete disregard for the fact that she is about to die because of her relief that her family is safe is incredibly concerning: it signifies that Bella does not care for herself, as all people should.

Some would argue Bella’s self-sacrificial tendencies are honorable because of the value put on them in American society. It is true altruism is a desirable trait, because it demonstrates a care for others above oneself; however, most modern psychologists view suicide as a far from selfless act, because it “leaves a lot of pain for [ones] family and friends” and is not the best solution available (Sandbrook). Bella tries to honor her family through her attempts at martyrdom, but those attempts would create more pain for her loved ones because of the sadness they would feel at her death. Furthermore, she never takes the time to think of a solution that could save her and her family, showing a lack of respect for herself. The same self-sacrificial mentality consumes Bella when she becomes pregnant with Edward’s half-vampire child in Breaking Dawn. Bella’s body cannot take the strain of the baby, but she refuses to abort the pregnancy. Sacrificing for children is a common trait of motherhood, but Bella’s situation is different because she does not know if the child can control its thirst for blood, whether it is a monster or a normal baby. Bella is determined that the child will live even if it kills her, not knowing if the baby is evil or benign, once again demonstrating a disregard for her life. Bella’s continual decision to put others before herself demonstrates a lack of self-worth, not bravery and selflessness.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar assert in their book, The Madwoman in the Attic, that female literature often contains “a paradigm of many distinctively female anxieties and abilities” (Gilbert and Gubar xii). If this theory is applied to Bella, her solution to female difficulties is to end it all and kill herself, an extremely narrow-minded and sad solution to any problems. Her strategy shows a lack of intellect and hope, sending a very negative message to readers about life. Bella’s suicidal attempts teach girls that their own lives are less important than the lives of those around them, the opposite of what society should be instilling in adolescent women about self-worth.

Like Bella, Katniss is willing to die for the people she loves, especially for her sister Prim. The importance Katniss places on her sister’s life is the reason she volunteers to go to the Hunger Games for Prim in the first place. However, Katniss’ desire to survive and fulfill her dreams is much stronger than Bella’s. Although Katniss has people she would die for, she demonstrates an unwillingness to die, making her actions inherently different than Bella’s. Bella sees dying for others as the honorable action to take, glorifying suicide to readers. Katniss believes the best way to help her family is staying alive for them, and she is willing to do anything to be reunited with them. Perhaps she has a better understanding of the toll loss can take on a family because of the death of her father, which created a strong value of life. Despite differing opinions on the best way to honor family, both Katniss and Bella value the lives of their loved ones immensely, a desirable quality in young people.

Katniss will sacrifice for Prim if necessary, but she has no intention of surrendering without a fight. When Katniss “is sent to the Hunger Games, she is driven by a desire to survive” (Tan). Readers see Katniss’ resolve when she and the boy from her district, Peeta, discuss the Games. Peeta wonders how he can “show the Capitol they don’t own [him]” before he dies (Collins, The Hunger Games 142). Katniss is baffled by Peeta’s fixation on his death, while she is focused on finding a way to survive the Games and return to her family. Her disdain for his lack of drive to live is obvious, demonstrating her own plans to fight against the other tributes. She thunders at Peeta, “if you want to spend the last hours of your life planning some noble death in the arena, that’s your choice. I want to spend mine in District Twelve” (Collins, The Hunger Games 142). Her determination shows young women an example of someone like them who is strong and capable of fighting against formidable opponents. Katniss demonstrates confidence, a trait that helps women become more successful in all aspects of life, including
careers and relationships. Katniss’ protective instincts for everyone, including herself, empower young women to recognize that they have the ability to preserve the well-being of their loved ones and themselves in difficult situations, rather than picking between others’ happiness and their own.

A third and obvious difference between Bella and Katniss’ identities is the way in which they fall in love. In Bella’s case, she loves Edward in an all-consuming way, to the point that it controls every aspect of her life, despite the relationship’s extremely dysfunctional nature. Merskin points out that “Bella is more than a little dependent on Edward,” making her less whole as an individual because of the way she ties her identity to Edward (Merskin). Bella needs Edward in a way that is highly undesirable for young girls to emulate in their relationships, due to the potential toll on self-esteem and happiness if the relationship fails.

A level of mutual need is acceptable and even desirable in some relationships, because it demonstrates a sense of closeness and a high level of trust. Yet, Bella is a teenager with no hobbies other than her boyfriend. In American society, Bella’s behavior is abnormal and signifies an unhealthy mental state because of her lack of development as an individual outside of the relationship. Bella sees herself as incomplete without Edward, making her feel like “becoming one with the other person [Edward] is the only worthwhile goal of [her] life,” essentially telling female readers that they are incomplete without a man (Gaarden 205). Bella forgoes all goals aside from being with Edward, allowing him to suck away her life for the hope of undying love.

