

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 fifth 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 will be 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 self-submission 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. Papers found in this volume were presented at the Undergraduate Roundtable of the Eastern American Studies Association Annual Conference in March of 2015.

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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—

As is tradition, the essays in the fall edition of *New Errands* come from the Undergraduate Roundtable at the 2018 Eastern American Studies Association Conference. These essays demonstrate both the range of methodologies and quality of scholarship attainable by exceptional undergraduate students. During the 2018 Roundtable, Bailey McCarthy was the winner of the Francis Ryan Award and Peter Fedoryk received the Louise Stevenson Award. The essays presented here look at topics including public reception of the film *Frozen*, trench art during World War I, Civil War advertisements, Superman as a World War II propaganda figure, German immigration in Philadelphia, and women's rights movements.

Key themes tie these essays together. First, several consider the role of art in understanding American culture, particularly during periods of major conflict. Others touch on issues of race and ethnicity, considering how gender and ethnicity have been understood in American culture. Finally, all of these essays take an interdisciplinary approach to their respective topics, highlighting the fruitfulness of an American Studies approach to scholarship. Together, these essays reflect the richness and diversity of American Studies scholarship at all levels and show great potential for the future of American Studies scholarship.

It is the goal of *New Errands* to encourage and promote undergraduate research into issues of American culture and society. The essays included here both meet that goal and offer useful models for others seeking to conduct successful undergraduate research and writing on American Studies topics.

We hope you enjoy reading these essays as much as we have.

Caitlin Black and Brittany Clark

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The Origins of the American Environmental Movement: Hudson River School Naturalism in the 19th Century¹

Peter Fedoryk
Villanova University

The stage is set. The great Enlightenment experiment of the United States has begun. The turn of the nineteenth century has come and gone, and the past colonists of America were ripe to become future pioneers of not only an exorbitant westward landscape but new ways of seeing their world. While aboard the ship *Arbella* en route to the ‘New World’, John Winthrop preached that the settlement to be built would be ‘as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.’ (Banas, “John Winthrop, *A Modell of Christian Charity*) Winthrop’s original manuscript was printed in old English, and the single quotations around this quote indicate a modernized transliteration of the original text. From the very beginning of their quest for settlement, these Puritans saw themselves as the privileged few traveling to the new lands of Canaan. The origins of American exceptionalism today can be traced back to this small moment in the experiences of the first Europeans to plant roots in America. Religion motivated the move to America and allowed for the expansion of the metaphor that America was the new promised land. Its mountains and valleys were the lands of Eden, lost so long ago to the curiosity and greed of humans. In the nineteenth century, the folktale heroism of Daniel Boone resounded in the heart of a youthful America, which sought to conquer the width of a continent and cast the light of its ‘shining city’ from coast to coast.

A young Thomas Cole sought to immerse himself in the physical lands of Eden that surrounded his new home. He devoted his life to recording the Created world, falling in love with landscape painting and the nature it recorded. Cole’s subject, the Hudson River Valley of New

York, provided the artist with an abundant wilderness from which to draw inspiration. The concept of ‘untouched nature’ captivated the painter and the gaze of westward moving pioneers and settlers alike. America’s borders were rapidly expanding along the Frontier line, with settlers building and rebuilding small civilizations as they went. Cole responded to this growing trend with an idyllic presentation of human integration into the natural world. He became obsessed with the idea of civilization building, recording his deepest fears with the mediums he knew best—oil and canvas. A realization grew amongst Cole and naturally inspired intellectuals who came after him that the expansion of civilization would quickly become synonymous with resource mining and natural degradation. Cole’s conceptualization, over time, of the idea of sustainability, is exhibited first and foremost in his legacy of landscape painting. His works provide a visualization of the love he had for the natural world and his attempts to reconcile a modernizing humanity with the damage the latter would bring upon the former. It is in this inevitable conclusion, at the crossroads of idyllic natural experience and the rough inconsistencies of human progress, that environmentalism was born—not as a fully-fledged movement, but in the foundational ideology of intellectuals who realized there would soon be a problem to confront.

During the revitalizing of American art in the years surrounding America’s bicentennial, Robert Rosenblum wrote about themes of nature in art from 1800-1950, noting that “these American painters have all sought a wellspring of vital forces in nature that could create a rock-bottom truth in an era when the work of man so often seemed a force of ugliness and destruction.” (Rosenblum, “The Primal American Scene,” 37) This was a period when art reflected subtle uncertainties that developed as a surge of industry loomed on the horizon. Rosenblum was writing generally about American art from the 19th century and the early 20th century, but his argument is exemplified in later, more specific work on the art of Thomas Cole.

Ellwood C. Parry III wrote the first full length monograph on Thomas Cole that convincingly described how Cole initiated the trend of nature painting in America. He honed in on Rosenblum’s argument in his description of Cole’s mindset while the artist was working on *The Course*

¹ Winner of the EASA Louise Stevenson Award for best paper in the area of undergraduate research.

of *Empire*. “It seems that Cole was particularly aware of the differences between the traditional framework of human history and the new geological time scale of worlds without end. Compared to the helpless transience of man and his works, so quickly turned to ruins, the setting for *The Course of Empire*—temporarily used as a stage for a human melodrama—goes on unchanged.” (Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole*, 145) He wrote that “Cole’s primary legacy was his example as a man of modest background and Christian principles who turned landscape painting into an honorable, if not always highly lucrative, calling in the United States.” (Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole*, 365-366) Parry added to this commercial assessment with the ideological evaluation that, “Cole shared in and helped to promote a national fascination with the sublime. This tradition has rightly been traced in American art from the beginnings of the Hudson River School all the way to the abstract expressionists over a century later.” (Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole*, 367) Parry’s works have since become the widely accepted view on nature painting, with most art historians crediting Cole with the founding of mainstream nature landscapes.

Parry’s claims about Cole’s Christian principles were further delineated by Donald Worster in Worster’s broader claims about the motivations of environmental activists and environmentalism. Worster argued at the very heart of it that, “that movement has, in the United States, owed much of its program, temperament, and drive to the influence of Protestantism.” (Worster, *Wealth of Nature*, 185) Worster observed that religious knowledge of God’s creations and anecdotal accounts, that were considered scientific record of the time, of the natural world were considered to be two sides of the same coin, only splitting apart in the latter years of the 19th century. “The contemporary disjunction,” he wrote, “between the study of history and of nature has a fairly obvious explanation. In the eighteenth-century world of the English parson-naturalist, there was no such split... As we moved away from that small rural community, the old broad-gauged, integrative ‘natural history’ began to fragment into specializations.” (Worster, *Wealth of Nature*, 31) Citing the scholarship of Stephen Fox, Worster pointed out that John Muir was the first great national leader of the environmental movement, who was deeply Protestant. (Worster, *Wealth of*

Nature, 193-194) Worster claims the idea of the “rights of nature” originated “out of left-wing Protestantism, out of Enlightenment rationalism, and out of frontier evangelism.” (Worster, *Wealth of Nature*, 195) His argument defined Protestantism as the religion for activists and claims the motivation of naturalists is sourced from the same place many industrialists garnered momentum.

In 2001, Robert L. McGrath wrote a general background of art and the American conservation movement, part of which considered the connections of 19th century art to conservation. McGrath repeated previous assertions that, “as custodians of nineteenth century visual culture, painters and photographers had a vital stake in defining the nation’s physical and moral geography.” (McGrath, 34) McGrath continued on to write that, “the painted image could be made to stand in for reality itself while serving as a rhetorical screen behind which wilderness might vanish altogether, leaving only its memory.” (McGrath, 37) He drew this conclusion from considering the economic place for art in the age of national parks, emphasizing that nature art merely reified the environment instead of advocating for its conservation in any depth.

When describing American writer James Fenimore Cooper and Thomas Cole, Roderick Nash wrote, “As with Cooper, Cole’s love of wilderness was at times clouded over with doubts and offset by an antipodal attraction to civilization.” (Nash and Miller, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 78) Nash and McGrath held similar views about the complexities of identifying environmentalists and environmentalism. Nash pointed out that many were torn between the industrializing society that they were a part of and their affinity for untouched nature. He established that while among their contemporaries Cooper and Cole were environmentally inclined, they did not want to place nature in a sphere separate from that of civilization and mankind. While Nash ultimately believed that Cole was an advocate for the “preservation” of land, he asserted that to document and appreciate the wilderness of America in the 19th century was not to fit into what would be considered an environmentalist today, because a sense of extreme urge to protect the environment was unfathomable in the face of a dynamic new society. (Nash and Miller, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 101)

In order to understand how the early environmental movement grew and expanded, it is crucial to keep in mind Worster's remark about the field of natural observation being a certified potpourri of amorphous methodologies and Nash's description of mixed feelings towards industry and nature. By aligning the work by environmental and art historians, Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School adopt a new place in the development of early environmentalism, for their art would serve as visual fodder for the environmentalist movement that was to come.

