

*New Errands:
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Welcome to New Errands!

The Eastern American Studies Association and the American Studies Program at Penn State Harrisburg are pleased to present the Spring 2018 issue of *New Errands*, an online journal that publishes exemplary American Studies work by undergraduate students.

Seeking to develop the next generation of Americanists, *New Errands*' mission is both to provide a venue for the publication of important original scholarship by emerging young scholars and to provide a teaching resource for instructors of American Studies looking for exemplary work to use in the classroom.

New Errands is published semi-annually, after the end of each academic semester. The goal of this timetable will be to collect and publish essays produced during the previous term, so that they can be made available as quickly as possible for use in the following term. We encourage both selfsubmission by undergraduate students and nominated submissions by instructional faculty. They must have an American focus, but can employ a variety of disciplinary methods. Submissions can be emailed as Word documents to: newerrandsjournal@gmail.com.

Essays can be of any length, but they must have a research focus. Any visual images should be placed at the end of the manuscript, and tags should be placed in the text to indicate the intended placement of each image. Manuscripts should conform to MLA guidelines.

New Errands Staff:

Supervising Editor– Anthony Bak Buccitelli

Co-managing Editors– Brittany Clark and Caitlin Black

For further information about the Eastern American Studies Association, including the annual undergraduate roundtable and the EASA undergraduate honors society, please visit: <http://harrisburg.psu.edu/eastern-american-studies-association>.

A Message from the Editors—

The Spring 2018 edition of *New Errands* includes six exemplary essays. These essays cover topics ranging from ethnographies of fantasy football and a *Harry Potter* podcast, to studies of Women's Shakespeare Clubs, political cartoons of Chinese immigrants, Irvin Penn's Photography, and the court case *Lochner v. New York*.

This exciting collection of papers touches on a wide range of topics and research methodologies. In doing so, they reflect the breadth of American Studies scholarship while bringing attention to important current and historic events. Each paper also demonstrates a high commitment to excellence in both research and writing. As such, we hope that you will find in these papers strong examples of undergraduate writing that model interesting assignments and approaches at this level of scholarship.

We would like to thank Sarah Wilson for her aid in the selection process. In addition, we would like to thank our contributors for their dedication to American Studies scholarship.

We hope you enjoy these essays.
Caitlin Black and Brittany Clark

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Women's Shakespeare Clubs: Fandom in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century America

Alana Herrnson

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In 1929, as recorded and distributed in the Shakespeare Association Bulletin, a member of the Hathaway Shakespeare Club of Philadelphia explained that what drew her and her fellow club members together to discuss and analyze the works of the Bard each week was “the strong bond of fellowship due to our common literary interest and singleness of purpose” (4.4:119). Meanwhile, in her 2000 book, *Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth*, Camille Bacon-Smith detailed the purpose of ‘fandom’ communities, stating “the clubs in fandom are run by the fans, for the love of the source products— the books, comics, television and movie series around which fans rally— and for the community” (8). These two women are connected by more than just their “common literary interest” and their “love of the source products.” The structures upon which modern fan communities stand and the products they put forth are also found in the women’s Shakespeare clubs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, vice versa, the comradery of spirit and foundations of female community that women found in Shakespeare clubs continued into the female fan communities of television shows like *The X-Files* and *Star Trek*.

In this essay, I will explore the correlations between these two groups of women, using case studies pulled from newsletters such as the Shakespeare Association Bulletin and *Shakespeareana*, as well as internet fan sites and blogs. In doing so, I hope to show how women have and continue to utilize specific touchstones in popular culture as a means of forming community, especially in areas where they have been intellectually barred. Noting the importance of fandom as an intellectual and communal outlet for women today, it is clear that Shakespeare was as personal a source text for American women as any fandom source text is in the modern era of popular culture.

Due to the constraints of this essay in terms of length, I will begin by establishing a series of

definitions necessary in order to develop a working knowledge of fandom studies. It is also worth noting that Katherine Scheil, the primary expert on Women’s Shakespeare Clubs, published a book on the topic, *She Hath Been Reading*. Scheil views these clubs through the lens of a larger movement of women’s reading clubs. However, I intend to view the subject through the lens of fan studies, in which Shakespeare is not just the reason for women gathering, but rather the fundamental basis upon which these women’s relationships to themselves, each other, and the greater world developed.

Henry Jenkins, a leading expert in the field of fan studies, loosely defines fandom as “the social structures and cultural practices created by the most passionately engaged consumers of mass media properties” (“Fandom, Participatory Culture, and Web 2.0”). He further narrows his definition to that of participatory culture, a subset of fandom in which the members actively respond to and interact with their source text, developing a community with “relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices... one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another” (*Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture* 7). Fans employ the use of textual poaching, “appropriating media texts and rereading them in a fashion that turn them to their own individual, contingent, or contextual advantage,” in order to “individualise mass culture by interpreting texts beyond the dominant meaning which has been decided by the elite (academics, teachers, authors etc.) who monopolise the readings” (“*Star Trek Rerun, Reread, Rewritten*” 85; Levine). Common forms of textual poaching found in fandom include fanzines (amateur magazines created and distributed by fans which connects a fan community spread out across large distances), meta/headcanon (online or printed theories that fans post analyzing aspects of their chosen media, occasionally creating their own individualized canon concepts through transformative works such as fanfiction and fanart), cosplay (the practice of dressing up as, performing, and embodying a character from a source text) and activism (“fan-driven efforts to address civic or political issues

through engagement with and strategic deployment of popular culture content”) (Brough and Shresthova).

Keeping these parameters in mind, we can fit the primary creative, cultural, and communal products of women’s Shakespeare clubs into these same categories. Fandoms remain an influential and important aspect of modern American society, serving as micro-communities that allow their members to express their identities, connect with others, and participate in larger conversations on social justice through identification, communication, performance, and advocacy. How do women’s Shakespeare clubs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fulfill the academic parameters of a fan community? What connections can we find between these clubs and the women’s fandoms of the late twentieth century? In answering these questions, we can understand the emotional and intellectual motivations that drew these women to Shakespeare, and to each other, week after week to meet on front porches, in parlors, and in library halls to partake in “a common feeling of wholesome hero-worship” for the immortal Bard (Scheil 15).

In the late nineteenth century, the women’s club movement began gaining steam, particularly as an intellectual outlet for middle class women who were denied the opportunity to express themselves in the presence of their husbands. By the turn of the twentieth century, an estimated two million American women were members of women’s clubs and organizations. Similar to church groups or philanthropy clubs, reading clubs were intended both for intellectual discussion and socialization with the other members. Kate Flint argues that “what distinguishes the reading group from . . . other sites of shared discussion is the fact that its members continually, at some level, return to a text and to their encounter with it, both as individuals and as members of a community” (517). During this same period, over five hundred women’s clubs formed, all with a single purpose in mind: to passionately study and discuss the works of William Shakespeare.

There are numerous records of such foundings in local bulletins, national Shakespeare journals, and club minutes, in which the members set forth the reasoning behind the foundings of clubs with such a specific mission. The 1896 edition of the Michigan State Library Bulletin extolled the virtues of clubs

that focused on a single subject, rather than the more common, and more generic, reading clubs of the era: “The provision of continued study on one subject prevents the waste of thought and energy common in clubs which take up a topic one week only to drive out of mind the next by one totally different” (1: 1-2). In 1892, Kate Tupper Galpin began her women’s Shakespeare club in Los Angeles as “an unfailing remedy for breaking the crust of the mind in rust, and releasing latent powers of which the possessor had never dreamed” (Lyons and Wilson 158). In an 1896 edition of her newspaper column, *Women’s Kingdom*, Laura Eaton, a member of the Osage, Iowa Shakespearean Women’s Club, spoke specifically to the communal nature of such a club which uses Shakespeare not just to enlighten a single woman, but to bring empowerment to all women who partake in the study together. She wrote, “we all feel that instead of walking alone, that we had all the time been walking by our sisters. . . . I know for the first time the true mission of the Shakespearean Club. Not wholly self culture, but it is to enter into, brighten and beautify the lives of all women in this city, who have few pleasures and fewer opportunities” (“Mitchell County Press”).

The ‘pleasures’ and ‘opportunities’ that Shakespeare clubs provided women were possible because, as Lawrence Levine explains in his discussion on Shakespeare in *High Brow, Low Brow*, many nineteenth-century Americans viewed literature as part of the popular culture rather than as a purely elitist activity. Due to the social accessibility to the material that stemmed from this outlook, women had the freedom to interact with the text as they wished, forming emotional connections with the material itself, as well as with the community that formed around the material. It also created a more permeable membrane for entry that developed into the “relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement” that Jenkins put forth in his definition of fandom. However, as Mark Duffett explains in *Understanding Fandom*, a fan is not simply someone who has committed to exploring and understanding a particular set of works. In order to enter a fandom, one must continually return to the source media, committing to ‘regular, emotionally involved consumption of a given narrative or text,’ or, in other words, organize weekly meetings to contemplate the meanings of *King Lear* and *Hamlet* (Sandvoss 8). As fans begin to build up their emotional connection

to a source text, they tend to move toward and create structured communities, in person, online, or by mail, through which they can share their opinions, acquire more knowledge, and create new material. However, as these organizations form, organization-specific vernacular, rules, and hierarchies form with them. We can see examples of this phenomenon in the form a pseudo-spiritual structure, both in an X-Files mailing list which called itself the OBSSE (Order of the Blessed St. Scully the Enigmatic), as well as in the Marion Shakespeare Club of Marion, Iowa. The OBSSE structured itself according to the hierarchy of the Catholic church in order to emulate the religion of their “blessed one,” X-Files character Dana Scully. The members refer to each other as ‘sisters’ and the site moderator as the ‘abbess.’ The Marion Shakespeareans referred to their club meeting place, both literally and figuratively, as the “sanctuary.” Women who joined the “charmed circle” of the Shakespeare club, as Shakespearean K.D. Brenneman recounted in her article commemorating the club’s first homecoming, were referred to as “One of us,” the capitalization evoking a reverential theme evident in much of the club’s traditions, as with the OBSSE. The OBSSE site included a frequently asked questions page in which all OBSSE jargon is listed in detail, including various names for the community’s patron saint, such as “she whose eyebrows are like the vaults of Heaven” and “she whose blazers we are unfit to button” (Wakefield 133). The Marion Shakespeareans also viewed the object of their obsession as a spiritual entity. When a new member joined the club, Brenneman said that the “charm of the magician, Shakespeare, fell upon here and will always remain” (“Archived Materials”).

In addition to complicated and deeply set subcultural community structures and vocabulary, fans are distinguished from other cultural consumers by “their off-by-heart knowledge of their text and their expertise both about it and any associated material” (Duffett 19). Many Shakespeare clubs used knowledge of their source texts as both an intellectual and a social commodity, with women recorded as having quoted lines of Shakespeare to each other to prove their points. Some clubs instituted a hierarchical fan-superfan dichotomy, similar to those Bart Beaty wrote about in his exploration of Hollywood franchise fandoms, stating that “the insider/outsider relationship is formed around the ability to recognize obscure and often trivial relationships, many of which may never

be developed in a meaningful way” (322). While casual members may not be aware of their outsider status, members who have invested heavily in the fandom are hyper-aware of their insider status, maintaining it as the ultimate reward, one that is frequently referenced and used as leverage when fans may choose to enter the fan community. This relationship was particularly emphasized in the Kate Tupper Galpin Shakespeare Club of Los Angeles where members received “certificates” when they had completed study of twenty plays, a physical representation of knowledge dominance (Lyons and Wilson 158). However, the certificate program also fulfills the qualification set out by Jenkins of “some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices.” The experienced members of the clubs would work with new members to pass along their knowledge and help them achieve the goal of ‘super-fandom.’ The Marion Shakespeareans also participated in competitive displays of knowledge. Instead of saying “present” during meeting attendance, members would perform a chosen line from a Shakespearean text, only being marked as present if they quote the line correctly. Additionally, members would receive ‘points’ in a credit system for particularly compelling analyses and displays of knowledge, quantifying their knowledge for means of competition. In doing so, the greater ‘hive-mind’ of fandom knowledge grew and the level of discourse in the club increased dramatically, contributing to the shared knowledge space that Pierre Lévy referred to as the ‘cosmopedia,’ which makes available to the collective intellect all knowledge gathered by the group, accessible through the individual members’ personal knowledge base (214).