Bella’s reaction to her life without Edward when he breaks up with her in New Moon demonstrates the depth of her dependence. Edward tells her their relationship is over in the woods behind her house, running away at superhuman strength at the end of the conversation. Bella is absolutely crushed and, despite the illogical nature of her actions, begins to follow in the direction she believes Edward went. While walking in her catatonic state, she tells herself that if she “stopped following him, it would be over. Life, love, meaning…over” (Meyers, New Moon 73). Bella’s belief that her life is over because a boy broke up with her is ludicrous, especially when readers realize that Bella is a dramatic seventeen-year-old. In the months after the breakup, Bella stops speaking to anyone unless forced, allows her grades to plummet, and loses interest in everything besides thinking of how much she misses Edward. He is her life force, and without him she is lost. She only feels alive when she sees hallucinations of him scolding her when she does dangerous activities, leading her to put herself in life-threatening situations just to see a shadow of her love. She even compares herself to a moon that lost its planet but “continued, nevertheless, to circle in a tight little orbit around the empty space, ignoring the laws of gravity” (Meyers, New Moon 201). Despite the insanity that consumes her after the end of the relationship, Bella is rewarded for her behavior. Edward and Bella become a couple again at the end of the book, suggesting to readers that Bella’s actions are the correct path to rekindling a relationship, which could not be further from the truth. Bella’s all-consuming love is so detrimental to her sense of self that in Breaking Dawn she decides to become a vampire, leaving her species behind to be with Edward fully. The fact that she literally becomes a different creature for love is the perfect example of how she loves Edward too much and herself too little. Bella and Edward’s relationship is imbalanced and unhealthy to a shocking degree, again demonstrating Bella’s lack of development as a woman.

Katniss’ romantic life is far more realistic than Bella’s because it is a part of her life rather than her entire life. Like any teenage girl, Katniss has romantic and physical desires, but they do not consume her. Instead, they develop naturally during her maturation into adulthood. Throughout the three books in The Hunger Games series, Katniss is part of a love triangle with two boys from her district: Gale, her longtime friend and hunting partner, and Peeta, the boy from her district selected to be in the Hunger Games alongside her. Katniss eventually chooses Peeta, but her reciprocal feelings develop slowly. She pretends to love him in the first book to save their lives, but her feelings do not truly become authentic until Catching Fire. Peeta and Katniss are forced to compete in another Hunger Games, fighting for their lives for the second time. While participating in the Games, they find a peaceful moment alone on a beach in the arena. Peeta tells Katniss it would be better for her to survive rather than for him to survive, because no one would miss him. Katniss realizes that “only one person will be damaged beyond repair if Peeta dies. [Her]” (Collins, Catching Fire 352). She is so overcome by her feelings that she kisses him, realizing for the first time the level of physical attraction she has for Peeta. Unlike Bella’s dramatic descent into love with Edward, Katniss slowly opens her heart to Peeta, developing a deep love for him. In a society in which young girls are experimenting with sex at incredibly young ages, Katniss’ slow development into a romantic relationship is a better example for young girls to read. The romance between Katniss and Peeta is much healthier than that of Bella and Edward because it does not make them lose their priorities or sense of self, instead encouraging them to be the best versions of
themselves possible. In the final scene of *Mockingjay*, Katniss reflects that she is with Peeta because he helps her remember “that life can go on, no matter how bad our losses” (Collins, *Mockingjay* 338). Peeta helps Katniss remember that she is whole, rather than making her think she needs him to survive. Their relationship contains high levels of emotional maturity that is much more desirable in reality than the desperate and dramatic relationship Bella and Edward share.

Both Bella and Katniss have qualities that young women may want to embody; however, Bella’s admirable qualities are overshadowed by traits that are detrimental to the social evolution of women as a whole. Her choices undermine the efforts of women to assert their independence in the world, because she creates a model of the ideal woman that relies entirely on men for survival and self-worth. Bella should not be condemned because of her decision to marry young and have children, as feminist ideologies empower women to choose what type of life they want. However, Bella’s love for Edward takes away her choices. Their romance consumes her so much that she abandons ambitions that would take her away from Edward. All of her decisions are tied up in the happiness of the men around her, calling into question if Bella is able to make choices for her own satisfaction. Katniss is a healthier role model because she finds a balance between her dreams and the ambitions of her loved ones. She is able to please both herself and others, never hesitating to defy the government to get what she wants. Bella’s inability to care for herself makes her a negative role model compared to Katniss because Bella perpetuates the idea of sacrificing a woman’s needs for a man. Katniss provides the remedy to Bella’s self-detrimental nature because she knows who she is outside of her relationships with men and is driven by independent goals, thus demonstrating a stronger and more realistic role model for young girls to idolize.