The Beginnings of Thomas Cole

Thomas Cole's legacy lies in his work with American landscape painting. In an American art climate where portraiture art by John Singleton Copely and Charles Willson Peale was the main focus, Cole's success with landscape painting laid the foundation upon which nineteenth century American artists built. Cole immigrated to the United States from England in 1819 with his family, initially settling in Philadelphia and ending up in New York by 1825. (Noble, *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole, N. A.*, 19) During his twenty-five year career, Cole was a poet, painter, enlightened thinker, naturalist, and religious man. Cole's biographer, Louis L. Noble, wrote with a romantic air about Cole in his twenties as a man whose "poems were the outpouring of his thoughts for himself: his pictures were more for others." (Noble, *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole, N. A.*, 50) Noble wrote on Cole several years after the artist's death, and his dreamy descriptions of Cole as a renaissance man render the artist as a deified 'starving artist' imbued with impossible diligence and unquestionable vision. A reading of Noble's work is as far as one needs to go to understand this. The way he writes about Cole is of a writer ruminating on a figure he stands small before, and holds the utmost respect for everything the man did. It is quite romanticized and embellished with detail, thus must be taken lightly, though with a critical eye. It was in New York where Cole met with success that would ferry him to the career that was to come.

Cole became cemented in the mainstream art world when three of his paintings were purchased by Colonel John Trumbull, William Dunlap, and Asher Brown Durand. The account of this encounter and sale is written down and published in *The New-*

York Evening Post from 22 November 1825. Ellwood Parry quotes the entirety of the article, which is anonymously signed but known to be written by William Dunlap, in *The Art of Thomas Cole* 25-26. Trumbull is most well known for his painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which appears as an engraving on the reverse side of the two-dollar bill. Dunlap was a playwright and artist who studied under Benjamin West, one of the most famous painters of the late 18th century. Durand was an engraver at the time, but would see such promise in the landscape work of Cole that he would later paint landscapes in the same style. The reputation of these men, and their appreciation of Cole's style, created Cole's success. The three paintings were several landscape paintings drawn from sketches that Cole made during a foray into the foothills of the Catskills. Most notably among these was *View of Kaaterskill Falls*, which is not known to exist but is replicated in an 1826 painting of the same view for Daniel Wadsworth. Cole's opportunistic encounter with three of America's established artists immediately placed him in a position to succeed. His style across twenty-five years of painting, while always centered on landscape painting, displayed three thematic differences in approach: wilderness, pastoral lifestyle, and allegorical messages. In different ways, Thomas Cole's approach to nature, the new country of the United States, and religion all played a significant role in the evolution of the artist's painting. Each approach to landscape painting displayed a different reason why the natural landscape of North America deserved consideration for the future.

The Wilderness

The subject of much of Cole's career, and the namesake of the group of artists that followed in Cole's footsteps, was the Hudson River Valley of New York. Cole was obsessed with the endless wonder and beauty of the region and repeatedly recorded his muse on canvas. In a lecture presented to the Catskill Lyceum in 1841, Cole stated that, "in selecting the scene [of American Scenery] the author has placed more confidence in its overflowing richness than in his own capacity for treating it in a manner worthy of its vastness and importance." (Thomas Cole, *Lecture on American Scenery*, 197) As Parry noted in his monograph of Cole, this new attitude towards landscape painting

enriched public appreciation of it. Where European artists sought subjects of Europe's rich history, the history of America was young and undeveloped. Cole filled this void with a subject that mainstream European artists could not compete with—the American wilderness. He elevated the subject of wilderness nature and imbued the theme with imagery of raw power, framing the untouched land as a celebration of an identity unique to America. Insofar as contextualizing this development in art, the westward push from the East coast to West coast of the United States brought with it the excitement of 'unexplored territory' and tales of frontiersmen and pioneers.

View of Kaaterskill Falls embodied these qualities when it was sold to Trumbull in 1825, and the version Thomas Cole produced in the following year did the same. Cole titled this second work as *Kaaterskill Falls* and it exists today, giving us an idea of what the original painting might have looked like (Fig. 1). The interaction between Thomas Cole and Daniel Wadsworth, the patron and eventual lifelong friend for whom *Kaaterskill Falls* was created, served as one of the primary artist-patron relationships that Cole had during his career. Though Cole acquiesced Wadsworth's request for a painting on the same subject as Trumbull's painting, he did so reluctantly. In one of the letters that the two exchanged Cole expressed his feelings towards the matter in saying, "I have labored twice as much upon this picture as I did upon the one you saw: but not with the same feeling. I cannot paint a view twice and do justice to it." (Thomas Cole, letter to Daniel Wadsworth, 20 November 1826, in *The Correspondence of Thomas Cole and Daniel Wadsworth*, 4) With just a glance, it is hard to believe Cole was speaking in terms other than abundant modesty.



Figure 1 Cole, Thomas, *Kaaterskill Falls*, Oil on canvas, 1826, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT

Kaaterskill Falls depicts a view from the underside of an outcropped rock, over which a cascading stream of water plunges into the basin below (Fig. 1). This exact scene of raw American wilderness is far from how it might look to an observer in the same location. Most notable in this respect are the colorful leaves of a North American autumn and the powerful lighting in the sky that hints at majesty and emotion into the painting. Thomas Cole, like other artists of his time, would sketch his subject prior to painting and later work to frame the picture in an aesthetic way. More often than not Cole's work presents a slightly modified landscape to allow for appropriate framing of the

subject, though the subtleties of this process generally produce a convincingly realistic scene. The placement of the waterfall serves as an example of this artistic license, altered to frame the receding vista in the center of the image. On the subject of waterfalls, Cole had powerful words that told of the strong

message in their imagery. "The same object at once presents to the mind the beautiful, but apparently incongruous idea of fixedness and motion—a single existence, in which we perceive unceasing change and everlasting duration. The waterfall may be called the voice of the landscape." (Lecture on American Scenery, 205) This further description of an element found in *Kaaterskill Falls* further delineates the meaning of wilderness to the artist. Its effortless longevity towers over the comparably meager progress of human civilization.

In a far more noticeable edit to the original scene, Cole added a lone figure standing at the edge of the falls, staring out into a ravine that seems to be swallowed by mountains (Fig. 1). This figure, dressed in vaguely traditional native American

attire, is an archetypal image of the noble savage—one of the comparably respectful versions of stereotypical Native American portrayal. For an artist painting the raw, wild landscape of North America, the only step beyond framing a painting to seem majestic is adding the very archetype of the American wild in the middle of it. In the same lecture on landscapes, Cole said, “a very few generations have passed away since this vast tract of the American continent, now the United States, rested in the shadow of primeval forests, whose gloom was peopled by savage beasts and scarcely less savage men.” (Lecture on American Scenery, 201) Cole sends the message that Western civilization faces a more established and ancient entity in wilderness than any they might come to face. This depiction of humanity and wilderness establishes a respect for the power of nature, and is imbued with a sense of reverence. This statement, a prelude to what would become the driving force behind the motivation of environmentalists and conservationists, still considers humankind’s prominent rise as a part of wilderness celebration. The “gloom” of the “savage men” evolves into a beautiful wilderness when shared with civilized people. Cole’s statement reflects ideas about the majesty of the world around humans, and elicits feelings of wonderment and awe. Cole is not necessarily asking the viewer of his painting to protect the environment, but he is imploring them to value the beauty that it holds—the first step towards creating a likeminded, environmentalist group of individuals.

The Frontier

An artist can only paint the same scene so many times, before tiring of the repetitive nature of doing so. Thomas Cole often pointed out that his desired subject was ever filled with new and delightful images that had been yet untouched. A July 5, 1835 journal entry comments on, “virgin waters,” and “virgin forests...preserved untouched from the time of creation for [the artist’s] heaven-favoured pencil.” (Cole, *The Collected Essays*, 131) For most of his early work, Cole operated in a world that had no need to conflict with the sphere of civilization and human progress. The relative few generations of Europeans in North America had been too few to drastically impact the geography and natural landscape of America. However, the time would come when even the sublime virginity

of North America’s landscapes would be sullied and desecrated by the hands of man. Cole spoke about the crossroads of American progress and American wilderness in his “Lecture on American Scenery,” and has been quoted at length here to articulate the emotional sub-text within the artist’s declaration:

To this cultivated state our western world is fast approaching; but nature is still predominant, and there are those who regret that with the improvements of cultivation the sublimity of the wilderness must pass away; for those scenes of solitude from which the hand of nature has never been lifted, affect the mind with more deep-toned emotion than aught which the hand of man has touched. (Lecture on American Scenery, 202)

This well-articulated statement reflects what must have been years of frustration at the open, yet unseeing, eyes of the general public of America. Everything Cole knew to be beautiful, from his time spent sketching in nature, was ignored by the relentless onslaught of human progress during his lifetime. To meet the increasing industrialization of cities and the growing population, wood must be cut and stone must be quarried. In the nineteenth century, taming the wild landscape manifested itself in the concept of the westward moving Frontier line.