According to Jenkins and in conjunction with fandom’s need to provide “strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations,” members of fan communities thrive from epistemophilia, not simply pleasure in knowing but a pleasure in exchanging knowledge. The Marion Shakespeareans, for example, engaged in correspondence with wide networks of other Shakespeare clubs, sharing in new ideas and information, as well as providing thoughts of their own. In addition, they, like many other clubs across the country, paid dues to be members of the state and national federations of Shakespeare clubs. While records show that the Marion Shakespeareans were at first hesitant to join the larger network of clubs for

fear of loss of autonomy as an organization, the group later determined the power of the national connections forming in the federations were of greater importance to the growth of their chapter.

Part of the way members of Shakespeare clubs fulfilled their epistemophilia was through their own methods of textual poaching. These methods served to elevate the deification of Shakespeare that also emerged around this period. As any interaction with a source text that involves textual poaching inevitably leads to a challenge to the author's authority, the women engaging in conversations with the text were simultaneously acting reverentially toward "William Shakespeare, poet by the grace of God" and "evok[ing] the scorn of the class" when elements of the work did not fit with a club's desired interpretation (Long 45). In order to discuss and opine on the implications of new forms of Shakespeare interactions, clubs networked through a variety of journals, including the American Shakespeare Magazine, *Shakespeariana*, the Shakespeare Association Bulletin, and its later incarnation, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, which all printed news of Shakespeare clubs, shared members' personal essays, and encouraged clubs to continue sharing details of their chapters' endeavors in studying Shakespeare. One could see similarly titled publications in the Star Trek fanzine boom of the late 1960s. Women published fanzines under the names *Star Trek Lives!*, *Spockanalia*, and *The Enterprise Papers* for the purpose of using Star Trek to forge intellectual and emotional connections with other women and to share in their creative output. The far reaching national Shakespeare publications held similar goals, the editor of one such journal included a supplication at the end of one issue, writing "we are separated geographically by immense distances and only in exceptional instances can we meet face to face, but this is the place where we can talk to each other... Here Shakespeare will introduce us, each to all" (Scheil 17).

As with Star Trek's fanzines, the Shakespeare publications started out as entirely non-fiction information dispensers, providing details on what clubs had formed when and what activities they had recently planned. As members grew more comfortable with the format of the journals, they began using them as more than just mode of communication, but rather as modes of expression and creation. They first

tried their hands at producing analyses, or what we would refer to today as meta or headcanons, including such topics as 'Is Hamlet Insane?' 'Shakespeare's Use of Eleven', 'Was Oberon a Meddler?' 'Shakespeare's Manifestation of Abnormal Characters', 'Shakespeare's Historical Plays', 'Elemental Beings as Agents of Enchantment', and 'The History of Rome as it pertains to Coriolanus' (Croly). However, as with the Star Trek Zine-makers, Shakespeareans sought to engage more personally in the works that they had dedicated so much of their time to, with one woman, Miss L.B. Easton of the San Francisco Shakespeare Class, noting in an issue of *Shakespeariana* that "married ladies have so many claims upon their time, material, domestic, and social, that one has to handle them very gingerly, in order to obtain any results whatsoever" (3). Thus, in order for these women to get the most out of their fan community, they had to develop their own personal engagement with the text, which they could later share with the rest of their group as a form of short and long distance socializing. These personal engagements developed in the form of transformative works such as fanfiction, including parodies, spin-offs, and inspirations. For example, *The Seven Ages of Woman: Shakespeare Up to Date*, a companion piece to the original speech in *As You Like It*, dealt with the issues of misogyny and women's stereotyping through the use of parody (*Fortnightly Shakespeare* 1:2). Paula Smith, a Star Trek fan in the 1970's employed the same coping mechanism to deal with misogynistic writing on Star Trek: *The Original Series*. She published a fanfiction called *A Trekkie's Tale* in the second issue of the fanzine *Menagerie*, which parodied (and named) the 'Mary Sue' trope, by exaggerating its transgressive features. Another form of transformative work that there is record of Shakespeareans creating is the crossover AU fanfiction, in which characters from more than one work interact with each other in a story in an alternative universe to that from which the characters originally derive. The president of the *Fortnightly Shakespeare Club*, Anna Randall-Diehl, who encouraged her members to partake in the fanfiction phenomenon, created her own Shakespearean comedy, called *The Marriage of Faataff*. The story is "set in 'Castle Montague' in Hoboken, New Jersey, Falstaff 'becomes a happy Benedict,' accompanied by fellow characters Romeo, 'the gracious host of Castle Montague,' a tamed Petruchio and a Kate who did not go to the 'taming school,' and a Juliet who 'entertains Will Shakespeare's friends' and 'flirts

without a balcony” (Fortnightly Shakespeare 1:4). In addition to using revisionist writings as a creative outlet, women used them to address complex social issues by creating dialogue with the author. Randall-Diel, for example, recognizes the hints of strength that Shakespeare gives his female characters, and uses those hints to create a narrative of female empowerment, in which Petruchio is tamed and Kate is free and in which Juliet is no longer doomed to die for love. In these works, the writers are employing the standards of wish fulfillment used in Jenkins’ textual poaching to respond and relate to Shakespeare on a personal level. In writing transformative works, they facilitated their own empowerment, and in sharing them, they facilitated the empowerment of their communities.

In addition to fans empowering their own communities, a common theme found across fandom is ‘fan activism,’ in which fans, inspired by their source material, attempt to incite some form of social change. The motivation for such activism often includes identification with a character, theme, or experience within a work, mapping the fictional content onto real world concerns. Fan groups characterize their activist goals as a ‘mission’ that they must complete, either in deference to source of their identification or to the creator of the work. The women of The Shakespeare Club in Concord, for example, claimed that they had “‘met to perfection the requirements laid down by Portia: . . . for in companions/ That do converse and waste the time together,/ Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,/ There must be needs a like proportion/ Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit” (Leahy and Whetstone 9). Our friends at the OBSSE, as mentioned above, also attempted to model their behavior after their character role model, with one such ‘sister in St. Scully’ establishing the Scully-like attributes that members should strive to hold themselves to, writing “Scully is my Saint, I shall not prance/ She maketh me search for irrefutable/ She leadeth me to a logical explanation/ She restoreth my faith/ She leadeth me in the path of science for truth’s sake. . . .” (Wakefield 132). Fans then take this identification and apply it to issues that the community as a whole is passionate about.

The Marion Shakespeareans engaged directly with their texts in order to guide their social activism. Following the passage of the nineteenth amendment, the Marion women returned to Shakespeare to

contemplate the topic, “Has woman’s power been greatest when yielded through men?” (“Archived Materials”). Other club women found earlier inspirations for their own suffragist opinions, with the members of the Peoria, Illinois, Women’s Club (who performed Shakespeare annually) supporting suffrage as early as 1907. The Woodland, California Shakespeare Club read plays and also “wished to work actively for women’s suffrage, for the improvement of the lot of women and children, for town beautification, and for many other civic matters” (Scheil 10). The Pasadena, California Shakespeare Club “became a forum and launching-point for numerous ‘progressive’ ideas of the new century, including public kindergarten, public restrooms, Juvenile Court and the Pasadena Humane Society... initiated by Shakespeare Club volunteers” (Scheil 10). Many such women studied the texts to find example of strong female characters who displayed agency that could be paralleled with the fight for the vote. Favorites cited by the Marion Shakespeareans included Juliet, Ophelia, Imogen, Portia, Helena, and Lady Macbeth. Club members treated characters “as if they were real personages whose virtues were to be emulated, or their weaknesses decried” (Scheil 52).

While these characters span a broad spectrum in terms of strength and agency, the ladies of the club read deeply into each one, finding textual evidence that provided personal empowerment for the women who identified with them. Similarly, modern fan run activist organizations, such as the Harry Potter Alliance or Firefly fans’ ‘Can’t Stop the Signal’, mobilize civic participation by relating social movements to the experiences of the source text, using iconic imagery and thematic relevance to galvanize the base. Another form of civic engagement between the two groups is charity performance. The Fortnightly Shakespeare Club, for example, participated in a charity performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* “for the benefit of the Home for Blind Women” on Long Island (1:5). In a similar act of performance charity, cosplayers who dress up as fictional characters at the base of their fandoms, often raise money, awareness, or, in many cases, smiles, by donning the persona and performing as their characters.

Considering all that these women have done in Shakespeare’s name, all of the time, energy, and passion that they poured into an intense immersion

of their souls in his works, how can we understand Shakespeare's role in the larger conversation of fandom in America? Scholar Mark Duffett describes fandom's contributions as "the ways it can heighten our sense of excitement, prompt our self-reflexivity, encourage us to discuss shared values and ethics, and supply us with a significant source of meaning that extends into our daily lives" (18). As the object of fandom, Shakespeare seeped into his fans' minds, empowering the community in their understanding of his works, and becoming the whetstone upon which their ideas and ideals were sharpened. Fandom empowers women specifically through the deeply set sense of ownership that comes hand in hand with engaging in conversations with the text. At a point in history when American women's value was being challenged, the fact that Shakespeare provided women with sources of inspiration and a sense of belonging speaks to Shakespeare's legacy as a cultural touchstone which rooted itself throughout American history. By viewing Shakespeare through the lens of fandom, we can see how he and his works have permeated the American psyche. One quick search of Tumblr will show countless ways fandoms have supported its members and called for change in their names. One quick search of Archive Of Our Own will reveal countless fanfictions, metas, and headcanons through which members of a fan community interact with and respond to their source texts. Searches across the thousands of Shakespeare club archives spread across this country in attics, basements, and libraries will garner similar results. There is strength and power in loving something, and greater strength and greater power in coming together to create that love. Through Shakespeare, American women found community and voice, and through American women, Shakespeare retained a cultural relevance within America, not as an object of sophistication, or even an object of entertainment, but as an object of internal identification and community engagement.

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Lochner v. New York

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The Gilded Age in America was the best of times, it was the worst of times—truly a tale of two cities. One bore the fruits and architectural wonders of the industrial revolution, with sprouting skyscrapers and the elite air of America's first billionaires. The other bore much different fruits: those of industrialization—squalor, urban sprawl, and abhorrent labor conditions justified by liberty of contract. Notions of freedom and equality so hard-fought in the preceding decades and established by the 14th amendment were now out of date, manipulated to encompass antiquated definitions of economic autonomy and succumbing to the greed of the wealthy industrial class and its permeating ideals of Social Darwinism. Politics were not immune to the influence of America's new bourgeoisie class, often coalescing to form earmark legislation beneficial only to a handful of formidable businessmen and their puppet politicians. Given the political and economic environments, liberty of contract's landmark ruling was based on little to no legitimate constitutional basis. Therefore, the ruling in *Lochner v. New York* arose in congruence with a financially guided Supreme Court that misconstrued the aim of the 14th amendment. The justices' involvement with political machines and their far-reaching interpretation of the "due process" clause consequently relegated wage laborers as the new American slave power.