Works Cited


Surrounded by a pile of bloody syringes, Jean-Michel Basquiat was found dead, clear liquid seeping from his mouth, in his sun-baked Great Jones Streets apartment in New York City. It was August 12, 1988, and the artist was twenty-eight years old. Though a mixture of opiates and cocaine would signify the end of his lived, physical experience, many experiences leading to this moment elucidate Jean-Michel’s complex relationship to the human body. In quite the same way that Basquiat deconstructed his own body by using up to one hundred bags of heroin per day, he also used artistic means to deconstruct the human anatomical form. Likewise, Basquiat utilized medical imagery and diagramming in his art to comment on the both broad societal conventions and the more specific conventions and norms of the art world of the period.

Jean-Michel Basquiat was born on December 22, 1960, at Brooklyn Hospital in New York City. Born to a Puerto Rican mother and Haitian accountant father, Basquiat had a middle-class upbringing. His mother, Matilde, often took him to New York art museums and encouraged creativity and the arts from his early youth. In 1968, seven-year-old Jean-Michel was playing in East Flatbrush neighborhood in Brooklyn and was hit by a passing car. Basquiat was then forced to remain in King’s County Hospital for a month while he recovered from broken bones, internal injury, and a surgery to remove his spleen. Here, Matilde Basquiat gave young Jean-Michel a copy of Gray’s Anatomy, a well-known medical textbook. Though Basquiat would encounter many more life-changing events through his time growing up in the midst of the crack epidemic in New York City, the month in which he studied Gray’s Anatomy and became extremely familiar with the human anatomical form was one of the most influential events of his life on his career as an artist. Gray’s Anatomy had a lasting influence on

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2 Ibid.
3 Eric Fretz, Jean-Michel Basquiat : A Biography (Santa Barbara, CA, Greenwood, 2010).
5 Eric Fretz, Jean-Michel Basquiat.
7 Eric Fretz, Jean-Michel Basquiat; Oliver Berggruen, “The Prints of Jean-Michel Basquiat.”
Jean-Michel Basquiat’s creative life from that point forward; many of Basquiat’s later works involved medical diagrams and anatomical images and labeling and his rock band, Gray, was named after the publication.\textsuperscript{10} As a major motif in many of his works, Basquiat often used the anatomical and medical representation of the body to speak to the nature of the art world he so quickly became a part of, as well as society as a whole.

Basquiat was by no means the first artist to employ the use of medical diagramming and anatomical representation in his works. Traditionally, art and science were linked through the process of anatomical imaging.\textsuperscript{11} Prior to the development of advanced methods for medical imaging, artists created the bulk of the images used in the medical field.\textsuperscript{12} Typically, traditional roles of medical imaging engaged the practice of dissecting the human body to create a more accurate understanding of the bodily form.\textsuperscript{13} Artists Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, famous for their work on the human form, both carefully studied and dissected human bodies, even surpassing the anatomy curriculum being taught at period universities.\textsuperscript{14} Despite the close relationship of the two fields for centuries, the relationship began to disintegrate in the latter part of the 18th century as scientists gained an increased focus on factual objectivity in bodily representation.\textsuperscript{15} Namely, without a proper study of anatomy, the representation of a proper human form was thought to be impossible.\textsuperscript{16} With the divergence of the relationship between these two fields came a growing focus on what art could offer through a study of anatomy that scientific representation could not: a sense of moral and emotional understanding and belief.\textsuperscript{17} The human bodily form had provided a ground for knowledge in both science and art for centuries, but artistic representation was able to create a broader sense of the body, more than what the objective reality of the form could offer.\textsuperscript{18}

A critical piece of literature, Gray’s Anatomy, has been considered one of the most important works on the topic. Gray’s Anatomy has sold over five million copies since it was published in 1858 and has undoubtedly influenced the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat, graffiti-artist turned painter who became famous for his “sophisticated use of childlike images” and busy artistic style where he mixed images and text.\textsuperscript{19} Basquiat embodied the notion that anatomical representation can evoke a wider sense of morals and emotions through representation of the bodily form.

Jean-Michel Basquiat’s anatomical representation in his artwork criticizes and speaks to the emotions of the period in that it presents medicine as an authorial voice. In this role, medicine has the power to construct and frame the knowledge around a particular topic. In this case, medicine and medical diagrams serve as an indicator of the true, pure representation of the bodily form. This recalls directly the burgeoning 18th century conventions that art, not framed by science, was the equivalent of beauty without proof.\textsuperscript{20} Unless these anatomical artists studied scientific anatomy, they would be unable to accurately represent bodily emotions and forms, and when compared with “accurate” scientific portrayals, the medical diagrams would always win the bid for authorial power.