The Frontier line has claimed a legendary position in the philosophy of the United States, in cultural context and in symbolic meaning. The excitement of one man taking on the untamed wilderness manifests in countless television shows about wilderness survival and mimicked in sci-fi trekkie tales of space travel. Not the work of Thomas Cole, this solidification of American identity around the Frontier was introduced by historian Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932). In the last years of the 19th century, Turner introduced his idea that the frontier—which was on its way to becoming a memory—was the defining feature of American ideology and culture. Turner stated, “The exploitation of the beasts took hunter and trader to the west, the exploitation of the grasses took the rancher west, and the exploitation of the virgin soil of the river valleys and prairies attracted the farmer.” (Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,”) Turner argued that the presence of a wilderness on the westward border of

the settled North American continent provided an opportunity for civilization to build its way up from savagery time and time again.

Wilderness defeated humans at first, and had to be beaten back in order for humanity to thrive. The Frontier line expanded westward across the United States for the greater part of the nineteenth century, buoyed on by legends of the folk heroes who were the first pioneers to attempt to tame the wilderness.

Thomas Cole's rendition of *Daniel Boone Sitting at the Door of His Cabin on the Great Osage Lake* (Fig. 2) is an early example of Cole's consideration of human interaction with the wilderness subject he so heavily favored. Boone sits with a faithful hound in the lower left quadrant of the painting, his attention fixed on the general direction of the artist's location. The greater part of the canvas is dedicated to a vista across the Great Osage Lake in Kentucky. Similar to the framing of Cole's landscape paintings, a pair of isolated trees sit on either side of the canvas. They guide the eye of the audience from the foreground of the scene to the background, where looming mountains shrouded in golden light and dark clouds extend past the splendid view of the Great Osage Lake.

Here, Cole merges landscape with genre to provide an image with both naturalistic attributes

and an attention to human narrative—landscape referring to a consideration of natural views and



Figure 3 Cole, Thomas, *Daniel Boone Sitting at the Door of His Cabin on the Great Osage Lake*, Oil on canvas, 1826, Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, Massachusetts



Figure 2 Cole, Thomas, *Home in the Woods*, Oil on canvas, 1847, Reynolda House Museum of American Art

scenery, while 'genre' refers to the painting of candid scenes from everyday life. The small dog's upturned eyes wait patiently for Boone's command; Boone himself is seated but not sedentary. There lies an element of restlessness in way his legs are positioned and the manner that he rests his right hand on the rock in front of him, as though waiting for the moment

he can leverage it to push himself up and be on his way. *Daniel Boone Sitting* merges the artist's opinion of nature with the social understanding of the Frontier. Cole, with all his nature exploration and recording, might have fancied himself a bit of a refined Daniel Boone-figure—or at least obligated to pay homage to the legacy of those who delved into the natural

world before him.

Daniel Boone Sitting at the Door of His Cabin on the Great Osage Lake (Fig. 2) was one of Cole's earlier works, but he continued to revisit the mixing of landscape and genre throughout his

career. This style commands the intermingling of nature with humanity, and explores the ways in which the two can coexist. *Home in the Woods* (Fig. 3), a later work of Cole's, depicts just that. From Daniel Boone's independent taming of the wilderness developed a more systematic method of pioneering. Cole's rendition of one example of this depicts a small family of five, subsisting off the land through hunting and fishing. Cattle graze on the river bank in the background, an element consistent with the progress of pioneers.

The artist portrays an estimation of American pastoralism, not highlighting the difficulties of subsistence survival but instead showing the audience an idyllic setting. It is a romanticized scene, where the small family on the fringe of the Frontier enjoys a quaint life of reclusion and peace. Cole spoke on the matter of pioneering when he said, "an enlightened and increasing people have broken in upon the solitude, and with activity and power wrought changes that seem magical." (Lecture on American Scenery, 201) And yet time and time again, Cole has recorded his thoughts about the desecration of the wilderness and the sullyng of virgin "waters" and "forests". (Lecture on American Scenery, 201) *Home in the Woods* reflects a kind of enlightened simplification of the relationship between humans and the environment. As hard as Cole might try, he could not tear himself from the idea that humanity must progress, while simultaneously maintaining a deep love for the raw, natural world he discovered through landscape painting. The genre style paintings in which he attempts to reconcile humans and nature are imperatively idyllic in distinction. For only an idyllic representation would produce a world where human progress could succeed and the natural world could retain its majesty.

Allegories of Humanity

It was the inconsistency between reality and desire that drove Thomas Cole to produce some of the most splendid works of his life. The desire to explore the highest heights of human civilization, the desire to relish in the awesome beauty of the natural world, and the reality that these two desires would clash until only one remained. *The Course of Empire* was a five-painting series that Cole worked on from 1833 to 1836. The narrative relates the rise and fall of a civilization, beginning with the taming of wilderness and ending with nature's retaking of

the ruins of civilization. "It was a paradigm of the Romantic spirit—melancholy, grand in conceptual scope, and didactic and moralizing—and it succeeded in delighting its audience." (Powell, *Thomas Cole*, 70) The series followed Cole's tour of Europe, during which he studied the works of European masters and took particular note of the ruins that covered the world once dominated by classical Empire. Despite the allure of an age-old tradition, Cole wrote to Daniel Wadsworth about his pining for the America wilderness. The particular passage is quoted at length below to relay the layered emotion behind Cole's observations:

I have seen Rome & Naples & have spent nearly a year in Florence & have been delighted & I trust benefitted by the rich treasures in Nature & Art I have seen—I have reveled among pictures & statues—have mused among the ruins of antiquity and drank in the beauty of Italian Landscape—but with all this I have not been so happy as I was before I left home—And nothing has touched my heart like those wild scenes of America from which the hand of Nature had never been lifted. (Cole, letter to Wadsworth, 13 July 1832, in *The Correspondence*, 56)

To unpack all that Thomas Cole expressed in this letter to his lifelong friend and patron is to understand his internal struggle with the problem of American wilderness. He had seen firsthand the ruins that were left after the destruction of empires, and pondered at the stark mutilation of society and the natural world in this process. Whereas several years ago Cole might have been curiously excited at the prospect of the modern empire that America was building, he could now think only of the ramifications such an empire might hold for the subjects he painstakingly recorded on canvas. *The Course of Empire* was to be an enlightening and cautionary message to his fellow countrymen—the sum of the hindsight and foresight that Thomas Cole had to offer during the golden years of America's country-building. A brief overview of the series will show how Cole framed his didactic message across five canvases.

The series begins with sunrise, and the most wild of settings in *The Savage State* (Fig. 4).



Figure 4 Cole, Thomas, *The Savage State*, Oil on canvas, c. 1833-36, New York Historical Society

‘Savage’ folk run through the forest, armed with bow and arrow, rendered in a likeness of Native Americans. The sharp mountain peak cast with golden rays from the sun demonstrates the light of civilization beginning to appear over this raw landscape.

The Arcadian State, the second of the series, demonstrates that society has begun to take form (Fig. 5).



Figure 5 Cole, Thomas, *The Arcadian State*, Oil on canvas, c. 1833-36, New York Historical Society

Clustered groups of individuals are scattered amongst the tamed foliage of this pastoral setting. The combination of landscape painting and genre painting in this scene certainly reflects the sort of Frontier-living that Cole idealized in *Home in the Woods* (Fig. 3). The classical garb worn by the figures in *The Arcadian State* are certainly a reflection of Cole’s time spent in Europe amongst

the work of classical and neo-classical artists. The third painting in the series is presented in full midday light, for it is the peak of civilization (Fig. 6).



Figure 6 Cole, Thomas, *The Consummation*, Oil on canvas, c. 1833-36, New York Historical Society

The empire is gleaming and white, shining in its radiance and celebration of military conquests and cultural revelations. *The Consummation* is the height of human progress as seen in the mind of Thomas Cole. It is again modeled after the great empires of antiquity, going so far as to portray Caesar—or a Caesar-esque figure—riding beneath a triumphant arch (Fig. 6).

Unfortunately for the aspirations of this civilization, reality comes crashing down quite literally in *Destruction* (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. Cole, Thomas, *Destruction*, Oil on canvas, c. 1833-36, New York Historical Society

All the hopes, dreams, and achievements of this idyllic civilization crumble as their society devolves into total war—herein lies the burning admonitions of Thomas Cole—to rise to success is only to fall further and harder given time. The series concludes

with a starkly different scene of overgrown vegetation and a sense that ‘raw’ wilderness is retaking the world. *Desolation* was to be seen as a haunting reminder that humanity need only destroy itself for nature herself to retake what was always hers (Fig. 8).