Before delving into the logic and circumstances surrounding *Lochner v. New York* (1905), it is important to note that the Supreme Court decision handed down in this case and the ensuing *Lochner* era of laissez-faire economics took place in a period of rising discontent from labor. Unions like the American Federation of Labor and the Knights of Labor were gaining momentum in the republic with their rhetoric specifically aimed at wage laborers, promising the abolition of the wage system (Foner, 125). Their presence in the American political landscape and their call for labor reform were, therefore, not out of the ordinary in this era characterized by hands-off government policies. Laws like the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, which prevented monopolies, undoubtedly meddled in the economy (May, np). It comes as no surprise that other policies aimed at

regulating further economic actions would be passed, with New York's infamous Bakeshop Act being one of these. A joint effort by Henry Weissman of the AFL and journalist Edward Marshall, the Bakeshop Act of 1895 limited the toil of bakers to ten hours per day and 60 hours per week. As expected, this act drew support from rising progressives like Reverend William S. Rainsford and the Society for Ethical Culture's founder Felix Adler. Even business magnates backed the reform and agreed that it would "preserve the existing social order" and stymie agitation in the working class (Kens, 1990, 55). After unanimously passing the New York State Legislature, the Bakeshop Act seemingly had full support from both the public and politicians. However, disgruntlement loomed when baker John Lochner of Utica, New York was accused of violating the 60 hours provision. After making its way through the appeal process to the Supreme Court, Justice Rufus Peckham delivered the majority opinion overturning Lochner's charges. Peckham argued that although states have policing powers to regulate the health, safety, and morals of citizens under the Tenth Amendment, baking did not constitute a public health problem (Kens, 2005, np). Instead, the Bakeshop Act "necessarily interfered with the right of contract between the employer and the employee", violating liberty of contract (Kens, 2005, np). This conclusion, although not fully supported by all justices, developed from the previously alluded moral and intellectual misconstructions arising from the justices' involvement with political machines and other uninformed decision-making.

Along with corporate tycoons who reveled in gluttony from their exponentially-expanding wealth, politicians themselves had reason to celebrate in the explosion of inequality and class divide in America. Steamrolling legislation through state legislators and even Congress in return for financial assistance became a profitable endeavor for politicians with ties to business moguls. Thus, the political machines were born and infiltrated the many crevices of industrial American government (Kens, 1990, 30). Some even defied gravity while slithering their way to the top; such was the case of the Supreme Court. Justice Rufus Peckham, deliverer of the majority opinion, had been sullied by business interests since his days as a novice lawyer (Kens, 2005, np). In his private practice in Albany, NY, Peckham represented mostly corporate clients, developing deep professional ties with who he

represented. Justice Melville Fuller—who assented in the majority opinion—was also criticized during his Senate confirmation hearing for his deeply embedded relationships to big corporations (“Melville W. Fuller”, np). This is a problem because their sympathies towards their former clients and professional links had enormous clout in swaying them to favor rulings that benefited the corporations. *Lochner v. New York*’s ruling on the right to labor freely is an exemplar of this in such a manner that allowing for unlimited hours profited the employers the most because it supposedly increased capital (Kens, 1990, 56). These ties to business magnates also inevitably linked them to the political machines controlling Washington and beyond. Peckham’s nomination to the highest court was secured only by the manipulation of the Democratic Party machine of Tammany Hall and by the push to veto the two nominations before Peckham. (Kens, 2005, np). Justice Joseph McKenna’s nomination was also only assured through the puppetry of Boss Platt’s Republican Party machine (“Joseph McKenna”, np). Associations with the business industrialists of the Gilded Age therefore clouded the justices’ abilities to objectively come to an agreement regarding the validity of the Bakeshop Act that would improve conditions for the people, instead relying on their special interests. This morally unjust reasoning coupled with a misconstruction of the 14th amendment were fertile grounds for the blowing defeat to labor that *Lochner v. New York* perpetuated.

The 14th amendment states that “No State shall... abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens... without due process of law” (U.S. Const. amen. XIV, sec. 1). Historically, this amendment in the Constitution was designed to grant all persons born in the United States citizenship, effectively voiding Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution and granting all formerly enslaved African-Americans with equal rights. Nevertheless, a mere two years after its ratification, its original meaning and effect were twisted to fit the narrative of business elites. In the Slaughterhouse Cases of 1870 that argued against the unification of all of Louisiana’s slaughterhouses, lawyer John A. Campbell warped the meaning of “privileges or immunities” in the 14th amendment to encompass the “right to labor freely” in any pursuit (Benedict, np). Although the Slaughterhouse Cases were dismissed on the grounds of Louisiana’s policing powers, the novel interpretation of the 14th amendment presented by

Campbell to the Supreme Court was forever planted in the minds of employers seeking a legal justification for their laborers’ slave-like toil in the workplace. This misconceived version of the 14th amendment was subsequently evoked in later hearings on labor. Social Darwinism and the faith entrusted in the “invisible hand” of economics accompanied this misinterpretation of the 14th amendment to create a legal protection of liberty of contract and the belief that it is within an American’s unalienable rights “to labor as much or as little as he chooses” (Foner, 120) under his/her privileges or immunities. Liberty of Contract henceforth first found its legal justification in *Allegeyer v. Louisiana* (1897) when the Supreme Court ruled that a Louisiana provision requiring all corporations to pay fees to the state was unconstitutional for depriving a person of the right to make contracts. Therefore, the “liberty of contract” principle educed as a foundation for laissez-faire government and the *Lochner v. New York* decision stemmed from a convolution of a simple phrase—broadly and vaguely worded in order to assure that no other human being is made a second-class citizen—instead exploited to fatten the wallets of business magnates.

The decision by the Supreme Court in *Allegeyer v. Louisiana* (1897) and its subsequent advocacy for liberty of contract was an overreach because the Court was symbolically overstepping its boundaries as a body of judicial review and stepping into the judicial activism that so characterized the *Lochner* era (Bernstein, np). Substantive Due Process, born out of the due process clause in the 14th amendment, was used by the Court to assume the power to examine the content of legislation and the means to enforce it—a dramatic shift from its power to find laws constitutional or not (Hoffer, np). Aside from overstepping its powers as a governmental body and again misinterpreting the 14th amendment, the Supreme Court furthermore ignored the use of history as its basis for holdings (Chemerinsky, 902). It is historically accurate to claim that the 14th amendment was meant to provide African-Americans citizenship. Guaranteeing former slaves rights was its aim, as it came along with the 13th and 15th amendments and was a direct result of the Civil War. Naively ignoring Court precedent that emphasizes the use of history as a basis for rulings proves that the ruling in *Lochner v. New York* was recklessly composed without regard to the actual meaning of the 14th amendment.

Additionally, considering the Court's increasing reliance on "liberty of contract", the Supreme Court never bothered to define what it constituted as a contract. Legal definitions delineate a contract as a mutual assent to a valid offer and acceptance (Kim, np). This being the case, simply bringing a dispute to court is a display of disagreement and voids any notion of a contract. Justice Day best put these fallacies in perspective in the *Lochner v. New York* dissent saying, "Nothing is better settled by the repeated decisions of this court than that the right of contract is not absolute and unyielding" (Bair, 5).

As disheartening as *Lochner v. New York* and the ensuing *Lochner* era were for the proletariat quite literally left in the dust by industrialization, the rise of labor unions and progressive influence not long after advanced the idea that "social and moral considerations" were to be of paramount importance when determining wages (Foner, 144). Populists, the AFL, the American Economic Association and countless others successfully allied to bring about the rise of the Progressive State. Reforms and regulations in the form of the Clayton Act of 1914 or the Federal Reserve Board were just some of the first manifestations of the burgeoning moral agent that was the federal government. Liberty of Contract was to be defeated in 1908 by the ruling of *Muller v. Oregon*, asserting that interminable hours at work were detrimental to one's health, therefore constituting a public health problem, allowing states to regulate such toil. Justice Louis D. Brandeis would argue this case, successfully ensuring that humane laboring conditions be a principle of freedom, because, as he said, "If we desire respect for the law, we must first make the law respectable."

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Irving Penn: *Preserving the Myth of the American Woman*

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Marlene Dietrich blew into Irving Penn's Fifth Avenue studio to have her portrait taken for a 1948 issue of *Vogue*. "The first thing she said was 'you have to put the light there!' I said, 'Now, look: in this experience you be Dietrich and I'll be the photographer.' And, boy, she was boiled, but she stayed with it" (Fielden). To Penn's bewilderment, Dietrich ultimately was unhappy with the portrait and the next time she saw him she, "turned on her heel" and walked the other way (Fielden). Dietrich was a new brand of American celebrity. She had made a name for herself by bending the rules of gender representation, often wearing men's clothing in sexually provocative settings (Chauncey). To "be Dietrich" is for Marlene to control her self-presentation and expression. To forgo her agency is for her to hand her identity to its capturer. In his portrait of Marlene Dietrich, Irving Penn controls Dietrich's presentation thereby manipulating her identity and imposing an unwarranted sense of shame onto her body forcing her to conform to the myth of the midcentury American woman.



Portrait of Marlene Dietrich by Irving Penn, 1948

As a photographer for *Vogue*, Penn was a producer of American cultural standards. His images circulated widely throughout the country in a magazine that purports to establish the highest standards of female beauty in fashion. Penn endeavored to reveal the true "spirit" of his subjects in the world of high fashion and celebrity. He built strong relationships with his subjects who generally granted them a glimpse into their psychology (Rosenheim and Hamborg). However, Penn's shots were never candid and as such he was constantly manipulating how that true spirit of his subject was conveyed. Even if he was not claiming to present an idealized female he certainly depicted a particularly feminine representation of his subjects. Penn presented a mythic impression of truth that played into and established the ethos of American culture even if the myth did not truly get to the heart of the sitter.

Penn rendered concepts of femininity in his subjects in strikingly beautiful and soft images. For example, his 1951 portrait of Audrey Hepburn has a charming girlish quality to it.



Portrait of Audrey Hepburn by Irving Penn, 1951

Hepburn's lips are strongly defined with lipstick, she wears a form-fitting sweater and large earrings, and she smiles brightly while making direct eye contact with the viewer. The viewer and Penn have direct access to Hepburn whose face is beaming at the prospect of their attention. Dietrich, in contrast, just barely looks

towards the camera, refusing to make eye contact with the viewer. Penn begs Dietrich to reveal her feminine qualities and she almost acquiesces to his pleading, but not quite. She shows her made up face but refuses to turn her body towards the camera, obscuring any feminine contours.

In his book, *Hollywood Goes to High School*, Robert Bulman explores the American myths that cultural producers use to simplify national culture. He explains that, “one way in which we collectively manage to cope with the complexity and confusion of social life is to package reality and to represent it as fiction—to tell stories about our social world that make it more comprehensible” (Robert 4). As an arbiter of cultural norms, Penn authors these simplifying cultural myths, especially as they pertain to women and femininity. His photos for *Vogue* teach the American public what a woman should look like and how she should behave. His images serve as models of ideal feminine behavior. Dietrich complicates this narrative of feminine behavior and Penn effectively rewrites her self-presentation in order to maintain the myth.

One of the myths perpetuated by Penn is the same myth that Bulman recognizes in contemporary American film: men are allowed to be multifaceted with complex identities while a woman’s identity must be static and position themselves in relation to the desires of men (Robert 95). By asking Dietrich to reveal her feminine qualities, Penn actively constructs the myth of the American woman as a typically feminine and welcoming presence. Dietrich actively challenged this notion of femininity during her career in pre-code films like *Morocco* (1930) where she wore men’s clothing and flaunted her sexuality. Dietrich’s refusal to conform to traditional gender roles jeopardized the pervasive conception of the twentieth century woman. By virtue of his employment at *Vogue*, Penn was invested in the preservation of this mythical American femininity and so, consciously or not, uses his photography to rebuke Dietrich’s behavior and make it clear to the American public that there are consequences to transgressing the myth. In so doing, Penn tries to reconstruct Dietrich’s femininity to make her better conform to the script of America’s well-behaved women.

Dietrich was unhappy with Penn’s attempt to

curate her presentation. Even Penn admits that the shoot was uncomfortable for Dietrich and she “was boiled the whole time.” She wanted to control how the world would view her and Penn refused to grant her that autonomy. Her dissatisfaction with the situation is written on her face. She avoids the gaze of the viewer, looking just above the eye of the camera. The distant glance coupled with the scowl on her lips give the impression that Dietrich is both angry and on the verge of tears. The viewer is intruding. Penn’s shining light illuminates the only recognizably feminine element of her presentation: her face. This is not the warm girlish face of Hepburn; this is the expression of someone who feels violated.