In some ways, Jean-Michel Basquiat creates what appears to be a parody of Gray’s Anatomy, the work of literature that is considered to be the premiere work of medical authority—the authorial voice of medicine. In Untitled (Hand anatomy) (Figure 1), Basquiat uses his busy mixture of text and images in typical fashion. The top of the painting reads “Chapter IV,” which likely refers to Gray’s Anatomy’s fourth chapter “Myology.” Basquiat scralls the Latin names of the hand muscles to the right of the hand in the painting. Below the image, which is notably painted as the hand of a white individual, reads, “HANDS AND FEET ©.” The copyright symbol, a common feature in his work, seems to suggest that the white hand and labeling of the white body parts is copyrighted, insinuating that the power and authority is in the hands of the white individual. The white hand serves as the authorial voice, the one that holds back artists from attaining validity in the world of anatomical representation and rendered Basquiat himself raced and “ghettoized” in the hands of the predominantly white art world.\textsuperscript{21}

Likewise, along what appears to be a ladder in the left side of the painting, reads the phrases, “Notary Education,” “Sensory Education,” “Language,” possibly steps to climbing the ladder that culminates at the authorial title of “Chapter IV.” To the left-center of the painting, Jean-Michel’s trademark crown rests above the Spanish word “Pecho,” referring to the thoracic cavity that holds the heart.

\textsuperscript{10} Oliver Berggruen, “The Prints of Jean-Michel Basquiat.”
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Reinhard Hildebrand, “Alternative Images: Anatomical Illustration and the Conflict Between Art and Science,” Interdisciplinary Science Reviews 29, no. 3 (2005), 295-311.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Joshua Liao, “Perspectives: The Human Body at the Intersection of Art and Science.” The Lancet 381 (2013), 525.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Eric Fretz, Jean-Michel Basquiat.
\textsuperscript{20} Reinhard Hildebrand, “Alternative Images.”
\textsuperscript{21} Arthur Danto, “Flyboy in the Buttermilk.”
in the human body. Positioned in the composition in a similar location as the heart in the body, this reifies the notion that art provides an emotional connection to anatomy that science cannot, therefore questioning the authorial voice of medicine.

In Anatomy II (Figure 2), Jean-Michel Basquiat once again questions the authorial voice of medicine, linking it to conventions of the time by using anatomical images. The painting reads, “Academic Study of the Male Fig.” Instead of only saying this once though, it is written twice and underlined both times, emphasizing that it is an “academic study.” It is not though, as Basquiat was never formally trained in anatomy and science, suggesting the parody-like nature it holds in reference to Gray’s Anatomy. On the left side of the drawing, Basquiat writes, “Leg of a dog by Leonardo,” recalling Leonardo da Vinci’s sketches which compared the leg of a dog and the leg of a man. Remembering here that Leonardo was considered one of the most accurate anatomical artists in the history of artistic representation, Basquiat questions the authorial voice of medicine by referencing an artist who triumphed over medical professionals of the time in his attempts to accurately represent the human form. By doing so, Basquiat questions the validity of the authorial voice of medicine, which more broadly seeks to question the authorial voice of society at the time—the colonial holdovers of the art world, life in the midst of the civil rights movement, and later the overly-drugged streets of New York City, and the reality of death that was occurring all around him.

Jean-Michel Basquiat uses representation of the authorial voice through anatomical diagrams to speak to his experience with colonial holdovers in the art world in Catharsis (Figure 3). On the left panel of the painting, Basquiat depicts a dumbbell with heavy weights balancing on his famous crown, perhaps signifying the pressure he felt as an up-and-coming artist in the East Village Art scene. Above this is an image of what appears to be radium (as a scrawled out text below it suggests), once again linking the voice of the authorial voice of medicine by presenting a common scientific figure, suggesting the precedence of science to art much like the stress and holdovers of the art scene at the time. Perhaps this also links to the characteristics of the element, one that is extremely radioactive in nature, much like the feelings one might experience after being oppressed (namely, the opposite of “catharsis”). The middle and left panels represent anatomical imagery that link back to Basquiat’s lived experience with pain in his month recovering in the hospital. “Thumb,” “arm,” and “spleen” are labeled, the same parts of his body that were hurt in his East Flatbrush accident. Above the starkly white hand, which is bloody and could perhaps be the hand of the doctor is the word “fortezza,” meaning strength. Basquiat’s body was in the hands of the white doctor at the age of seven, much like the authorial voice he studied in the Gray’s Anatomy textbook. Basquiat’s use of anatomical imagery to represent this further suggests that Basquiat’s lived experience as a rising black artist in this midst of a predominately white art world, one which despite its attention to him and fondness for his world, still held the ultimate authority over his work and success.

Jean-Michel Basquiat’s experience as an artist in the art world of the period was highly defined by his representation as and of the black male form. Basquiat once explained that he included black people in his paintings because “I didn’t see many paintings with black people in them.” That being said, his work was often called primitive and raced to the highest degree possible. Basquiat’s anatomical representation in the work makes parody of this “primitivism” questioning the voice of the medical labels. In Catharsis (Figure 3), below the labels of the body parts Basquiat injured in his accident are the words, “Left paw©” and “Left paw,” both of which are painted to stand out more than the other medical labels. These labels create a biting commentary on the nature of primitivism in art and link the black body back to the stereotypes placed upon it for centuries. Basquiat uses images and text that relate to medical and anatomical representation, here, to culturally deconstruct stereotypes about the black body and to call attention to the problem of authorial voice in this sense. In Gray’s Anatomy, a white unseen voice is labeling the body and claiming authority over this knowledge. In terms of this painting, the white unseen voice is likewise stereotyping the image of the black body. Signifying Basquiat’s lonesome war with racism, both covert and blatant, many of his works speak to similar themes by use of anatomical imagery.