Figure 8 Cole, Thomas, *Desolation*, Oil on canvas, c. 1833-36, New York Historical Society

This series was commissioned by Luman Reed, but designed entirely by Cole himself. Given the tumultuous circumstances of the 1830s, it is more than likely that the *Consummation* and *Destruction* scenes were inspired by in part by contemporary events—namely the Jackson administration and Jacksonian democracy. In a journal entry dating to August 21, 1835, Cole prophetically noted that he, “felt a presentiment that the Institutions of the U[nited] States will ere undergo a change—that there will be a separation of the states.” (Thomas Cole, Journal Entry of 21 August 1835) He continued to write, “Riot & murder are commonplace occurrences,” and “What a weakness this proves in the government!” (Thomas Cole, Journal Entry of 21 August 1835) Such observations certainly weighed on his mind as he slowly painted a visual representation of the downfall of a successful civilization. “It appears to me that the moral principle of the nation is much lower than the formerly... It is with sorrow that I anticipate the downfall of this republican government; its destruction will be a death blow to Freedom.” (Thomas Cole, Journal Entry of 21 August 1835) To make matter worse, the political message of Cole’s work fell either on unheeding ears or no ears at all.

The Course of Empire was received as a resounding success, one to mark his permanence in

the American art tradition. It was Cole’s usual beautiful landscape mixed with European-favored classicism. The *New-York Mirror* published a series of art reviews on *The Course of Empire* after the paintings were presented to the public. The author of these particular articles wrote his own descriptions for each painting, instead of relying on Cole’s captions and explanations. Ironic in hindsight but overwhelmingly frustrating for Cole was that—in the words of art historian Ellwood Parry—the art reviewer led, “to a particularly American conclusion that destruction and desolation could never happen here because of the unique combination of freedom, progress, and the love of God on this side of the Atlantic.” (Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole*, 186) While it is fair to conclude that Cole held a worldview characteristic of an adamant cynic, *The Course of Empire* remained largely ineffective at influencing the momentous tide of westward expansion and industrialization.

What is clear in *The Course of Empire* is Cole’s consideration of issues that far outdistance the impact of a single individual. Parry notes that in the context of the five paintings that comprise *The Course of Empire*, “it seems that Cole was particularly aware of the differences between the traditional framework of human history and the new geological time scale of worlds without end. Compared to the helpless transience of man and his works, so quickly turned to ruins, the setting for *The Course of Empire*—temporarily used as a stage for human melodrama—goes on unchanged.” (Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole*, 145) As an artist providing a message through his work, he grappled with a society that was seemingly more tumultuous than ever before. Religion, which had held a critical role in American society since its inception, had begun to clash with the newfound field of natural sciences. Cole’s protestant background and his ever-noting observation of the natural world experienced an ever growing fissure as the two fields split apart. Science was no longer a part of religion, but a field capable of tearing it down. Amongst the internal struggle, Cole dealt with the looming reality that his beloved wilderness had only years left before it too would fall to the surging tide of human progress. He vocalized this struggle in the concluding lines of his “Lecture on American Scenery” in saying, “I cannot but express my sorrow that much of the beauty of our landscapes is quickly passing away; the ravages

of the axe are daily increasing, and the most noble scenes are often laid desolate with a wantonness and barbarism scarcely credible in a people who call themselves civilized.” (Lecture on American Scenery, 210) It is not nature itself that will die out, but civilization—when it has consumed all resources available, leaving nature to find a way in a world without humanity’s greed (Fig. 8).

The Struggle of Reconciliation

The most compelling draw to Thomas Cole’s art is how it considers both traditional themes and the developing future, and provides a wonderful visual representation of the internal struggle taking place in the hearts and minds of nature-inclined intellectuals. Cole was a staunch protestant and even attempted to rise to the role of a preacher for a time, and yet in his naturalist artwork he was compelled to explore newfound fields such as geology, biology, and meteorology. His student, Frederic Edwin Church, would go on to use Cole’s style of landscape painting to visually document the work of natural scientist Alexander von Humboldt. Renowned art critic Robert Hughes describes that, “[Church] had set out to give a detailed account of plants, geology, and atmosphere, scientifically true and symbolizing Humboldt’s and his own belief in the unity and harmony of the cosmos.” (Hughes, *American Visions*, 162) Humboldt worked thirty-five years before the voyage of the *Beagle* and Darwin’s establishing of the theory of evolution, a concept that presented serious flaws in the validity of religious history. The world seemed to be turning upside down, and the deep rooted problems Cole identified in his “Lecture on American Scenery” were not showing signs of ameliorating.

Contemporaries of Thomas Cole grappled with the same ideas he struggled with, but from a more scientific based perspective. John Burroughs (1837-1921), a nature essayist, wrote woefully that, “The culture of the race has so long been of a non-scientific character; we have so long looked upon nature in the twilight of our feelings, of our hopes and our fears, and our religious emotions, that the clear midday light of science shocks and repels us.” (Burroughs, “The Ambiguous Impact of Science,” 23) Burroughs refers here to the clashing of religious history with developing ideas about evolution and natural selection. Burroughs went on to write, “our young people go to the woods with pencil and note-book in hand; they drive sharp

bargains with every flower and bird and tree they meet; they want tangible assets that can be put down in black and white. Nature as a living joy, something to love, to live with, to brood over, is now, I fear, seldom thought of.” (Burroughs, “The Ambiguous Impact of Science,” 24) The theoretical credibility behind Burroughs’ reasoning is that while humans might seek to understand the beauty of nature, in doing so they inevitably desecrate the essence of that which they were only trying to understand. Similar to Cole’s frustration at the destruction of nature in the name of resource mining, Burroughs condemns the materialization of nature through quantifying measurements.

George Perkins Marsh (1801-1882) presented a similar rationale to explain the cycle of naturalism and environmental materialization in his landmark ecological study, *Man and Nature*. Though it contains logic at its core, the circular argument that Marsh developed finds no solution to any problem. Marsh summarized his approach with the following logic:

In proportion to a man’s advance in natural knowledge, and his consequent superiority over outward physical forces, is his emancipation from the influence of climatic and local causes, and the more clearly does he manifest those attributes of his proper humanity which vindicate his claim to be called a being, not a thing—a special creation living indeed *in* Nature, but not a product of her unconscious action, or wholly subject to her inflexible laws. (Marsh, “The Pastoral Vision Refuted,” 16)

In contrast to this, Marsh also claims that, “The love of landscape and rural beauty has been increased much in proportion to our familiarity with the different branches of natural knowledge.” (Marsh, “The Pastoral Vision Refuted,” 20) Chief among Marsh’s argument is the claim that as humanity accumulates natural knowledge it establishes dominance over the natural world. His logical continuation is that humans more and more are separating themselves from the idea of a natural world, and instead of living as a part of it are living *in* it as superior beings. His argument describes the necessity of learning about natural science, but in doing so it distances humanity from nature itself.

The contradictory subtext is that humanity materializes and diminishes nature through the study of natural sciences while maintaining a stark fascination with the beauty of it.

In these theoretical assessments, although problems are identified, no rational solutions were conceived. Even Thomas Cole had little idea how to solve future environmental problems in any large scale way. It was to the same ears, of which many fell deaf to the realness of his allegorical paintings, that Thomas Cole presented his pleading call for some measure of action. "I contend that beauty should be of some value among us; that where it is not NECESSARY to destroy a tree or grove, the hand of the woodman should be checked." (Lecture on American Scenery, 210) Cole presented the concept of sustainable living in the simplest way possible. If resource mining was carried out in a more calculated manner, perhaps Cole's beloved wilderness could retain a semblance to its true form. Alas, even if nineteenth century Americans could agree with this simple solution in theory, there was little way of controlling every way in which the rapidly expanding borders of the United States affected the environment upon which they encroached. The environmental problems that are faced by our world today are the materialization of far more than naturalists of the nineteenth century could even begin to predict.

The end of the nineteenth century produced the results that were inconceivable earlier: legislative action to mandate the conservation and preservation of natural wilderness. The establishment of Yellowstone Nation Park in 1872 marked a pinnacle of success for naturalists, the likes of which Thomas Cole never came close to witnessing. The painter's primary legacy will always lie in reshaping the conceptions of landscape painting, and elevating the style to heights it had never reached. Cole's successful work with Hudson River Valley scenery cemented the importance of the world around those in the nineteenth century. His work inspired multiple generations of artists to step out of their studio and paint as a subject that which had only previously been considered as background. Artists like Thomas Moran and Albert Bierstadt founded the Rocky Mountain School, focusing on similar landscape scenery as Cole but in the western territories of the United States. Cole's obsession

with wilderness, willingness to imagine an idyllic coexistence of humans and wilderness, and desire to question civilizations were all paramount to building a lifetime devoted to a cause. Cole's realizations about empire building and resource use proposed questions that no one seemed prepared to answer, not even the artist himself. Thomas Cole died in 1848, not knowing if the immense issues he happened upon during his life would ever reach a resolution. His contributions to the field of naturalism paved the way for later environmentalists to take action towards increased conservation and preservation. Cole's landscape paintings, above all else, were able to capture the intrinsic value of the natural world and persuade wide audiences to go forth and seek it out in all other nature.