Penn demonstrates the consequences of gender-non-conformity in the mid twentieth century. To behave like Dietrich is to become vulnerable to the immense discomfort evident in her expression. It is easy to imagine a happier rendition of this photograph. Dietrich would be facing the viewer, inviting them into her world and psyche. Instead, Penn hides Dietrich’s body in shame, turning her away from the camera, hunched over in a shapeless black mass. Her face emerges from the shadows as if she turned around, startled by the sound of the viewer walking into the room. Her expression is almost accusatory. This is one of few, possibly even the only, portrait Penn took of a woman from behind. All of his other portraits are either three quarter or full frontal views. By posing Dietrich with her back towards the viewer Penn effectively distances the viewer and subject, isolating her in the black mound of her androgynous black clothing and creating an overwhelming sense that the viewer is unwelcome in the space of the image.

Penn even further isolates Dietrich from the viewer in the composition by severing the connection between the subject and viewer with the marble patterned stage on which Dietrich is seated. Penn set the camera’s field of clear focus to the edge of the stage, capturing Dietrich’s face in sharp clarity while casting the rest of her body into an unfocused haze of blurred grey and black. The blurred surface of the stage on which Dietrich is perched dissolves into abstraction as it extends towards the viewer. By the time it reaches the photograph’s bottom edge the stage is completely blurred and out of focus. Penn uses an aperture with such a shallow depth of field that everything but Dietrich’s face is out of focus. Penn makes it impossible

for the viewer to pass into the world of the image without traversing a pool of abstract foreground. This is markedly distinct from Penn's portrait of Audrey Hepburn in which he uses a deep depth of field, creating sharp focus on every detail of her body and the background. The viewer can imagine stepping right up to Hepburn and feeling the woven texture of her sweater. In this way Hepburn is a "real" woman who could exist in the world of the viewer, while Dietrich is relegated to the mysterious world beyond the stage. Hepburn is approachable, what an American girl should strive to be, while Dietrich is isolated and broken. From her imaginary world Dietrich looks back to the viewer in anger over what could have been if only she had presented herself like Audrey; Penn implies she could have been the hero of the dominant American female myth but instead is the villain. Penn has effectively written her out of the narrative of American femininity and used her as a cautionary tale to women everywhere: beware of the consequences of nonconformity.

When viewed in the context of Penn's other portraits of female celebrities, it becomes clear why Dietrich was upset with the way she was represented. Long before Butler penned her now famous *Gender Trouble*, Dietrich understood that in the American imagination to be a woman was to act a certain way and present oneself as a woman to the world. Much of her career was spent shifting the conception of the American woman to something a bit more masculine. Her films created new myths of what a woman could be, slowly supplanting those that came before her. The rewriting of myth was initially thwarted by the 1934 film codes that censored her transgressive representations of female behavior. Now, with Penn, she once again had an opportunity to show herself to the world in a way that suited her, and again a man interested in preserving a typical conception of the American woman stopped her. Penn's representation of Dietrich is not only an act of violence against her, but is also a tool he uses to teach American women how to behave. Penn berates the American public with flattened presentations of well-behaved women for the public to emulate. The disappointment Dietrich felt is written on her face and captured in her actions. Now we can only wonder what we would see if Marlene was able to set her own photographic lighting and present herself to the world and teach the American public other ways to be a woman.

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Fantasy Football: Is It All Touchdowns and Victories?

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Introduction

Fantasy sports is an interactive, team-management activity played by millions all over the world. One of the most well-known fantasy sports there is to play is fantasy football. Currently played by millions of people each year by all age groups, fantasy football provides an opportunity for friends, families, and coworkers to make their football Sundays more interesting. The scoring system is based on statistics accumulated by athletes of real-life professional sport organizations. The end of August marks the start of the fantasy football season. After league members get together to draft their respective teams, participants set their rosters for the week and watch the week's NFL games as their fantasy team accrues points. Fantasy football is a bonding activity for friends. Thus, fantasy football has psychological and social implications that are worth exploring. The social implications have the ability to affect the people who play together in their respective leagues, which at times is cut-throat and highly competitive.

The studies conducted on fantasy football have led to interesting findings. For the people who create their fantasy teams, it is a fun game to play with friends and it makes football Sunday a little more exciting, but research has concluded there are many unforeseen consequences when joining a league. An example of an unintended consequence would be a breakdown of relationships between fantasy league members (Schlimm 2015). Another consequence is the impact fantasy sports can have on team fandom (Ruihley & Hardin 2011). Although on its face, having a fantasy football team is an exciting hobby, being involved in a league can lead to many unforeseen consequences for participants.

We engaged fantasy players by sitting with them on Sunday afternoons to observe their reactions to football games and watched how they interacted with each other. Along with observing participants as they watched football, we also asked participants

questions during the viewing session. Our paper starts with an overview of previous literature written about the topic. We will then discuss our methodology of observing fantasy league members and non-fantasy league members as they watch professional football games. Our findings section shows interesting results from our observations that may make people reconsider joining a fantasy league. We discuss our findings in relation to previous studies pertaining to fantasy sports and draw connections between what the researchers studied and what our results found. Finally, we conclude with making recommendations and general observations about this activity and its implications for friendships.

Literature Review

Commitment to Socialization

Combining social media and gaming, fantasy football is one of the biggest sports gaming markets. Ruihley and Hardin (2011) explained how socialization is one of the major reasons for people to join leagues. Ruihley and Hardin (2011) collected data from 322 fantasy sports users (FSUs) in a questionnaire format using quantitative-scale items and qualitative open-ended questions. They used message boards as a way to observe the purpose of joining a league. Their findings demonstrated that socialization plays a huge role in participating in a fantasy league. It also showed the commitment to socialization by how often players in a league responded to message board posts. They found that 11.8% of FSUs in the study used a message board daily, and 20.2% used it at least once a week.

Unintended Consequences

Both Ruihley & Hardin (2011) and Lee et al. (2013) used message boards as a way of looking at commitment to socialization in fantasy leagues. Whereas they looked at the reasons and benefits for joining leagues, Schlimm (2015) researched the unanticipated consequences of joining a league, and wrestled with the question of whether or not playing in a league is worth a person's time. Schlimm (2015) discussed how fantasy football is a great escape from the pressures of the real world and how it is a way to meet new people with similar interests. However, fantasy football is not always touchdowns and victories. Schlimm (2015) warned about how fantasy football can be addictive and become too involved in someone's life. Fantasy players need to keep in mind the baggage that can pile up when the game becomes

larger than the friendships that it creates.

Effects on Team Fandom

Another unintended consequence of joining a fantasy league is the impact on team loyalty. Lee, Ruihley, Brown, and Billings (2013) found that, participants in a fantasy league showed higher team loyalty and higher fandom in general, ... where fandom in the NFL is higher than team identification (np.). They also found that "... 41% of fantasy football participants preferred a win by their fantasy team instead of their favorite team" (Lee et al., 2013, np). Not only do people who participate in fantasy leagues increase their interest in their favorite team, but there is also a much higher increase in the viewing and enjoyment of the NFL as a whole.

While all of these studies demonstrated the social aspects of a fantasy league, they are all done online by observing message boards and social forums. This encouraged our group to observe fantasy league members in real time in order to get raw reactions to games, filling the gap left by prior research. Researching people in real time allowed us to record genuine responses to events going on while our study groups watched football.

Methodology

Our research question is, "Does participating in a fantasy football league have a negative impact on the friendships of the participants?" Throughout the month of October 2017, our group got together on Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays (days that the National Football League has games) to host game days at our house. In order to get people to come to our sessions we incentivized them to come and get free pizza while watching the games. We observed two groups: one 12-member Fantasy Football League, and a group of 10 individuals who are not participating in a fantasy league currently. Both groups were made up of college-aged males (ages 18-22) who love the sport of football. We had two separate sessions of football screenings whereby we observed only the fantasy league members in one session and the non-fantasy league members in the other. We used phones and computers to take notes in the back of the room and we analyzed people's patterns of behavior and conversations.

Findings

The location that held our football game screenings was in the Club Room of our fraternity house (Phi Gamma Delta). The room is a rectangle layout, that when cleared can hold around 100 people. We set up the sofas in the room in a U-shaped, stadium style seating (see Figure 1). The red leather couches provided adequate comfort for those who decided to attend our sessions. Throughout the games, the poignant aroma of Papa John's plain and pepperoni pizzas were predominant everywhere the room. People entered the room talking about the day's games and what their projections were. Each participant wore mostly causal clothing that ranged from a t-shirt and shorts, to sweatpants and a sweatshirt. A handful of participants wore football jerseys of their favorite team or a jersey of a player they liked. Once people decided to take their seats, new smells illuminated the room: stale beer and cheap cologne. The room's light was turned off once the games began, so that the only light in the room was coming from the projector and peoples cell phones. The 100-inch projector screen took up most of the wall, which allowed participants to have a clear view of the multiple games that were being displayed at once using "NFL Redzone" (see Figure 2). "NFL Redzone" is a television service that provides its watchers with coverage of live football games where a team playing is within 20 yards of a touchdown. This allowed watchers to see all the teams that were about to score at one moment. This added excitement into the atmosphere of our sessions because at all times, participants were watching players score touchdowns or highlights of big plays, which had major implications on the outcome of their fantasy matchup.



Figure 1: This is the screening room in our fraternity's club room.



Figure 2: The size of the projector is 100 inches.

Cell Phone Usage

When comparing the two groups together, there were a considerable amount of differences and patterns that were noticeable. One of the more interesting findings was that participants in the fantasy league were more likely to use their phones during the games compared to those who were not in a fantasy league, despite the large display accompanied by sound from a top-of-the-line speaker system. However, the league members seemed to be more distracted by the screens of their cell phones. We were curious as to why this was, so it prompted us to ask a couple of questions to the fantasy league members about their phone usage. Their responses centered around them being able to see updates from other games and to check on their own fantasy team's scores.

Patterns in Behavior

Patterns in behaviors also differed between groups. Some incidents occurred where fantasy league members were so upset with either a play in a game or another league member that they left their comfortable seating to sit farther away. They were so mad that they decided to sit somewhere less comfortable (i.e. on the floor, standing to the side of the room, etc.) in order to avoid interactions with each other. At times, members in fantasy leagues were so enthralled by what was going on during the games that they forgot they had pizza right in front of them. It wasn't until the commercials that people realized they still had food left to eat. Members of leagues were also more inclined to ridicule each other for saying something inaccurate or something that went against the general consensus. There was a mentality of "I know more than you because my team is winning." Members who were not in a fantasy league showed

more signs of inclusion compared to the other group. After players in the NFL made electrifying plays, people not in a league gave each other high fives and chest-bumped each other. During commercials when people would get up to use the restroom or refill their drink, non-fantasy league members asked others if they needed anything, such as food or something to drink. Not once during our sessions with fantasy league members did anyone ask each other if they needed anything.

Patterns in Conversation

There were also noticeable patterns in conversations between league members and non-league members. Jack Brusco, a member of the fantasy league, was arguing with his fellow league member about the outcome of their fantasy game. He said, "Bro, I'm projected to beat you by 40 points. There's no way you're winning!" Right from the start of the session, there was already a feeling of tension rising between participants. Not only was there a tense atmosphere, but fantasy league members were looking at players in the NFL not as athletes but as point-collectors. "Another point right there, boys," said league member Michael Ertel. Him and other participants clearly showed no respect for the sport and only cared about his fantasy team accruing points.

Non-fantasy participants had very different patterns in their conversations. Most conversations tended to be light-hearted and didn't focus on anything controversial. Conversations were about what people did over the weekend or what they planned to do the upcoming week. Furthermore, non-fantasy members were more invested in which team won a single game and didn't worry about individual players' performances. This shows that people not in a fantasy league had more of an appreciation for the players and the sport overall.