Representation and references of the black male form occur consistently throughout many of Basquiat’s anatomical images. In Anatomy II (Figure 2), the head of the figure is missing, replaced by the word “Rinso.” A popular soap brand, this could serve to symbolically remove the figure’s blackness, creating a white figure that is labeled with the word “new.” The “rinso” motif is seen

22 Ibid.
23 Ingrid Sischy, “For the Love of Basquiat.”

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once again in Untitled (Rinso) (Figure 4). The words surround the outline of an anatomical form, which uses white lines on a black background to simultaneously present the figure as a black man and to allude to medicine in a way that references an x-ray. Untitled (Rinso) uses words and phrases to label and surround the human form, rather than technical medical terms, though. The painting reads, “1950 Rinso: The Greatest Development in Soap History,” once again symbolically wiping away the color as a cleansing agent, and referring to this act as “great.” The bottom corner likewise reads, “Whitewashing action.” Not only does the slogan reference the removal of color symbolically, but it also represents the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, an ultimate reference to the notion of white authorial power. The word “Everlast” beside the main black figure causes the viewer to recall the famous athletic brand. This suggests overcoming a trial and remaining in power, much like a boxing match. At the top of the painting near the three figures though, “Kingfish,” regarding to a person in a high position, is scratched out, perhaps suggesting that these authorial positions and feelings of power and confidence are not fit for black people. Instead, the white individual, art collector, or viewer is the kingfish here. In terms of the physical makeup of these anatomical forms, they all possess stereotypically black features. These anatomical forms, with lines and arrows emphasizing the authorial power of the white world and references to stereotypically black features, struggles, and colloquialisms, are typical of Basquiat’s symbolic representations of emotions through the anatomical body.

In addition to questioning the notion of the authorial voice of the art world and White America at the time, Basquiat’s representations of medical imaging speak to his own experiences in the midst of a turbulent society at the time. Colonial holdovers of the art world undoubtedly added to this tumultuous existence, but Basquiat often also spoke to broader societal norms and ideals. Another important function of Basquiat’s representation of the anatomical form is in his experiences with authorial power; but in a sense directly relating to his lived physical experience and experiences with death and the lived experiences of others. In Anatomy (Figure 5), which was a portfolio series of screen prints published in 1982, Jean-Michel Basquiat confronts these feelings through his portrayal of the human anatomical form. The screen prints are all on the black, x-ray reminiscent background once again. Across the screen print series, the human body is stripped into pieces; Basquiat fragments it down to a few individual labeled bones. These images confront a fear of the fragmented body—one that is damaged and incomplete. This damaged body likely connects to Basquiat’s experience with bodily trauma in the hospital as a child, and perhaps links to Matilde’s stay in mental institutions throughout his childhood. They connect to a fragmented and damaged role within society and, when combined with the connection to the black figure, comment on human nature and superficiality. Even more so, they connect to human fears of death and dying, a concept that is linked to the body being torn apart. In anatomical dissection, the body is stripped to its very core. Likewise, Basquiat’s paintings strip the subject to its core, confronting his anxieties towards a soulless, stripped non-existence. This can be seen in Leonardo da Vinci’s Greatest Hits (Figure 6) as well. Basquiat’s use of fragmented, zombie-esque forms are presented on a background that his intentionally aged. Though they are still present, they appear to be resting on the boundary between life and death; their existence is uncertain.

The anatomical representation of these forms often represents the individual’s underlying fear of death, and this can be seen in Basquiat’s representation of the anatomical drug body. In Riding with Death (Figure 7), Basquiat confronts these feelings. In the work, a skeletal body rides a similarly skeletal horse. As a common slang term for heroin, “horse” references the drugged body, something that was extremely familiar to him, especially at the time of this painting, which was one of his last works. This painting suggests that the drug body and corpse go hand in hand, a reality that Basquiat faced daily as other graffiti artists and friends died from overdoses. Basquiat’s fragmented representation of the body rests amidst a clear background with no words, unlike many of his other works. Still, through the anatomical representation alone, Basquiat elucidates the fears regarding the material body and comments on the wider drug scene, particularly that of New York City where he resided, of the time.