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Changes in Advertisements During the Civil War

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The Civil War was a time when uncertainty was high. No one knew what was going to happen to them. The families that were left behind during the war were uncertain if they were going to be forced out of their house and left with no place to go, or even worse they are left to die. The men were off at war... How would a family survive if they have no income and children to feed or have to pay for a doctor to come to the house and administer medicine for a sickly child? The soldiers had their doubts about whether or not they were going to live through the next battle that they were fighting in and whether or not they were going to be able to survive an injury if one occurred. The men that fought in the war had their doubts and were uncertain if they were even going to make it home to their families. They also had to deal with the fact that they could come home to their entire family being deceased or the family had to move to a new area and they were not able to communicate where they are now living. The communities that were affected during the war were uncertain about whether their town was going to become a battle field or if the towns economic status would drop drastically due to the men fighting in the war. Everyone that was affected during the war was uncertain about a lot. Throughout my research I wanted to know how people and businesses were able to survive during the war. How were the advertisements being advertised? What was the reasoning for why they were advertising new areas of interest. I wanted to make a connection to see why the advertisements were changing over the course of the Civil War. When I was researching, I had to think and put myself in the shoes of a soldier, a wife, a child, etc. to try and get a better understanding of what it was like to go through a great amount of stress that it puts onto a person. People knew that the war was happening, but they did not have TV's, cell phones or a radio to find out what was happening across the United States.

Instead they had newspapers. Newspapers was the common way for people to get information during the week and sometimes even daily. In a newspaper, there are common areas of interest that people look at when they are reading the paper. People look at the stories that are published, international news headlines, the detailed graphics that are within the newspapers and the advertisements. During the time of the Civil War the advertisements were a way for the people to see what businesses were selling. Some were goods while others were services to help the sick or to make remedies. The Civil War advertisements shows a shift in the American psyche which reflects evolving interests, desires, ambitions as well as health issues and medical concerns.

The Civil War advertisements that I researched were from Harper's Weekly. Harper's Weekly was a newspaper that would be given out weekly. Harper's Weekly began running in 1857 as a "journal of civilization". The newspaper started running in 1857 and is still running to this present day. I chose to use Harper's Weekly because I felt that it had quality advertisements that I could use to make comparisons to other advertisements within different issues and years. I decided to only look at the January issues of the Harper's weekly for time sake and for simplicity sake too. In the January issue of *Harper's Weekly* of 1861, the advertisements were geared toward quality of life issues that a man, female, or child could be dealing with. The advertisements that were geared toward illnesses and cures included ads about Throat diseases, Premature Hair Loss, Spasmodic Asthma, Hernia's and much more. The ads also included remedies that doctors had made for certain illnesses. An advertisement for Spasmodic Asthma appeared in the January 5th, 1861 edition of *Harper's Weekly*. This ad's main goal is to sell a product that cures this dreadful illness. The ad includes information about the illness, where the medicine is located, who made the medicine, and how the medicine helps to relieve the pain. The ad helped to advertise its product and how it can help with the uncertainty of this illness. Looking at the other ads throughout the issue there is not much difference in what is being advertised. The illnesses and the cures have a few small ads throughout the weeks of January.

In January's issue of 1862 there were differences in what *Harper's Weekly* was

advertising. The January 4, 1862 advertisements maintained some interest in quality of life issues but started to transition into what was needed in the war. There were advertisements for civilian clothing as well as war related issues such as artificial legs, female weakness, matrimony made easy and much more. The advertisement that stood out the most was the "Matrimony Made Easy" advertisement. This ad talked about how the experiment of sex with a partner will help to fascinate any person that they wish. This ad is very different from the other ads that are in the newspaper. From the Civil War starting, families and couples are being torn apart by the war. Some are being killed, others are away at war for months at a time. The couples cannot experience the love satisfaction that they need or want within their relationship. The ad allows for a man or woman to get information about this "curious scientific experiment which never fails." The later issues during the month of January started to include more items about the war. These advertisements included Infantry tactics, Heavy Artillery, guns, and cartridges, etc. The January issues in 1861-1862, both show a slow change in how the uncertainty of war is starting to effect what the consumers are demanding.

The *Harper's Weekly* advertisements during 1862-1865 changed based on what was needed by the war effort. While the January issue in 1862 still has the illness and cure ads in the newspaper, after looking into the month further, there is an increase in military ads. Going into the year 1863, the newspaper's advertisements in January are offering more advertisements for someone that is fighting in the Civil War. There are ads for American Watches, Swords, Guns, Pistols, Artificial legs, Mess Kettles, etc. There are also ads for 'Life Pills'. These ads are geared toward a person that is nervous and needs help calming themselves down. There are also ads for Pensions, Bounty, Pay and Prize for all Army and Navy claims that were made. Looking at 1864, the newspaper advertisements are geared even more towards helping with the war effort perhaps because in April of 1863 Congress passed a Conscription Law which drafted men into the Union Army. The January 2, 1864 issue, has more ads about the war and selling items to purchase i.e. Union Playing Cards, watches, and artificial ears. Comparing the ads from the previous years, there is a more significant amount of the ads for the consumer to read. There is three pages worth of advertisements

that relate to the war. An advertisement that stood out the most would be the ads for Bibles. In the January Issues from 1861-1863, there were no ads for a Bible. Starting in 1864 there were ads each week about them. The ad talked about where the consumer could get a Bible and how much it would cost. Advertising about a Bible in that time era was uncommon and reflects the extreme uncertainty the people were experiencing. Due to the war happening, families and people are being tested on their faith and whether or not they can believe that the war will end or it will continue. The usage of a bible can also help the families to find peace and comfort while their husband, brother, son, or a friend is fighting in the war. The ads over these years have changed to reflect what the war effort was demanding.

The January 7, 1865 issue has similar advertisements to the 1862-1864 ads; however, they also reflect the transition to a post war society. There was not a lot of ads about guns, warfare, ammunition or trying to sell any products related to the war. There were some ads that were trying to sell useful items that a soldier could use i.e. sweatproof money belt and army badges. Looking at the other ads throughout the month of January, there were more ads about curing illnesses. The ad for "Pineapple Cider" is an ad that will cure Rheumatism (Harper's, 1865). The ad gives directions to on how to use the medicine and what it will do to help cure it. The advertisement that stood out the most out of at the issues in January would be the ad for "PETROLEUM" (Harper's, 1865). The ad talks about how a consumer can buy stock in the Petroleum and Mining Company. It talks about where the company mines the Petroleum and where it is located. This advertisement was not in the other 1861-1864 issues of the *Harper's Weekly*. The trend that was shown throughout 1862-1865 shows that the advertisements were first geared towards the war effort, but also started to gear towards new innovations which would bring their own uncertainties.

The advertisements that were published over the years of the Civil War changed over time. The trend that was noticed was that as the war progressed, the ads started to change to what was needed by the war effort. The Civil War advertisements show a shift in the American psyche which reflects evolving interests, desires, ambitions,

as well as health issues and medical concerns. The advertisements showed changes and trends that were happening during the Civil War. The only certainty that the war brought was uncertainty.

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The Art in War: Exploring Trench Art, its Materiality, and the Human Side of War

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Preface

Warfare timelessly associates itself with objects of death and destruction. Whether they manifest themselves as armaments or ammunition, these objects only help in facilitating man's destructive instincts and fueling the flames of war. While many concede that these objects are merely expressions of man's cold, technological ingenuity, I argue that they can also be repurposed for expressing one's humanity in face of the cruel realities of warfare. Thus, this paper seeks to examine trench art, a longstanding practice of transforming materiel² into artwork, utilitarian objects, and even symbolic monuments. By investigating trench art in a material cultural context, we gain a better understanding of the human side of warfare, as seen through the lenses of soldiers, prisoners of war, and civilians that create these art pieces.

Trench art, despite its namesake association with the trenches of WWI, does not originate with the Great War. In fact, trench art has existed as early as the fifth century and has since then become an important byproduct of countless conflicts (Saunders 1). One of the earliest instances of trench art can be found in present-day Istanbul, Turkey. There, at the Hippodrome of Constantinople, lies the Serpent Column, "a three-headed sculpture of intertwined snakes" (Saunders 17). In 479 BC, the

Greeks erected the Serpent Column to celebrate their victory over the Persian army at the Battle of Plataea. The Serpent Column's status as trench art is determined by its materiel composition, which consists of melted-down bronze armor captured from the defeated Persians.