Discussion

Through our research, we found that most people joined the league in order to fulfill their need to socialize with friends. Participants joined the league because their friends joined or because they placed some amount of monetary bet. Members communicated almost daily with each other either through phone calls, group message chats, or by word of mouth. Although our research specifically focuses on the unintended consequences of joining a league,

our findings correlate to Ruiley & Hardin's (2011) research which found that people join fantasy sport leagues in order to commit to socialization. They researched fantasy sport participants' commitment to socialization through how often participants responded to a message board post. Their results showed the amount of times a fantasy sports user responded to message board post in order to socialize with their fellow league members.

During our research, we found that the atmosphere surrounding the participants in a fantasy league was intense. We focused on looking for specific unexpected consequences of joining a league that Schlimm (2015) may have overlooked. Specific unintended consequences we found were people's patterns in behavior and their patterns in conversations. Schlimm (2015) found that in certain situations, the game becomes larger than the friendships. Schlimm (2015) carried out this research by tracking online fantasy emails and message boards. Our group took a different approach by studying these unintended consequences in person. For example, patterns of conversations were more hostile between members of a fantasy league compared to those who are not in one. Where Schlimm (2015) focuses on the overall unanticipated consequences, we take it a step further by focusing on specific consequences that Schlimm unobserved.

Throughout our research, we encountered different attitudes from our participants about how they felt about football players on their fantasy football teams compared to their favorite teams. Players pick their fantasy team based on statistics that the real football player accumulated over previous years. They don't pick their fantasy team based on personal preference for their favorite team. They choose players that have the best overall statistics and players who are most likely to get them the most points. Participants in fantasy leagues frequently would choose to not watch "their team", but rather the various other games going on that day in order to check up on the players on their fantasy teams. Whereas, people who were not in a fantasy league only had one concern, if their favorite team was winning. Lee, Ruiley, Brown, and Billings (2013) found that fantasy league participants showed a high increase in the fandom of football. They found these same people often wanted their fantasy team to win more frequently than their favorite NFL team,

concluding that the increase in fandom was more towards the NFL and lowered loyalty to one's favorite team. Moreover, fantasy players in our research seemed to be more knowledgeable about what was going on in the NFL, as opposed to non-fantasy players who mostly had knowledge about their favorite team. Although Lee et. al (2013) goes more into depth about the impact of fandom while participating in a fantasy league, we were also able to see some of the changes. Knowing that people joined a league as part of fulfilling their need for socialization allowed us to gear questions to participants more effectively during the game. Furthermore, we found that Schlimm's (2015) research on the unintended consequences allowed us to look for specific consequences that resulted from league members joining our league. Additionally, our findings indicate that participating in a fantasy league has its drawbacks and can negatively impact the relationship of friends in the league.

This study demonstrates the importance of considering the potential consequences and benefits of joining a fantasy football league before deciding to participate. Everyone likes to believe that friends are there to comfort and support each other. However, based on observations and relevant literature, there are unintended consequences of joining a league. These consequences might reveal underlying personalities about individuals which others failed to recognize. These findings are noteworthy because the knowledge of the adverse consequences a league may impose on a friendship may serve as a deterrent from participation. Therefore, these consequences may impact participation in fantasy football leagues, as well as the perception of what these leagues entail.

Conclusion

Fantasy Football has accumulated millions in revenue for websites that host fantasy sports. This time-consuming activity has shaped the way participants think and act toward each other. Through ethnographic observations our group was able to sit in with fantasy football participants from an all-male league. We compared their patterns of behavior and patterns in conversation to a group of males who all were not part of a fantasy football league. Overall, we found that there was a high degree of animosity and competitiveness among members of the fantasy league compared to those who were not part of a league. The tense atmosphere was felt by many who

were in a league, compared to the uncommitted and open-minded atmosphere of those who were not part of a league. Members, who were part of the league, on average interacted with their mobile devices more during games in order to keep track of other games' scores and to see highlights of the players that were playing in their fantasy matchups. Observing our study groups, produced interesting findings. However, our research was not without any drawbacks or limitations. Observing an all-male league skewed our data and observations. Unfortunately, we were not able to find an all-women's league or a mix-gender league that was willing to allow our group to study them. Our findings could have been different if we also observed women and their patterns in behaviors and conversations. Furthermore, we were not able to host a significant amount of game days for our participants because of the time allotted for visiting our research site and because of the limited amount of NFL games being played in the month of October. Future researchers can take our research a step further by hosting more game days for their study's participants. For example, observing a fantasy league from the start of the professional football season to the end of the season would probably give researchers more data overall. This would allow researchers to have more observations, thus allowing them to discover more astute and detailed findings about their participants. Close friends, family, and coworkers all over the world participate in this online experience. It is important to realize the unexpected consequences that may result from joining a fantasy league. For some, our findings may be the determining factor of whether or not someone joins a league; it can ruin friendships, cause bitter fighting to erupt, and overall ruin an experience as a fantasy football player and football sport lover.

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The Visual Production of Chinese Masculinity in Political Cartoons, Photography, and Laundry

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Introduction

The act of oppressing a group to improve the economic, social, mental, and racial standing of another has remained a constant within United States society. The ways historians and individuals have studied this systematic discrimination, however, have changed and will most likely continue to evolve as new evidence and theories are introduced. In considering today's events and the political tone used to define "us," versus "them," it is relevant to focus on this pattern of fear associated with immigrants or "foreigners." As a group that experienced some of the first xenophobic legislation and founding ideas for immigrant exclusion, the Chinese in North America provide an important narrative and contribution to the overall study of American exclusion. Their entrance into the United States and what it entailed for the racial order of society was unprecedented. In an attempt to study the Chinese American experience it proved to be a unique challenge because of the language barrier that rendered verbal primary accounts more obscure. The growing body of literature in material and gender studies has provided insightful avenues, however, for identifying the varying methods by which Chinese immigrants were subordinated, particularly in contradictory ways.

The subject of masculinity is especially appropriate for this study because the majority of Chinese immigrants traveling to the United States in the nineteenth and early twentieth century were male. Yet even as these Chinese men landed and worked within the patriarchal society of the U.S. they did not necessarily attain the privileges of masculinity assigned by American culture. Their identity as men in conflation with their Asian identity offered an intersectional approach to studying race and gender through their experiences. Though Chinese men saw themselves as men, their definition of masculinity did not fit within the "hegemonic masculinity," or dominant version of masculinity, as clarified by Bryn

Williams, of United States society (53). Male Chinese immigrants were defined as not masculine under the United States' white Western concept, and this in turn played an effective role as Chinese men were positioned within the racial hierarchy of society. The racial category of the Chinese presented a problem. They did not fall under the social conception of "black," but also could not be of equal standing as "white" (Daniels 34; Williams 54). Not being white, Chinese were classified as inferior, and one tactic used to substantiate this claim was through attacking their masculinity. This concept in itself was echoed, as later immigrants would come to face similar attacks upon their masculinity. The presumption that race was directly connected to an individual's "inherent" or lack of masculinity was reinforced through visually based constructs. The racialization of masculinity was influential in the subordination of the Chinese male immigrant population, and was achieved through depictions of Chinese "otherness" in political cartoons, photographic manipulation, and the visibility of Chinese men in occupations otherwise defined as "women's work."

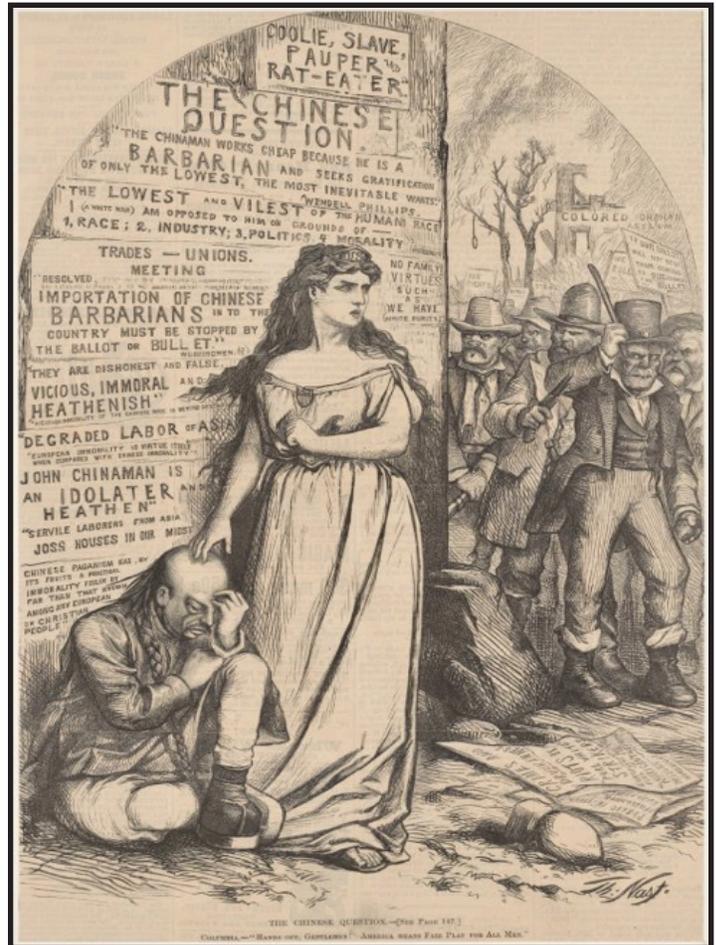
Chinese immigrants arrived in North America for diverse reasons. Known as "Golden Mountain," the United States promised a new life for many Chinese and solutions to their economic uncertainty in China. The Gold Rush of 1849 was a powerful incentive for many Chinese struggling to improve the fortune of their families. Approximately one hundred thousand Chinese came to California in search of this precious metal. It is important to note that in describing this growing United States demographic the majority of these immigrants were men. Over ninety percent of Chinese immigrants entering between 1849 and 1882, which was estimated to be nearly three hundred thousand according to Roger Daniels, were adult males. Many were married and this explained in part why they desired not to remain permanently in the United States, but rather to earn enough money to then return with to China. Their stay at "Golden Mountain" was always intended to be temporary (Daniels 16). Though just as many that left for home there were countless that remained and found work in the railroads, mines, agriculture, manufacturing, and domestic or laundry services. The latter profession, however, soon became one of the only employment possibilities for Chinese laborers. The xenophobia within the workspace most likely was

not a new experience for Chinese immigrants whose very admittance into the country was an elaborate and contradictory dance of racial categorizing and documentation. Photography was an important instrument of this process; though the camera could be argued as objective, this objectivity was lost when the only group required to register with photo identification were Chinese immigrants. This “visual regulation,” a concept introduced by Anna Pegler Gordon, was further reinforced through the active caricaturing and stereotyping of the Chinese through visual-based literature like political cartoons. Each of these techniques in the overall racial subordination of Chinese immigrants cannot be fully understood unless placed within a larger discourse of what defined masculinity (Daniels 9-12; Pegler-Gordon 53). In narrowing the focus to the visual or external messaging that went on between Chinese immigrants and Western society it is important to recognize and define briefly, material studies, a form of study related to this research. One of the initial purposes for evaluating the material culture of an individual or community, as explained by Wendy Rouse Jorae, was to generate insight on “people who remain otherwise largely invisible in the historical record” (453). Material possessions offer symbolic and overt reflections of the individual or individuals’ personal understandings and responses to their social standing. Additionally, material culture studies enable greater emphasis to be placed on how race-conscious societies absorb and remanufacture the appearance of persons (Jorae 453-454).

Political Cartoons

Political drawings were instrumental in reinforcing the inferiority of Chinese immigrants. Whether circulating at the local or national level, political cartoons featured in newspapers ensured a wide audience. These images were educational tools. They informed the general public on the standards of acceptability in society. In terms of the Chinese, these mass circulated images worked to emasculate this immigrant body based on the racial identity applied to them by society. Political cartoonist, Thomas Nast, in 1871 printed an image of a Chinese immigrant protected by Miss Columbia from a hoard of angry “nativists.” Nast’s drawing deplored the labor violence Chinese immigrants experienced; in the caption it read “America means fair play for all men”(Nast). The caption textually advocated for equal access

to labor despite a worker’s race, and yet the image itself suggested a racial delineation along the lines of masculinity.