In an interview with members from Jean-Michel Basquiat’s rock band Gray, his friend Michael Holman recalled Basquiat talking about the name of the band: “Jean said, ‘I know the name of the band…Gray.’ Something about that one word, the connection to industrialism, Gray’s Anatomy, the vagueness of it, the black-and-whiteness of it.” His band members also recalled a moment where Jean-Michel read a poem for a performance. It was entitled “Brains and hands”

26 Oliver Berggruen, “The Prints of Jean-Michel Basquiat.”
27 Eric Fretz, Jean-Michel Basquiat.
28 Oliver Berggruen, “The Prints of Jean-Michel Basquiat.”
29 Suzy Freeman-Greene, “A Fine Body of Work.”
and was a repetitive mantra about human evolution. This sense of connection to the human body pervaded all lines of Basquiat’s life, and particularly that of his artwork. Many of Basquiat’s works represented the human anatomical form, a field that has a complicit relationship with its connection to both artists and scientists. Through this representation of the human anatomical form, Basquiat creates commentary for the authorial voice of the art world, the authorial white voice, and social and societal conventions of the time in which he lived and worked.


All figures discussed in the paper can be found online at the following websites.

Figure 1

Figure 2
http://www.artnet.com/artists/jean-michel-basquiat/anatomy-ii-kXdQe0B3dKJMPbkuFaaBh1w2

Figure 3
http://www.artnet.com/artists/jean-michel-basquiat/catharsis-triptych-H6nwPEzBFeoDTAtaj7LVQ2

Figure 4
http://www.artnet.com/artists/jean-michel-basquiat/untitled-rinso-a-F_WQ1c6LarHVaABFncC3Q2

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

Bibliography


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**(Dis)Orientation: Experiencing Space, Place, and Meaning in Danielewski’s House of Leaves**

by Jake O’Leary

The spatial arrangement of text to create or evoke an intended image is nothing new to the literary world – 400 years ago, George Herbert arranged the text of “Easter Wings” to mimic the image evoked in the poem’s title. Such a method of text arrangement is not a novelty; however, contemporary author Mark Z. Danielewski has managed to employ typographical manipulations on a much grander scale, and to greater effect. Many critics have mentioned the unique arrangement of text in his debut novel, *House of Leaves*, if only in passing. The structure of *House of Leaves*’ text is the primary focus of Caroline Hagood's article, in which she argues that the structure of the novel and its multi-layered narrative form an ever-changing house that signifies the ever-changing nature of truth (87-88). Similarly, in another article on the novel, Natalie Hamilton finds that Danielewski, through his unique arrangement of the novel, both literally and figuratively creates a labyrinth, which becomes a central theme of the book, owing much to earlier experimental writers like Jorge Luis Borges (3). More specifically, critic Katharine Cox considers the labyrinth within *House of Leaves* a reflection of familial relationships between narrators on several of the novel’s narrative layers (4). I intend to demonstrate that, through numerous variations in the arrangement, shape, and presentation of the text of *House of Leaves*, Danielewski both creates a way for the reader to experience the physical spaces described in the novel, orienting the reader, and a way for the novel’s narrators to call into question authenticity and truth, disorienting the reader. Danielewski thus asserts the impossibility of accurate representation through either fiction or nonfiction, leading to the conclusion that, while the reader can attempt to interpret *House of Leaves* according to his or her own experience, no genuine meaning can be constructed from the text, a hallmark of postmodern literature. *House of Leaves* makes no claim to verisimilitude. In fact, in the introduction to the text, Zampanò, the novel’s purported primary author, is quoted as having said, “They say truth stands the test of time. I can think of no greater comfort than knowing this document failed such a test.” The *Navidson Record*, the central text within *House of Leaves*, however, appears to be a nonfiction exegesis of a documentary film of the same name. The *Record* opens on Will
Navidson, a Pulitzer-winning photojournalist, who, with his longtime girlfriend Karen Green and their two children, has purchased a house on Ash Tree Lane in the Virginia countryside. The house is not static, but instead changes constantly: at one point, the house is slightly larger on the inside than the outside, and later, cavernous hallways appear and disappear at random. The bulk of the *Record* and the eponymous documentary consist of several “Explorations,” in which various characters venture into the spaces within the house. Before the first Exploration, Will Navidson ventures into the dark, cavernous hallway alone while, in the meantime, the house rearranges. Because his girlfriend forbids him from re-entering the hallway, he enlists the help of his brother, Tom, who, along with wheelchair-bound engineer Billy Reston, mountain climber Holloway Roberts, and his associates, Jed Leeder and Kirby “Wax” Hook, explores the depths of the house. Following this expedition, Navidson and his family attempt to escape from the menacing house, but as they do so, the house does everything it can to stop them, and when Navidson’s brother re-enters the house in order to rescue the children, the house swallows him.