During this time period, however, trench art had not yet become prevalent and it would not gain popularity until more modern conflicts greatly intensified its practice. As such, for the purpose of this paper, I will be primarily focusing on trench art during contemporary conflicts such as WWI and WWII, when the practice became more prominent on a personal level. In addition, I will also refer to trench art in conflicts with which we normally do not associate it such as the Vietnam War. As I discuss trench art during these conflicts, I shall examine it through the lenses of a soldier, a POW, and a civilian. These three parties had very unique circumstances, purposes, and messages, which they conveyed by creating trench art.

Section 1 – Utilities and Coping Mechanisms: Soldiers and Trench Art

The outbreak of WWI and the technological marvels that developed from this international conflict left many both awed and horrified at man's destructive potential. Through our keen intellect and creativity, we produced many devastating machinations such as tanks, railway guns, howitzers, machineguns, and even chemical weapons. These weapon systems would become synonymous with the Great War and would spark a revolution for future weapons development. Despite the technological advancements of WWI, the military tactics and strategies of yesteryear failed to accommodate these new inventions. As a result, opposing armies were forced into a stalemate of trench warfare. Open combat of Napoleonic proportions was no longer feasible and the tactics of maneuverable "block-fighting"³, paired with

³ During the Napoleonic-era, armies would often move as a block-like formation to help maximize their firepower output, since early firearms were smoothbore and inaccurate.

² Materiel refers to military materials and equipment.

machine guns and artillery, rendered any frontal engagement as suicidal.

Campaigns would end up taking years, as either side remained entrenched, hoping to outlast one another. Periodically, large-scale assaults would be mounted on an opposing trench line, wherein an attacking force would disembark from their trenches en-masse, charging into no man's land.³ Many of these attempts were disastrous with men in the millions perishing to land mines, artillery, machine gun fire, and mustard gas. It would appear that the Great War had become the Great Bloody Massacre.

However, long campaigns meant extended free time to the troops hunkering in the trenches as they waited for the signal to mount another perilous assault. The claustrophobic and decrepit living conditions of trench life yielded few amenities and activities. In their spare time, soldiers were limited to sleeping, cleaning their weapons, eating, and writing to their loved ones. Soldiers sought to produce trench art in order to escape the momentary boredom of trench life.

Section 1.1 – Practical Trench Art

With an abundance of spent shell casings, scrap metal, and other materiel, soldiers were able to craft a variety of items for practicality, personal amusement, and spiritual comfort. Trench art during WWI came in many forms and usually reflected its creators' needs and circumstances. For example, a soldier, perhaps an officer, may have required a writing utensil to correspond with loved ones or a letter opener to open letters during mail call. In many cases, the soldier or officer would fashion a letter opener or a pen out of scrap metal and ammunition casings. Appendix A offers several examples of trench art letter openers and writing utensils made during the Great War.

³No-man's land was the area in between opposing trenches. No army strategically owned this land, hence the name. This long stretch of land was often riddled with artillery craters and landmines.

Trench art letter openers varied by design with some being more ornate than others, which likely reflected the individual's skillset or personal preferences. Since both Central⁴ and Allied soldiers came from various socio-economic backgrounds, we can expect different levels of craftsmanship. If we refer to Figure 1 in Appendix A, we can see that the crescent-bladed letter openers were crafted with extreme precision down to the minute detailing of the blade engravings. Figure 2 is far more simplistic, sporting very little detail save for a German iron cross. This piece of trench art implies that its creator either lacked the skillset to make an ornate one compared to Figure 1 or that he did not desire anything ornate.

In addition to letter openers, soldiers also made other practical items to facilitate daily aspects of their lives. One such aspect was smoking, a habit picked up by many troops throughout the War and one that would continue into current operations. Smoking helped calm a soldier's nerves, especially if he was suffering from shellshock, the proto-post WWII diagnosis for PTSD or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In addition to providing some form of psychological tranquility, smoking stimulated troops, keeping them alert should they be ushered into battle at a moment's notice. Troops would sometimes take scrap metal from enemy and allied materiel to fashion ashtrays for discarding cigarettes. Others would produce ornate metal cases to protect their cigarettes from moisture damage, as it would rain quite often on the Western Front. Older soldiers would even fashion metal smoking pipes to serve as a personal souvenir as well as a reusable smoking platform. Please refer to Appendix B for examples of trench art ashtrays, cigarette cases, and smoking pipes.

In many cases, these examples of the trench art allowed soldiers to circumvent both logistical and requisition restrictions in the military. Items such as writing utensils or even cigarette cases were

⁴The Central Powers primarily refers to the Austria-Hungary, the German Empire, and the Kingdom of Serbia.

considered more or less novelty items that were disregarded by the military's supply chain. As such, acquiring such luxury items became both difficult and expensive. Trench art helped alleviate this issue and gave soldiers what they needed, thus enhancing their mundane lifestyles to more bearable conditions.

Section 1.2 – Hobby and Artistic Trench Art: Artillery Shells

While many troops practiced trench art for utilitarian reasons, others would embrace trench art as a hobby and transform existing materiel into small trinkets, jewelry, vehicle models, and even functioning instruments. Perhaps one of the more popular forms of leisurely trench art was the decorative artillery shell. During the Great War, the massive amount of discarded artillery shells left troops with an abundant supply with which they could forge their masterpieces. Artillery shell trench art, or “shell art” as I like to call it, was practiced by both Allied and Central troops of different backgrounds and skillsets, many of whom made these artworks for a variety of reasons. Shell art was most practiced on the Western Front, where trench warfare had intensified. One could expect these art pieces to vary in both skill and sophistication, as was the case with those made by copper workers who joined the Belgian Army. Many of these workers were “consummate metalsmiths”, who had transferred their preWar skills into trench art (Saunders 51). Appendix C contains samples of WWI-era shell art, many of which will vary in both style and purpose.

You will have noticed that some examples of shell art share similar characteristics, particularly in how the artillery shell was given an hourglass shape. This was achieved through a popular decorative technique known as “corsetting”, which involved fluting the lower half of an artillery shell. According to Nicholas J. Saunder's *Trench Art: Second Edition*, corsetting could be achieved by several means. One common method was to heat

the artillery shell with molten lead to allow some pliability and then use a “specially shaped wooden punch” to hammer against the insides of the shell (Saunders 57). After all desired decorations were applied to the shell, it would be reheated again to remove the punch and allow for finalization. Some of the higher quality shell art was difficult to produce due to the lack of necessary skillset or tools. In some cases, shell art could only be produced in the rear lines by the likes of combat engineers, who usually had immediate access to machine tools and molten lead.

Another key feature of shell art is the distinct designs and engravings. Many of these shell art pieces were often decorated with pastoral motifs such as “flowers, leaves, and romanticized images of women” (Saunders 57). Such imagery reflected the ideals of “art nouveau”, a popular neoclassical art style that emerged during the 1890s, which heavily emphasized nature and feminine beauty (Saunders 57). In addition to reflecting trending art styles, shell art also incorporated landscape or landmark designs, as is the case in Figure 11, which shows an artillery shell featuring a relatively detailed rendition of the Basilica at Albert on the Somme.

Based on the examples of shell art that we have seen, we can interpret the purpose of each artifact or even deduce the background of its creator. If we examine Figures 12-14, we can deduce that the creators were art nouveau enthusiasts who wanted to produce artwork that was reflective of trending art styles. By looking at Figure 15, we can observe an artillery shell that was decorated with a motif of Alsace-Lorraine, a piece of land with contested Franco-German identities. We can assume that the creator was either of French or German nationality and that shell art served as a bold statement to claim Alsace-Lorraine as either rightful French or German territory.

In Figure 16, the artillery shell is decorated with the Flanders Lion, the coat of arms of Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern portion of

Belgium. This indicates the background of the creator, who we can likely assume is Flemish or at least of Belgian descent. It also indicates that he might have created this trench art as a form of communal pride, possibly one drawn from nostalgia for one's homeland. It could be that the creator intended for this particular artwork to be sent back home as a souvenir or as reassurance to his loved ones of his survival.

These are among the many interpretations, which we as viewers can make through examining these artifacts. Shell art, among other forms of leisurely trench art, reflected the skillsets of its creators and their cultural or national background. Some trench art pieces were more ornate than others based on the availability of tools needed to produce it. Regardless, shell art all share common characteristics through their expression of trending art styles, environmental observations, nostalgia, and national pride.