Political Cartoon of Chinese immigrant protected from nativist labor backlash by Miss Columbia. Artist, Thomas Nast, 1871.

Nast’s cartoon depicted a Chinese man sitting on the ground, head bowed, as a weapon-wielding-white-male mob loomed threateningly around the corner; the only thing between the mob and the immigrant was the powerful figure of Miss Columbia. Columbia’s hand hovered protectively over the lowered head of the Chinese man, like that of a mother protecting her child. Vulnerable, the Chinese man hid behind the skirts of Miss Columbia. In the background stood a wall with a list of headlines that called for the political and violent removal of the “Chinese question,” (Nast). The image highlighted a lack of masculinity in the Chinese man, as interpreted from the political drawing. The juxtaposing of the Chinese man between

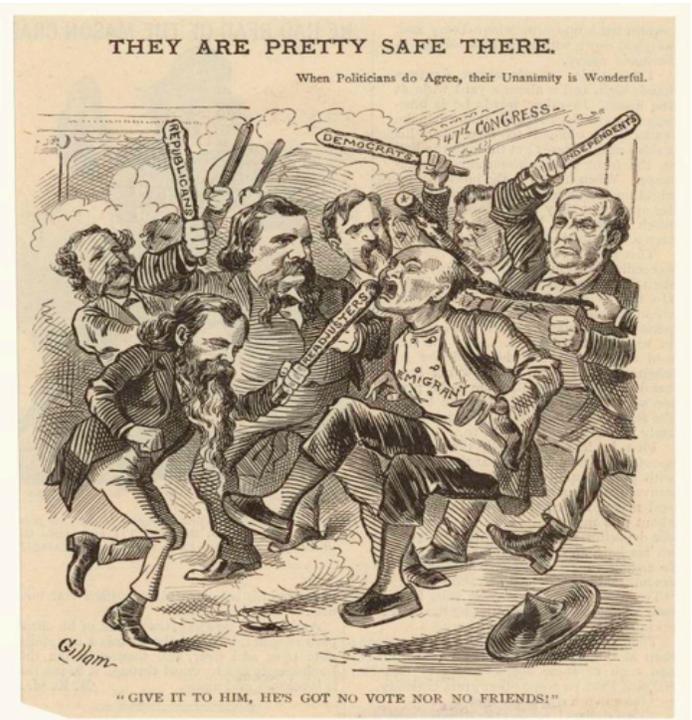
Miss Columbia and the mob worked simultaneously to emasculate the Chinese man, and

thus all Chinese men. Whether dressed in three-piece suits or collared shirts with disheveled neckties, all the men in the mob retained their manliness through the facial hair they sported and Western form of dress. The Chinese man in contrast bared no beard or mustache, and his long tunic and sandal type footwear marked him as foreign. He more closely resembled Miss Columbia with her flowing dress and long tresses, which was similar in length and texture to the Chinese man's own braided hair. Unable to defend himself, the Chinese laborer relied on a woman, which went directly against the socially constructed gender role of the male provider and protector.

Political cartoons in their own way used features of material studies in order to distinguish Chinese immigrants as inferior. By dramatizing the visual markers of difference, whether through dress, adornments, or hair choices, cartoonists capitalized on these cultural symbols to present the popular sentiment of the era. Gillam Bernhard, a political cartoonist, commended the exclusionary policies of the Forty-seventh Congress with an illustration of leading politicians from Washington clubbing a Chinese immigrant. This depiction was a reflection of a popular notion that physically harming individuals of Chinese origins was an acceptable solution for removing the Chinese "problem." Bernhard, similar to Nast, drew viewers' attentions to the noticeable difference in clothing and hairstyle of the Chinese immigrant versus the gang of politicians. Despite the brutal actions of these political figures they were still seen as "respectable" men in their suits, neckties, and prominent beards or mustaches (Gillam).

Bernhard's rendering of the Chinese man's traditional garb stood in sharp contrast to the "respectable" men in suits, most notably the Chinese man's queue, or long braid. Yanked back by his queue, the Chinese man's clean-shaven face was forced to jut out and upward in pain. This particular form of attack shined light on the historical abuse Chinese men received from wearing their hair in this long manner. It was ubiquitous to find analogies made between the queue of a Chinese man and the long hair expected of a young girl or woman, as noted by Bryn Williams in his work, "Chinese Masculinities and Material Culture." The cultural meaning behind the dress and style of Chinese immigrants was disregarded, only placed within the context of the "American"

standard. Williams referenced Edward Said in order to conceptualize "Orientalism," which placed those belonging to "the East," in opposition or contrast to the "Western culture," rather than allowing these individuals to be understood "on their own terms," or within their own cultural framework (Williams 56-57). Failing to be understood within their own cultural history, Chinese men were fitted within the mold they "identified" closest to under a Western mind frame: women. Even when Chinese men began cutting their hair, the only possible reason was presumed to be for the purpose of "Americanization," yet this style choice could just have likely been symbolic of their rejection for Manchu rule during the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911 (Gillam; Williams 56-58; Jorae 468).



Political Cartoon of a Chinese immigrant beaten by political leaders of Washington. Artist, Bernhard Gillam, 1882.

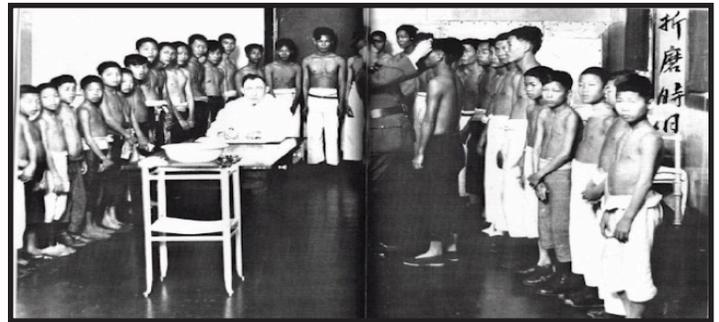
Photography

The reinforcement of Chinese men as not masculine extended farther than cartoons as demonstrated in photography. Understanding the role photography played in the subordination of Chinese immigrants must be accomplished in two parts; the act of requiring or taking the photo and the perception or feelings the actual images attempted to invoke must be analyzed as distinct from one another in order to clearly see how they worked concurrently to

emasculate and thus degrade the Chinese immigrant class. The year 1924 was the first time general immigration laws included a photo identification requirement when applying for visas in the United States. Chinese immigrants, however, had been abiding this law for the past thirty years. In the early 1890s when law makers were debating the inclusion of photographic identity certificates a leading proponent, Representative Thomas Geary of California, argued that photos were necessary since Chinese “look alike, all dress alike, all have the same kind of eyes, all are beardless, all wear their hair in the same manner” (Pegler-Gordon 57). His reasoning won as attested by the very act named after him, the Geary Act, which extended the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 for an additional ten years and contained an amendment necessitating the inclusion of a photograph in identity certificates. The singling out of Chinese immigrants through “visual regulation” by means of photographic evidence reaffirmed and cemented through law the idea that all Chinese can be understood as one identity, which more easily enabled the subsequent social emasculation of this group. They were not seen as individuals with families and personalities and dreams of their own. The Chinese immigrant community was generalized under one representative body, a body that they had no power to personify, but rather was caricatured and painted inaccurately by a social order culturally dissimilar from their own. Now legitimized under law and social thought, the Chinese immigrant body was stripped, only to be re-imagined within a United States ‘ race based framework (Pegler-Gordon 53-57).

The image itself constructed a new identity for this immigrant “body,” which lacked any “real” character in accordance with Western society. As explained previously by Williams, Chinese immigrants were not understood within the context of their own cultural make-up but rather taken at “face-value” in context to Western standards. Having defined these thousands of Chinese persons arriving to the United States as all-alike, it was believed that one Chinese immigrant, or in even broader terms, one Asian immigrant, was representative of all others that fell within this same category. The dehumanization of Chinese immigrants made for an easy re-casting of their identity through the manipulation of the photographic lens. In determining what was included within the frame and what was left out, or how the

angle of the photograph might render one figure or group larger or smaller in comparison to the other subjects were all considerations that changed the messaging of an image. Relying on just the “facts,” or only what the picture allowed a person to view, was symbolic of American society’s own narrow scope (Williams 56-57).

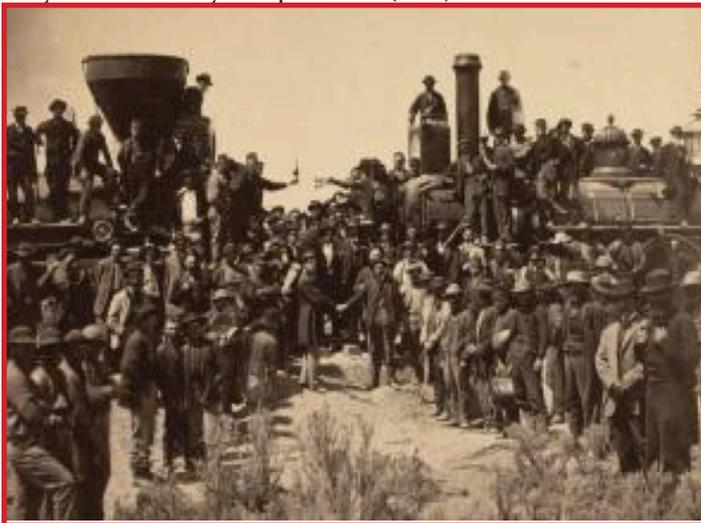


Physical Examination at Angel Island. Asian boys and young men who have immigrated to the United States stand single file waiting to be examined.

Angel Island, the Pacific counterpart to Ellis Island, was an entry point for many Asian immigrants. The photographs of these new arrivals were telling and illustrated possibly their first encounters with United States racial structuring. An early twentieth century photograph captured a medical examination procedure, an experience that all immigrants endured upon admission into the United States. The photograph depicted approximately two-dozen male immigrants of Asian origins lining the perimeter of a medical examination room, and ranging in age from early adulthood to boys of ten years or less. Indiscriminate of age, however, all were stripped to the waist and most were staring back at the camera’s flash. The lack of privacy these immigrants were afforded represented deeper assumptions linked to race and masculinity. Following Western thinking, the disproportionate ratio between Chinese male and female immigrants living in the United States implied a lack of moral grounding. In “Of Men and Men: Reconstructing Chinese American Masculinity,” King-Kok Cheung described Chinese men’s existence in the United States as a “virtual bachelorhood,” since those that immigrated at the turn of twentieth century were “forbidden” to bring their wives or marry white women (174). This lack of stability allegedly left this dominantly male group more at “risk” for committing the “unseemly,” (“Physical”; Cheung 174-175). The photo suggests that a level of comfortableness in seeing

another male's body must have existed in order for these male immigrants to not protest such a violation of "masculine" integrity.

It was clearly identifiable who was in charge because the individuals were positioned around the only person sitting, or privileged enough to sit, the medical practitioner. The immigrants of the picture faced the center of the room where at a table one Caucasian man sat, fitted in a white coat, presumably a doctor or medical practitioner, while another in military-like uniform prodded the face of one immigrant. It appeared as if the center of the room signified the highest level of power, white and male, and the more distant people were from this nucleus, the farther they symbolically were from attaining that privilege. The frame's inclusion of the entire room and centering of the practitioner placed the "patients" symbolically on the edges of power. The picture reflected a sense of obedience or compliance to those of authority that was associated with Asian culture. According to Cheung, this respect was construed as "submissive and passive in the eyes of non-Asians" (175). Masculinity connotes a sense of power, particularly within a patriarchal society like the United States. Chinese male immigrants, however, were refused this privilege and thus held at a status more equivalent to the position of women, though its important to acknowledge that the level of privilege within gender varied in their own right. Even though Chinese males identified with the gender of power, they were racially disqualified (175).



"Golden Spike" Ceremony Promontory Summit, Utah in May of 1869. Uniting of the tracks between the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroad companies. Chinese immigrants were excluded from the photograph.