Will Navidson and his girlfriend spend time away from the house and from one another, but they are eventually drawn back, although for different reasons. Navidson, in his need to understand the house, returns to conduct a final Exploration alone. The physical impossibilities of the house are most prevalent during this Exploration, as corridors shrink and expand, inclines lead downhill in all directions, and sideways-oriented staircases lead to nowhere. Eventually, he finds himself within a dark, freezing abyss, alone except for a book and matches. There is no floor and no ceiling, but he appears to be neither falling nor rising. As he begins to fade, the story switches to his girlfriend’s point of view: Karen has come to the house to find her partner, overcoming her fear of the house; however, this footnote is not found at the foot of the page, but instead is arranged in a square in the middle of the page, outlined in blue, which, given that “house” is always presented in the same shade of blue, signifies the house itself. While the right pages contain a readable portion of the footnote, the left pages contain a mirror image of the previous page’s note. Critic Laura Barrett refers to this effect as “a series of windows” (255). The footnote ends in one square of blank space whose opposite side is a black square. Throughout this section, the image of the staircase or a downward shaft is evoked, with the footnote being read “downward,” and the remainder of the text in the section arranged around this square footnote. It is appropriate that this image is presented here, because this section of the *Record* concerns architecture and the “ever elusive shape of the house and the rules governing [its] shifts” (Danielewski 121).

As Will Navidson enters the hallway with Billy Reston to rescue the wounded explorer, Wax, he “begins to capture the size and sense of that place,” a space so incomprehensibly vast and empty that it has managed to drive explorer Holloway Roberts to insanity:

[The space’s] span approaches one mile, making it practically impossible to illuminate… In one photograph of the Great Hall, we find Reston in the foreground holding a flare, the light barely licking an ashen wall rising above him into inky oblivion, while in the background Tom stands surrounded by flares which just as ineffectually confront the impenetrable wall of nothingness looming around the spiral staircase. (Danielewski 155)

In this chapter, Danielewski fills each page less than halfway with text, while the other parts of each page are empty; the space described by the quote above is simulated by these pages, whose amount of open space varies continually—some contain several paragraphs of text (155), while others contain only a few lines (172-73); sometimes the text is at the top of the page (161), and sometimes it is
Danielewski again performs the actions described through typographical expanding, dropping, and as it slips, dragging Reston up with it. Becomes clear: Navidson is sinking. Or the stairway is stretching, what could possibly be pulling Reston to the top? … The answer however, does not fall. In fact, Reston's ascent only accelerates…

leave a burning gash. Navidson finally has to let go. Reston, he holds begins to slip across his fingers with enough speed to leave a burning gash. Navidson to the top by himself, the house begins to shift: Wax and Jed's ascents go according to plan, but when Navidson begins to hoist the handicapped Reston to the top by himself, the house begins to shift: The excess rope at Navidson's feet starts to vanish, while the rope he holds begins to slip across his fingers with enough speed to leave a burning gash. Navidson finally has to let go. Reston, however, does not fall. In fact, Reston's ascent only accelerates…

what could possibly be pulling Reston to the top? … The answer becomes clear: Navidson is sinking. Or the stairway is stretching, expanding, dropping, and as it slips, dragging Reston up with it. (Danielewski 285-92)

Danielewski again performs the actions described through typographical arrangement: As Navidson sinks, the text becomes oriented upside-down, requiring the rotation of the book, while the words “stretching,” “expanding,” “dragging,” and “rope” are all stretched vertically or horizontally across the pages (Danielewski 289-293). This literal stretching of words across the canvas of a blank page serves to further the reader's sense of the shifting space described. When Reston eventually makes it to the top, the staircase does not stop stretching; instead, the rope goes taut as it shifts, eventually snapping. The word “snap” is divided over three pages into three segments: “sn-,” “-a-,” and “-ps” (Danielewski 294-96). This arrangement, like the stretching of words, not only describes the snapping of the rope, but also literally demonstrates to the reader the snapping of a word.

As bizarre as the presentation of space in Exploration #4 within Chapter X seems, Chapter XX's exegesis on Exploration #5 is far more extensive and anomalous. At times, the space can seem impossible to comprehend. In a bit of foreshadowing, the chapter opens with a paragraph written in Braille (Danielewski 423). After detailing the gear Navidson has packed for his solo journey through the house, the Record launches into a description of his first few days inside the hallways he has chosen to explore, rather than the staircase:

After two hours he has only managed to go seven miles… Soon, however, he realizes there is a definite decrease in resistance. After an hour, he no longer needs to pedal… When he finally stops for the night, the odometer reads an incredible 163 miles… When Navidson wakes up the next morning, he… begins what he expects will be an appalling, perhaps impossible, effort. However within a few minutes, he finds he no longer needs to pedal. Once again he is heading downhill. Assuming he has become disoriented, he turns around… But within fifteen seconds, he is again coasting down a slope. (Danielewski 424-25)