Section 1.3 – Hobby and Artistic Trench Art: Jewelry

In addition to shell art, hand crafted jewelry was also pervasive throughout WWI and WWII. While it is doubtful that any of these items were of utilitarian value, many soldiers would still often craft these objects either because they had the spare time to engage in these activities or were personally compelled to craft something out of emotional endearment. Jewelry was easily one of the more popular forms of metal-based trench art. It often had very personal and emotional connections and contributed to the “remaking of individual identity” (Saunders 92). One of the more common jewelry pieces made by troops was a finger ring, which was produced by soldiers from all nations.

According to Saunders in his earlier work, *Trench Art: Materialities and Memories of War*, active soldiers such as the Belgians would make finger rings from aluminum fuses and washers salvaged from discarded German artillery shells. These rings would often be sold on the black

market, bartered for something of equal or greater value, or sent home to wives and loved ones. Wounded soldiers also enjoyed fashioning trench art rings in their inactivity due to the relative ease in making them. Please refer to Appendix D for examples of trench art finger rings and jewelry.

Section 1.4 – Hobby and Artistic Trench Art: Models

While rings were considered some of the more simplistic forms of leisurely trench art, more complex trench art such as miniature models tended to require exceptional levels of skill and patience to properly produce. Models in particular were usually meant to reflect the various technological marvels of one's time. During WWI, troops would often make metal models of tanks and bi-planes in various sizes. Often, these models were made with brass and shell casings, depending on what was available to the soldier at the time. During WWII, soldiers would produce their models after fighter planes like the P-38 Lightning. The Vietnam War saw the first widespread usage of helicopters and so some troops would make models based off the titular UH-1 Huey helicopter. Please refer to Appendix E for different model vehicles as they were made across WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam War.

Section 1.5 – Hobby and Artistic Trench Art: Instruments

Though trench art models and rings may have appealed to the individual's desire for extra cash, lovesickness, and craftiness, the creation of trench art musical instruments appealed to the group. War can be psychologically damaging and isolating to the individual, but in the warmth of comradery, group cohesion and morale can help one maintain his psyche. Music has remained an integral part of warfare. During the Napoleonic era, fife and drummers would often play tunes to help pace troops as they marched into battle. During an

engagement, the tune would change to notify troops when to advance, hold position, or retreat. Music in the modern context of 20th and 21st century conflicts sought to boost troop morale. For example, during WWII, various record companies would ship musical records to troops called V-discs, which contained a motley collection of popular songs, for soldiers' listening pleasures via record player. These discs would often be played at nightclubs where troops would visit while on leave.

However, out on the battlefield, such luxuries were scarce, so troops would often rely upon compact instruments that they either made or found. Such was also the case in WWI and Vietnam. Using wood, wiring, and other available materials, troops could produce a makeshift stringed instrument. If a soldier was lucky, he could sometimes obtain a harmonica. Many of these instruments, especially those made through trench art techniques, were used to play songs that would not only uplift soldiers in times of distress, but also tell abstract stories of their troubles and the sociopolitical climate around them. Usually, the homemade trench instruments would reflect the cultural background of the soldier and the style of music he preferred such as in Figure 25 in Appendix F, which likely implies an American creator with ties to the South.

Section 1.6 – Religious Trench Art

When the leisurely joys of music failed to comfort the soldier, he would often look towards religion for solace. Religion provided troops with spiritual security, reassuring them they were protected from harm. Wars have always necessitated the need for religion either as a justification for conflict or as a spiritual beacon for divine intervention. The latter became quite relevant when we consider man's technological investments in the global war machine. The mechanization of ground warfare, the devastation of precision munitions, and the harnessing of chemical weaponry all resulted in massive combat fatalities. The sheer number of deaths per engagement complemented by the visual carnage of the dead imprinted a deep, psychological scar for those previously sheltered or

unaware of such sights. For many who were shell shocked by these terrifying weapons, religion offered a safe retreat from the horrors of war.

During WWI and onwards, the army chaplain would serve as this safe retreat, acting as a homing beacon for troops, where he blessed them with protection before they embarked on a dangerous mission. Additionally, the chaplain acted as a comforter for those on their deathbeds. However, some troops, especially those wary of their impending demise, believed they required more than a chaplain's blessing. To enhance their spiritual protection, many troops, if they did not already own one, would craft crucifixes out of scrap metal and materiel and carry these crucifixes into battle. Much like a talisman, these crucifixes reassured soldiers that there was still light amidst the hopelessness of the Great War. Please refer to Appendix G for an example of a typical trench art crucifix that soldiers would have likely carried into battle.

Section 1.7 – Niche Trench Art: Sweetheart Grips

It should be interesting to note that the production of these personal talismans would continue across various conflicts beyond the Great War, where the advancement of military technology and the massive death toll they incur, would only further necessitate the need for spiritual protection. While crucifixes and other personalized trench art would continue to be made or carried by troops across both world wars, and in Vietnam, the advent of WWII saw the popularization of a niche form of trench art called sweetheart grips. This new variation of trench art involved the synthesis of firearms and traditional trench art. The idea was to remove the existing wood grips on a handgun, replacing them with Plexiglas⁵ versions of said grips. Then, a cropped photo of a loved one would be inserted behind one of the Plexiglas grips, turning the handgun into a portable picture frame, albeit one that shoots.

⁵ Service members making sweetheart grips would often acquire Plexiglas from fighter plane and bomber cockpits.

Sweetheart grips were meant to keep a soldier's memory of his spouse or loved one close to his person, preferably to his heart, where some pistols were sometimes kept via shoulder holster. The idea of synthesizing a tool for war and a picture frame of a loved one seemed to imbue the sense that the picture subject was protecting its wielder in combat, much like how a crucifix would divinely protect its carrier in battle. Additionally, the sweetheart grip might have also indicated the intensity of a soldier's devotion to his loved ones and his desire to return home safely. In many cases, this sweetheart-gripped handgun would act as a lucky charm for that soldier as he fought overseas.

Sweetheart grips were immensely popular among all soldiers, particularly American service members. These customized grips would often be seen on handguns issued to pilots, tankers, and officers, all of whom carried it for both personal protection and social status. However, other soldiers not relegated to these positions would soon begin carrying handguns themselves and would also follow the sweetheart grip trend.

The concept of sweetheart grips was that it was never limited to just standard issue handguns. During WWII, the most popular souvenir among American soldiers was the Luger P08 and Nambu Type 14 handgun, commonly carried by German and Imperial Japanese officers respectively. Many American soldiers would often scavenge for them after a battle, hoping to bring one home as a war trophy. Soldiers would sometimes further personalize these captured trophies with sweetheart grips. While WWII may have inspired the mass practice of personalizing one's weapons, the practice can also be traced back to a particular case in WWI.

A soldier in the Royal 22nd Regiment of the Canadian Army by the name of Henry Lecorre had personalized his Lee Enfield rifle with engravings bearing the names of various battles his unit had fought. The rifle, affectionately named Rosalie, is currently on display at the Royal 22nd Regiment's

museum in Quebec. Appendix H contains several examples of sweetheart grips found on several WWII-era or issued sidearms.

Section 2 – Pastimes in Captivity: Internees, POWs, and Trench Art

Trench art was not limited to just the active or wounded soldier. Even those in captivity, both military and civilian, became engrossed in trench art. Unlike on the battlefield, the supply of metal scraps at POW and internment camps was relatively scarce. Thus, the POW and civilian internee did not fully embrace the *Zeitgeist*⁶ of metal-based trench art. Instead, many found alternatives through wood and bone-based trench art.

Section 2.1 – German Internment Trench Art

Though POWs have long remained a common byproduct in the aftermath of a military operation, we rarely ever hear about civilians as prisoners themselves. When we do hear about civilian prisoners, especially through such wordage as internment, our first association is with the Japanese Americans during WWII. However, internment has in fact preceded that notion. During the Great War, the British, driven by fears of domestic espionage, interned countless German aliens. According to Harold Maytum's, *A Tale of Two Treatments: The Materiality of Internment on the Isle of Man in World Wars I and II*, the most notable location of German internment and later a source for civilian trench art was at the Isle of Man, a "Crown Dependency" or self-governing possession of the Crown (Maytum 36). This new internment site would be comprised of two camps: Douglas Camp and Knockaloe Camp. For the purpose of this section, we shall be focusing primarily on Knockaloe Camp, its inhabitants, and their trench art creations. Additionally, we shall also discuss Japanese American internee trench art

⁶ The term "Zeitgeist" (spirit of the time) refers to the dominant set of ideals and beliefs that motivate the actions of members of a society in particular time period.

as well as touch briefly upon notable POW trench art during WWII.

According to Maytum's research, the majority of Knockaloe internees were Germans who had immigrated to Britain, married local women, and had children, many of whom were fighting in the British Army (Maytum 41). In addition to German internees, there were also Austrians, Hungarians, and Turks. This intermingling of Central Power nationalities within the confines of the internment camp created a new national identity for its inhabitants. Amidst a media censorship campaign imposed on Knockaloe Camp, internees would often protest their confinement and the growing xenophobic sentiment towards them, by using trench art to disguise their contempt as well as to escape the dreariness of forced internment.