Extending from this understanding, Chinese male immigrants were accepted within very few avenues of work even though the majority came to the United States for the sole purpose of employment. What jobs, however, were acceptable to this race were often closely tied to their masculinity, as assigned by United States society. Chinese immigrants were seen as cheap disposable labor and thus were often limited to unskilled jobs in railroad construction, mining, and agriculture. Though they performed traditionally "manly" jobs they were not visibly recognized for this service. When the Central Pacific and Union Pacific rails were joined, completing the Transcontinental Railroad, a photo commemorated this "Golden Spike" ceremony in 1869. The photograph casted a wide view to insure workers of both Railroad companies were seen. Despite such a wide frame there was a glaring absence. Of the thirteen thousand Chinese immigrant workers hired to lay thousands of miles of tracks for the Central Pacific Railroad there was not one Chinese worker in the photograph. The purposeful exclusion of Chinese laborers not only disregarded the immense service they had done for the nation, changing the way communication and travel occurred between the West and East states, but also removed them from the category of "male" laborers. In a picture meant to celebrate the achievement of manpower or the progress of man, the presence of Chinese would undermine this message as evident by their "disappearance" (Daniels 9-15; "Golden").

Laundrymen and Domestic Work

The overall messaging of Chinese emasculation was substantiated on one of the most mundane yet intimate levels, laundry. By the late nineteenth century Chinese were increasingly rejected and physically beaten by competing "nativist" laborers, arguing Chinese were "unfair" competition in their ability to subsist on such low wages. Chance of legal recourse was barred if not effectively slowed by Chief Justice Hugh G. Murray's ruling in the California Supreme Court; Chinese were prohibited from testifying against whites "on the grounds of public policy" and as non-white persons (Daniels 33-34). Chinese thus had to resort to alternate forms of employment, which included laundering, tailoring, selling produce, and domestic service in hotels, homes, and boarding houses. These forms of labor were largely unoccupied by women in the West and Chinese could find business in their own ethnic population because they could

cater to the “special needs of the group.” The term “needs” referred to customers being able to speak their native tongue and find products or goods culturally familiar to them (Daniels 77). These occupations were highly visible since they pertained to the daily lives of people. The prominence of Chinese men “compelled” into this line of work, deemed “women’s work,” was considered proof of their “inherent” femininity (Wang 60; Daniels 74-77; Williams 58-60).

The laundering profession was a dual emasculation for Chinese immigrants. The “chore” of laundry as a female task was a gendered pretense in both the United States and China. Wang described through her article, “Race, Gender, and Laundry Work: The Roles of Chinese Laundrymen and American Women in the United States, 1850-1950,” how baby girls were preferred within poor households of China because they were more likely to receive work within private homes or commercial businesses than boys. Laundering was not a skill carried over from China to the United States, but instead was a learning experience for many Chinese male immigrants going into this profession. Wang detailed the account of Lee Chew, a Chinese immigrant who upon employment as a domestic servant had to be taught how to wash the clothes by the lady of the house. Therefore, Chinese men were emasculated for completing the tasks of women as defined not only within the United States but also within their country of origin. Most Chinese immigrants left their own country in search of better paying jobs or opportunities, and yet the only stable employment they were allowed were in services that back home, half way across the globe, their female relatives were completing as “chores” (Wang 62).

The proximity for which this work was done in relation to women further emasculated Chinese men. Irish and African American women were prominent and often vocal within the laundry industry. These different groups held a complex relationship with one another as they competed for business and yet simultaneously supported each other. They understood their shared status as a disadvantaged group within the gendered and racial structure of their society. Wang recounted a 1904 strike by female Ohio laundry workers and the use of Chinese laundry men to help their own cause. In order to appease customers while on strike, the laundry women advised their clients to get their clothes washed by the “Chinaman” rather

than the strikebreakers who were hired by their company. Two decades later in San Francisco, Chinese laundry men went on strike themselves, protesting for higher wages. In response their employers attempted to hire African American laundry women as “scabs,” or strikebreakers. This, however, failed as many African American women refused to work against their Chinese male counterparts. These events showcased the ability for relationships to transcend across culture, gender, race, and class. Though the interconnected relations between Chinese men and these diverse women’s groups were unfortunately not seen as models for promoting solidarity. In occupying and interacting within the same space as women, Chinese were crossing the gendered line between the men and women’s spheres. Unlike railroad work, Chinese were allowed to be visible sources of labor for laundering and work in the home. They could not practice or follow the traditional routes of labor that promoted their masculinity and instead were restricted to professions that perpetuated stereotypical assumptions of their passivity and femininity (Wang 81).

Conclusion

Chinese immigrants were an integral part of the United States economy because they were willing to work the most menial and at times dangerous jobs whether in laying the tracks for the transcontinental railroad or tunneling beneath the Earth’s surface in mines. They were, however, always considered temporary guests. The “othering” of the male immigrant body was a reminder of this position and was validated through political drawings, the legal and visual manufacturing of photographs, and the daily exposure to Chinese men performing the roles associated with women.

The emasculation of Chinese immigrants was not consistent. These contradictions made evident the very hand society played in rationalizing the dominance of one race and inferiority of another. Chinese held a dual image of an emasculated and yet sexually threatening. Wang highlighted the fears instilled in little girls about the “lonely” Chinese bachelors. In one incident a Chinese laundrymen, Charles Lee Sing, was charged with molesting a ten-year-old neighborhood girl, in which the only witnesses were five young girls, none older than twelve years of age. Interestingly Sing’s profession would be arguable proof for his innocence. Washing clothes

aligns him more closely to that of a woman, a provider of the home and child. Therefore Chinese men were not men because of their similarity to the domestic labor of women and yet conversely Chinese men were sexual predators because they were “lonely,” but men nonetheless (Wang 84). This serves a powerful example to the conflicting nature of society’s racial organization along the lines of masculinity. More specifically, it speaks to the individuals leading these societies and the social rather than “inherent” forces behind masculinity.

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Muggles Practicing Magic: A Digital Ethnography of Harry Potter and the Sacred Text Podcast

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Introduction

It is not uncommon for non-religious people to be drawn to some aspects of religion. There are many different religions with followings that are based on fiction, both movies and novels. According to Wolfe (2015), a few of these include: Jediism, based on the Star Wars trilogies, Dudeism, based on The Big Lebowski, and The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, who refer to themselves as Pastafarians. The Pastafarians are known to have fought for religious rights to be able to practice their religion as freely as those of any other religion. This is an example of a group of people who are interested in an aspect of religion outside of any “God” a religion might be centered around.

While the Harry Potter and the Sacred Text podcast does not claim to be a religion in and of itself, it is a community based on reading fiction as a sacred text. Studies involving religious trends in America have shown that religious expression is not necessarily decreasing, but it is considerably changing. The younger generation is generally more concerned with spirituality and the journey of faith rather than on tradition and keeping the faith of their parents (Cusack, 2011). There are communities that gather together on Sunday in lieu of a church service with only the absence of faith in a higher power in common (Cimino & Smith, 2015). The evolving mindset around faith and religion is everything but straight forward. Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is one example of how these religious trends are manifesting in society today.

Vanessa Zoltan and Casper ter Kuile, two graduates from Harvard Divinity school, created the podcast Harry Potter and the Sacred Text with the motto, “Reading something we love as if it were sacred” (Kuile & Zoltan, 2016). The podcast grew out of reading group in the Harvard community. Neither of the creators practice religion but both are interested in practicing faith in something, in this case they chose to

have faith that they could learn from the Harry Potter series. The focus of this podcast is for Vanessa and Casper to use a series they already loved to learn how to better live in the world. Reading the text in this way leads the creators and the listeners through journeys of reflection on culture and self. They are seeking to grow in awareness of how their thoughts and actions effect other people. This theme of people seeking to become “better” people is echoed throughout many religious and spiritual practices.

Literature Review

Evolving Religious Tendencies

It used to be thought that the developing world was becoming secularized, but Carole Cusack (2011) argues that this change was not one of moving away from religion altogether but of changing religions and the tendency towards them. Cusack focuses her studies on how religion and spirituality is influenced by the youth. The trends tend to show that youths experiment with religion and are more interested in the spiritual quest than the arrival at a certain belief. This mindset is relatively new considering that for thousands of years most people have readily accepted the religion of their parents. In Western countries, the prevalence of teenagers associated with religious tradition has declined significantly in the twenty-first century. Yet, interest in spirituality remains high as seen in the interest in the supernatural, as seen in the popularity of television shows such as Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Charmed. This change in religious expression is attributed to the focus of youth’s lives being on enjoyment and excitement which comes from peer relationships more than family relationships. Carole Cusack discusses how youth are changing how religion is viewed by taking the spirituality aspects of religion and leaving the rules and rituals behind.

Humanism

Vanessa Zoltan, one of the creators of Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is a humanist. Maggie Ardiente and Roy Speckhardt (2014) explain the growing of humanism. Humanism grew out of the movement of people with the desire to live ethical lives apart from religious motive. The Pew Forum conducted a survey that found that 16% of the United States population considers themselves unaffiliated with a religion but only 25% of that group are atheist or agnostic; the other 75% describe their religion as

“nothing in particular” (U.S. public, 2015). While the amount of the non-theist people is not significantly growing, the Catholic and Protestant population is declining. Americans are not moving away from religion, but evolving religious tendencies. The importance of religion in the lives of most Americans is in decline, which is to say that many people do not find a life purpose in religion as used to be common. Humanism answers this dilemma of giving meaning to life again without the belief in a god. The Humanism Manifesto defines values and morality derived from experience and reason-based knowledge. This gives reason to better humankind that is not based on doing what a higher power tells one and thus gives meaning to life for those without a particular religion.

Ritual without Religion.

While Humanism is becoming increasingly, widely practiced, there are many other groups that are similarly becoming more popular. Richard Cimino and Christopher Smith (2015) describe the rise of the “New New Atheism,” that operates under the desire to create an identity for the non-believing community. This differs from the “New Atheism,” which desired to debunk all other religions. While there is no interest in belief in a god, these communities are still drawn to rituals. There is a Sunday Assembly that started in Britain and has since been growing in the United States, where people gather weekly for a secular “church” service. Some people have also taken the route of moving away from common practices that are rooted in religion such as wedding ceremonies, funerals, and even Christmas. These are substituted with secular counterparts in which “festivals of light” is the replacement for Christmas and Hanukkah. Based on a survey completed by Cimino and Smith, only 35% of atheist/humanists attend a secular ritual, while 62% would be open to the idea. This goes to show that generally humans desire community and ritual, which can be separate from religion.

Community.

To further this point of community-driven people outside of religion, Steven Tomlins (2015) wrote about an Atheist Club at a university in Canada. Many active students in this club were interviewed and asked why they joined and what the club meant to them. Overwhelmingly, the students answered with something along the lines of being in a place with like-minded people. The club was a safe place where

they could talk and argue without having to fear being judged or offending others. Some said that the club was a place where activists could rally against whichever cause they were passionate about. Tomlins points out that these students do not mention that they are trying to convert others or that they feel marginalized but rather enjoy getting together and discussing interesting things. This idea can be compared to Bible studies or religious discussion groups in a different context but with a similar foundation.

Methodology

To study the community of the Harry Potter and the Sacred Text podcast, I immersed myself into it. I first began listening in July of 2017 and continued throughout my research and into December of 2017. I utilized the website, which helps to explain the team behind the project, their purpose, and the methods used. An important aspect of my research was understanding the audience, which was achieved through the voicemails sent in by listeners. There were extra episodes produced, which consisted entirely of voicemails. These voicemails provide a window into why people listen to the podcast and into the community of the fan base.