As Navidson progresses through the hallways, they begin to shift: “Sometimes the ceiling drops in on him, getting progressively lower… [then] rising higher and higher” (Danielewski 427-29). The text begins, once again, to attempt to represent the space of the house, with the text at the bottom of the page when the ceiling is low, and rising word by word across the page as the ceiling rises. When the hallway begins to widen, the space between words widens along with it, until only two words fit per line, forming what looks like an arch or a vaulted ceiling on the page. Later in this sequence, Navidson opens the door to “a narrow
corridor sliding into darkness” (Danielewski 443). Although the confined space comforts him at first, “the further he goes, the smaller the hallway gets, until he has to remove his pack and crouch” (Danielewski 445-47). Eventually he must crawl through this space, and the amount of text per page shrinks to imitate the small, dark space in which Navidson finds himself. While these pages purport to represent the dimensions of the hallways, other parts of this section reflect Navidson’s statement that “direction no longer matters” (Danielewski 433), with words arranged diagonally as well as vertically, and sentences that fork, repeating themselves as they branch out in different directions. These pages (434-41, 464-89) often require the reorientation of the book itself in order to be read; in a sense, they both orient and disorient the reader to the space by expressing how dimensionless it is, and how futile it is to attempt to represent such a space – at some point, attempts at linguistic representation devolve to the point that two pages are entirely comprised of musical notation instead of words (Danielewski 478-79).

As much as Danielewski’s typographical choices manage to literally orient the reader and represent the spaces the words are themselves describing, these choices can often serve to disorient the reader and make traversing The Navidson Record and the whole of House of Leaves a tremendously difficult affair. For example, the first instance of nontraditional text arrangement discussed above, Footnote 144, if read continuously, puts the reader 26 pages past their starting point, and requires a bit of searching to find where to begin reading again (Danielewski 119-45). The Record’s discussion of the myth of Daedalus’ construction of a labyrinth for King Minos of Crete, with its extensive accompanying footnotes, is both written in red ink and struck through, which makes it more difficult to decipher than the other text of the novel (Danielewski 109-11). Additionally, the text of The Navidson Record, along with its footnotes, often contains extensive passages in foreign languages (Danielewski 24-25), including Braille (Danielewski 423), which is ironic in the sense that Braille printed in ink is useless to those who actually require it. Although these passages typically are accompanied by translations, they serve to further mystify the reader.

While passages in foreign languages may add a bit of difficulty for the English-only reader, there are sections of House of Leaves that are unreadable because they do not exist, at least not within this world. Zampanò’s discussion of The Holloway Tape, which documents the titular character’s descent into madness and eventual suicide within the dark hallways of the house, is marred: “Some kind of ash landed on the following pages, in some places burning away small holes, in other places eradicating large chunks of text. Rather than try to reconstruct what was destroyed I decided to just bracket the gaps — []” (Danielewski 323). The entire section (Danielewski 323-38) continues as does the rest of the Record, but all of the text, including footnotes, is thus disrupted. This unsettles the reader to varying degrees — some words are easy to piece back together, like “anni[j]l]tion” (Danielewski 331), but others are completely burned, requiring the reader to skip over the blank spaces or to fill in the gaps with whatever word he or she thinks appropriate. The gaps in the text become even greater in subsequent sections. On page 372, the Record is purportedly missing two pages, with the next four pages inked out almost entirely. At the end of this section, which describes the scientific findings regarding samples of the house’s walls, 17 pages are reported missing (Danielewski 377). There is an additional, important component of the book missing: the image of Delial, the starving Sudanese girl whose photo won Navidson the Pulitzer Prize. On page 421, where the Record says, “See diagram,” there is only a rectangle of blank space surrounded by brackets. It is clear that the reader must conjure his or her own image of Delial. Thus, while the reader may be able to gain something from reading the burned pages regarding The Holloway Tape, there is little that can be determined from the missing pages and image except for the fact that this record is incomplete.

One of the primary issues postmodern writers deal with is the issue of representation, of the impossibility of representing anything accurately, leading to the conclusion that even the most meticulous nonfiction is still a form of fiction. House of Leaves, whose central text, The Navidson Record, is presented like a nonfiction piece, addresses concerns of “inadequacies in representation, no matter the medium, no matter how flawless”: “Representation does not replace. It only offers distance and in rare cases perspective” (Danielewski 346). Although representation is always inadequate, House of Leaves does attempt to describe the events and spaces experienced by the characters in the film The Navidson Record, and arrange text to mimic those spaces and events, whether they be cavernous hallways, a burned manuscript, or the path of a bullet. Critic Laura Barrett also argues that the “house, as a container whose volume supersedes its dimensions, represents all media… modes of representation that are inadequate to the task of literal reflection but may rise to the challenge of figurative evocation” (261). Thus, the book, through its attempts at representation, can guide and orient the
reader toward the ability to experience the house, but because the house itself is anomalous in the extreme, these attempts often have a disorienting and confusing effect. Because the titular house, and the book as well, are never fully understood by the characters, and because the manuscript is at points painfully incomplete, it follows that neither sense nor truth can be found or constructed by the reader – all interpretations become representations, which are in and of themselves inadequate and incomplete. It is fitting that, in the introduction to *House of Leaves*, narrator Johnny Truant states that “what’s real or isn’t real doesn’t matter here. The consequences are the same” (Danielewski xx). Whether or not the house, the documentary, or the book itself are real is of little consequence, because what the reader makes of them is independent of reality, if there is such a thing as reality.

Works Cited