Findings

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is a podcast devoted to reading through the Harry Potter series as if it were a sacred text. The creators, Vanessa and Casper, explain what they mean by the term “sacred” on the website. There are three components, the first is trusting the text, this means reading it, not just for entertainment, but as something worthy of contemplation without assuming it is inerrant. The second is rigor and ritual, this is the way that the text is being read. The engagement of reading the text slowing, repeatedly, and with mindful attention is what makes the text sacred. Vanessa and Casper practice this in using existing ritual ways of reading a text, which they call “spiritual practices.” The last aspect of treating the text as sacred is to read it in community, which also contributes to the sacredness of the text rather than the text being sacred itself (“Harry Potter”, n.d). This means that the creators, Vanessa and Casper, ask questions of the text, analyze the character’s choices, and apply it to their lives.. This podcast was created by people who love Harry Potter, who are not religious but desire to read something sacredly, and who enjoy thinking deeply and asking hard questions. While

the audience tunes in for many different reasons, the podcast has managed to stay consistent throughout the seasons with what it offers.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is a weekly podcast that discusses the Harry Potter books. The podcast is on the fourth season and therefore the fourth Harry Potter book. Each season is devoted to one of the Harry Potter books, beginning with the first book and working chronologically from there. Each episode in the podcast covers one chapter at a time, this format is similar to a book club because Vanessa and Casper read the chapter beforehand and discuss it during the episode. In each episode, the team picks a theme to look at the text through as they read it. Some of these themes include imagination, pain, wonder, rivalry, innocence, and forgiveness. Each episode is titled with the single word that is the theme, followed the title of the chapter being looked at. A new episode comes out every Thursday, and the duration varies from 30 to 50 minutes depending on the discussion and the presence of a visitor.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text website

The Harry Potter and the Sacred Text website includes all the information that a listener might need about the podcast and community. The home page of the website includes the podcast logo (pictured to the right) large and centered. Below the logo is a saying that describes the podcast's purpose, "Reading fiction doesn't help us escape the world, it helps us live in it" ("Harry Potter", n.d). Under this there is the menu to allow visitors to explore the website; the different pages include Home, About, Listen, Videos, Resources, Live Events, Get Involved, and Donate. The home page also includes a poll where listeners can vote on the 30-second recap challenge that begins each episode. Each week, Vanessa and Casper take turns giving a 30-second summary of the chapter of focus for the listeners who have not recently read the chapter. The listeners are then able to vote on the website for who they believe did a better job. After every 10 chapters, a winner is announced, and the competition continues. The other pages on the website provide information about the creators of the podcast, their methodology, links to all the episodes, an animated video for every season, resources for the spiritual practices uses, information about starting a discussion group, information on live events, and opportunities to donate to the show's production and

to the philanthropy they partake in.



Figure 1 Harry Potter and the Sacred Text logo. Retrieved from www.harrypottersacredtext.com

Podcast Structure

In Harry Potter and the Sacred Text the episodes all follow a consistent structure. The episode begins with either Vanessa or Casper reading the first few sentences of the chapter out loud. There is soft music playing and the voice fades out as they introduce themselves and the podcast. The host who did not begin with reading tells a story from their own life, which relates to the theme of the episode for that week, and in the next episode the two will switch roles. After the story, there is a small amount of dialogue before the two transition into the 30-second recap challenge, where they take turns summarizing the chapter while the time ticks away to an audible timer. From there they dive into where they saw the theme in that chapter and discuss wherever the conversation takes them. Often the discussion includes references to other circumstances in the Harry Potter world, references to their own lives, and references to relevant topics in culture. After they have both discussed where they saw the theme appear in the text, they move into the spiritual practice portion of the episode. There are four different practices that are used on the podcast. These practices come from a variety of religions

and are adapted to be applied to the fictitious text. Throughout the season each practice is used for several episodes in a row before switching to the next practice. The spiritual practices have grown as new ones have been introduced throughout the seasons but at this point there are four that are utilized: Lectio Divina, Havruta, Ignatian Spirituality, and Floralegium. After the spiritual practice has aided in looking at the text more closely, they play a voicemail that a listener has sent in. The voicemail is typically a comment or question about a discussion from a previous episode that challenges Vanessa, Casper, and the listeners to see a situation in a different light. The voicemails also often consist of a personal story from that person's life. Each episode comes to an end when Vanessa and Casper chose a character that they would like to offer a blessing to. Vanessa challenged herself at the beginning of the podcast to only bless female characters in an act to exemplify strong females for all the women and girls listening. The blessings start with a character and then are generalized to all people who share a characteristic or circumstance with that character. The episode is then concluded with a thanks to everyone involved and a statement of what the theme will be the following week.

Tone

The tone of the podcast shifts throughout the episode. The story that is told at the beginning of the podcast can be serious or light-hearted. The tone then shifts to be playful and competitive during the 30-second recap. During most of the podcast there is a more serious tone riddled with sarcasm because it is inevitable that something serious comes up in the conversation. Vanessa and Casper are good friends who started this project together, and it shows in that they seem to thoroughly enjoy being together and respect each other's opinions throughout the entire process.

Community

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text began as a small project but has grown to be very popular. Vanessa and Casper encourage fans to be involved and have captivated a community of people who love what they are doing. Each episode includes a voicemail from someone who has called in to be part of the conversation; most of these voicemails begin with a declaration of love for the podcast. The show started going on tour in the third season where they

travel to different cities and have live shows. There are directions on the website that encourage listeners to start their own discussion groups and gives advice on how to use the spiritual practices. Many listeners have done this and chose to read Harry Potter as a sacred text or even branch out to a different novel or series. The focus is on the community and the discussion rather than on Harry Potter.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is dynamic and well liked. There is a weekly podcast and a website. The episodes follow a consistent structure consisting of a story, a recap, discussion, a spiritual practice, a voicemail, and blessings. Vanessa and Casper want people to think deeply and critically about the text but mostly about life. There is a focus on how to ask hard questions to better understand people and circumstance while challenging oneself to be the best person they can. A community has grown around this podcast and the creators encourage and engage with the community regularly.

Discussion

Purpose of the Podcast

Insight as to why the Harry Potter and the Sacred Text podcast was created allows one to better understand why people with no interest in belief of a higher power, remain to be interested in aspects of religion. In the teaser for the first season of the podcast Vanessa explains that she is an over-educated, atheist who is typically limited by her own cynicism. She explains that she wanted to try something new by having faith in something. To set herself up for success she chose to have faith in great books because she already had a love great books and it is easier to have faith in something one loves. She was committed to believe that the more time she spent with the text, the more gifts it would give her. This is an important distinction because the podcast was not created by two extreme Harry Potter fans who wanted to have a religion based on the Harry Potter world. It was created because both Vanessa and Casper, spent Divinity school studying a book they did not feel connected to: The Bible. By applying the methods of studying the Bible to literature they both loved, they wanted to feel the same kind of commitment to the text as people who feel connected to the Bible do because of their faith (Kuile & Zoltan, 2016). With this

goal in mind, this podcast could have been based on any other book or series. The important element is the method of reading it rather than the text itself.

These ideas that were behind the creation of this podcast are supported by Carole Cusack (2011) who studied the change in how religion is viewed in the 21st-century. Vanessa and Casper's interest in having faith in something and being committed to something they love, without seeking a traditional outlet for that desire is in line with the trends Cusack describes.

Spiritual Practices

In each episode, Vanessa and Casper use one of four spiritual practices. This means that they use a guided method of looking at the text. *Lectio Devino* is one of these spiritual practices, it is traditionally a Christian practice of sacred reading but Vanessa and Casper alter the practice to fit their purpose. It involves picking a line in the chapter at random and first discussing the literal narrative, then looking at what metaphors are hidden in that piece of the text, followed by reflecting on what the text is speaking into one's own life, and finally inviting one to take action by apply something to one's life. The other practices are *Havruta*, *Ignation Spirituality*, and *Floralegium*. These practices are not all from the Christian faith and while they all vary in method, they are ways to engage the text on a deeper level.

While these practices are being used to better engage the text of a fiction series, they are originally based in religions of faith. This is an interesting dynamic because the creators of this podcast have no interest in growing to know a god more deeply or a scripture that is inspired by a god, but the practice of looking at a text in that way is what they are interested in. The focus is not to better understand J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter series, but the goal is to use the text to better understand themselves. This mindset is not unique to the creators of Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. Cimino and Smith (2015) study how atheist communities continue to seek rituals. People who do not believe in a higher power, are not always against all things associated with such faiths, many appreciate community and ritualistic festivals that are not associated with a religion. This is seen in the secular Sunday meetings and in celebrating the festival of the lights in place of Christmas. In a similar

way, Vanessa and Casper are seeking to find a deeper meaning and connection to the story of Harry Potter by choosing to use historically religious methods, but rebranded to fit their personal needs. It is not necessarily important that these spiritual practices are traditionally Christian or Jewish because they are tools used to be look at a text deeply and to mindfully apply it to life. This points directly towards the idea behind the podcast because they too take existing religious rituals and adapt them to a new context.

Living in the World

An additional aspect to the Harry Potter and the Sacred Text podcast is that is constantly commenting on culturally relevant topics. There have been many instances when conversation has centered around huge topics such as feminism, politics, body image, LGBTQ+ community, bullying, race, education, and of course religion. Using the text to address these kinds of issues is a way of using it learn and grow. Vanessa and Casper make sure to note that the text is not perfect. There are many instances when the characters fail in loving, in equality, and in values. The purpose of reading through the Harry Potter series sacredly is not to learn how to live in the world based on how the characters do; the purpose it to start conversations and to grow in self-awareness. The quote on the website's home page, "Reading fiction doesn't help us escape the world, it helps us live in it" ("Harry Potter", n.d), can be understood in this way. They are not reading Harry Potter to escape the problems of the world but to improve the world.

Vanessa is a humanist and humanism is another example of how people are interested in having morals apart from religion (Ardiente & Speckhardt, 2014). The focus is on contributing to society in a positive way for the sake of being a good person rather than following religious rules to please a higher power. The cultural commentary in the show provides a space where people can wrestle with the hard realities of this world by starting conversations and processing terrible events. This is part of how Vanessa and Casper have set out to read the Harry Potter series as a sacred text because a question that is frequently asked is, "what is the text asking of you?" This is the application portion of learning from a text and for this podcast the roots are found in humanism rather than in a faith-based religion.

Community

The community of followers of the Harry Potter and the Sacred Text podcast is dynamic. Some of the regular listeners were drawn in because of a deep love for Harry Potter and enjoy the opportunity to reread the books and talk about the characters. Others are drawn to the idea of reading something sacredly because they do not feel connected to a faith or a book of faith in a way that lends to learning from it. Many other listeners enjoy the types of meaningful conversations that occur on the podcast and enjoy thinking about new perspectives. These are not mutually exclusive groups because many listeners enjoy multiple aspects of the podcast. There are people of faith and not of faith that call in to leave voicemails. There are children and elderly people who listen and people all over the world. This podcast has drawn a large gathering of followers because it offers community, meaningful conversation, and is centered around a book series that already has large fan base. The voicemails sent in often include personal stories about how a concept discussed on the show related to a situation in their life. The community is vulnerable and supportive of each other and it is made easier because of the nature of the medium. There is anonymity in a podcast because the listeners only hear voices and never see faces. Additionally, the international following makes it almost certain that a voice will not be recognized. Vanessa and Casper are also extremely open and tell many stories about their lives which creates a safe environment for the listeners to also share.

This community rallied around the podcast is similar to many other communities that are drawn together by a single thing in common. Many very different people may join a club because they all share a similar interest. In Tomlins' (2015) study of the Atheist Club on a college campus, he found that the members of the club enjoyed the company of like-minded people where conversation about interesting topics was continuous. Community is always being sought in different ways and many people have found community in this podcast.

Conclusion

Vanessa Zoltan and Casper ter Kuile began this project of reading through the Harry Potter series as if it were a sacred text because they do not practice religion but still wish to practice faith and commitment

to something. The project includes adapting existing spiritual practices to the study of the series and is highly invested in the community that has formed around it. By referencing culturally relevant topics, this podcast is aimed at helping people to live in the world in a way that is not faith based. This seemingly outrageous idea is supported by many religious trends seen in the United States. The desire for connection, commitment, community, and rituals are not reserved for religious groups. These desires are widespread and this podcast is only one example of how they are being met.

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