One popular form of trench art practiced by the German internees was carved animal bone vases. Many of these vases were usually carved from ox or cow bone, both of which were abundant in the camp as beef and oxen was a staple food source. These carved bone vases would often convey "escapist or uncontentious designs", which functioned as a form of protest to confinement (Maytum 43). Much like shell art, bone art was very similar in the themes it portrayed. Its creators would often utilize pastoral motifs such as flowers and branches when decorating their vases. In addition, the vases themselves varied by bone quality and beauty, based on the skillsets of its makers. According to Saunders, the better-quality bone was often reserved for more "accomplished artists" (Saunders 121). There also seemed to be a hierarchal system regarding the types of flowers used on the vases. For example, novice carvers would prefer "simple outlines of tulips" whereas a master carver would attempt an "ornate representation of roses as buds" and "full flower[s]", accompanied by "folded leaves and petals" (Saunders 121). Please refer to Appendix I for an example of bone art.

Section 2.2 – Japanese Internment Trench Art

Civilian trench art would continue in practice with Japanese American internees during WWII, albeit with greater access to different materials. Under the directives of Executive Order 9066, Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps under suspicions of espionage, following the surprise Pearl Harbor attack by the Imperial Japanese Navy. Many interned Japanese Americans would indulge themselves in trench art, taking raw materials and transforming them into imaginative creations to "pass the time and beautify their bleak surroundings" (Harisuna "The Art").

Delphine Harisuna's *The Art of Gaman* explores the various types of trench art that were often fabricated by interned Japanese Americans in their spare time. Unlike the art of their German counterparts, Japanese American art items did not contain cloaked gestures of contempt, but rather expressed their cultural backgrounds and customs. Using available materials such as wood and scrap metal, many Japanese Americans were able to create furniture, tools, toys, and other culturally significant items. Much like their military counterpart, Japanese American internment trench art reflected its creators' desires and cultural backgrounds. Items such as those presented in Appendix J were designed for use in everyday life like in Figure 34 while others such as in Figure 35 were made as a sign of gratitude towards others. Interestingly, some items such as the one shown in Figure 36 were even made for aiding in courtship. Regardless of what type of object the Japanese Americans crafted, many of them always included a distinct cultural appearance or function that differentiated them from other civilian and military trench art of the time.

Section 2.3 POW Trench Art

It should be noted that bone and wood-based trench art was not limited to civilian internees as both POWs and active soldiers embraced the art whenever such materials were

available. Figure 37 in Appendix K presents a carved and painted ox bone made by a German POW. Unlike the German-made bone art pieces at Knockaloe Camp, which were often unpainted and depicted pastoral motifs, the POW bone art pieces were often decorated with “engraved and vividly painted military insignia” (Saunders 119). While smaller items such as bone art, woodcrafts, and even beadwork were common among POWs of all sides, on some rare occasions, we can find much larger, magnificent works of POW trench art. Saunders cites in one of his case studies of a particular trench art called the “Italian Chapel” on the island of Lambholm, Orkney, an archipelago in the Northern Isles of Scotland (Saunders 196). The chapel is the only remnant of Camp 60, a POW camp that housed Italian soldiers captured in North Africa during WWII.

According to Saunders, in late 1943, camp officials made available two Nissan huts⁷ for the Italian POWs. One prisoner by the name of Domenico Chiocetti began converting the huts into a chapel, with the assistance of other prisoners. Among them were “several electricians, a smith, and a cement worker” (Saunders 196). The author provides an extensive list of some of the features found on the finished Italian Chapel:

- An altar, moulded in concrete.
- Gold curtains, acquired from a company in Exeter, paid with money from the prisoner’s welfare fund.
- Candelabra⁸ made from iron and brass.
- A tabernacle⁹ made with wood obtained from a wrecked ship.
- Frescoes on the Chapel’s vault painted by Chiocetti.

The Italian Chapel, which still stands today, is considered an impressive piece of trench art not

just for its sheer size, but also for the extensive amount of effort and detail taken to construct an authentic Italian chapel. From a material culture perspective, the Italian Chapel is an extremely significant example of both trench art and cultural recreation in a foreign land. For the Italian prisoners who built it, the Chapel served as a three-dimensional “expression of the prisoner-of-war experience for Italian men for whom their Catholic faith [...] sustained them during incarceration” (Saunders 197). This expression of sustainment was one primarily driven by defiance towards one’s captors, much like the case with German civilian internees at Knockaloe Camp.

Eileen Whitehead’s thesis, *World War II Prisoner of War Visual Art: Investigating its Significance in Contemporary Society*, argues that many POWs risked death to produce such works as the Chapel, which served as a “positive act of defiance, through which they managed to retain their sanity” (Whitehead 6). Whitehead cites from Ursano and Blundell that “defiance of oppression strengthens the will to live and provides personal empowerment” (Whitehead 6). In the case of the Italian POWs, she argues that the Italian Chapel, as a symbol of resistance, is key to maintaining the Italians’ “self-respect” in a situation of “enforced captivity” (Whitehead 6). It was through Saunderson’s case study of the Italian Chapel that inspired Whitehead with her work on POW paintings in the Pacific Theater. During WWII in the Pacific Theater, many American and Allied service members who were captured by the Imperial Japanese, were often subject to horrible mistreatment. In order to protest their abuse and confinement, many of these Allied POWs would paint the dehumanizing conditions of their captivity as a means of defying their Japanese captors. Please see Appendix K for pictures of the Italian Chapel.

Section 3 – Recyclia and Memorabilia: Trench Art Beyond War

In the present day, we are left to assume that trench art is an aged fossil that shares a momentary

⁷ Prefabricated steel structure, made from half-cylindrical skin of corrugated steel for use as barracks.

⁸ A large branched candlestick or holder for several candles or lamps.

⁹ A large, locked box where the Eucharist is stored.

message at the time of its creation. However, if we look past that presumption, past the fog of war, we can see that trench art remains relevant, living beyond the battlefield as an influential artifact in the historical, artistic, and hobbyist field. At present, trench art is a rich and largely overlooked resource for gaining further cultural insight into the lives of the soldiers and civilians who created it. Trench art has inspired others to recreate it with both modern and period materiel. However, its uniqueness has resulted in conflicting views from museum institutions and private collectors. Additionally, trench art has also reinvigorated art movements, which seek to repurpose it to communicate relevant social issues in a polarized, geopolitical landscape.

As a culturally enriching resource, trench art presents a new dynamic in its artful representations of war. Traditional artwork such as paintings and memorials represent war from a “distance, spatially and temporally” (Saunders 163). As a result, such mediums usually fail at drawing its viewers closer to understanding the nature of conflict. These mediums ultimately become nonchalant impressions of warfare that lack “sensuous or tactile immediacy” (Saunders 163). Contrastingly, trench art aims to establish a more intimate relationship with its viewers through its incorporation of materiel into its artistic forms. Trench art possesses a “dimension of connectedness to people, war, loss, and survival”, something that is absent from conventional art mediums (Saunders 163).

Section 3.1 Recreating Trench Art

The industrial nature of trench art, specifically through its incorporation of scrap metal, has inspired many artists to recreate that same style of artwork in their own time. This replication of trench art can sometimes utilize existing modern materiel or if possible, even period materiel, which further enhances the authenticity of a particular type of trench art. One instance of this inspired recreation comes from a set of 3D

sculptures made in the 1990s by a Belgian sculptor named Rik Ryan. Using WWI-era artillery shells collected from nearby battlefields, Ryan created two metal-based figurines depicting a wounded British and German soldier supporting each other. Both figures were on crutches, each with an amputated leg. Ryan’s penchant for making trench art figures was inspired by his earlier participation in WWI battlefield archeological digs. Spent munitions that had once maimed and “fragmented” the human body, were now being reassembled through trench art figurines to “make the body whole again” (Saunders 169).

Other contemporary artists such as Belgian artist Ivan Sinnaeve have begun making their own modern-day trench art. Sinnaeve, otherwise known as “Shrapnel Charlie”, began casting trench art-style WWI-era toy soldiers after being inspired by toy soldiers he had encountered in a local shop (Saunders 169). Rather than use commercial metal, Sinnaeve would use the “endless supply of lead shrapnel balls” scavenged from the battlefields by local farmers and children, to whom he would compensate with his finished figurines (Saunders 171). Much like Ryan, Sinnaeve shares fond memories of exploring old battlefields for war debris and other particularities.

Section 3.2 – Trench Art and Conflicting Attitudes

Despite its ongoing recreation, trench art and its artistic value was often met with ambiguous responses by various academic and museum institutions in the postwar era. According to Saunders, there were conflicting attitudes towards trench art in its representation as war “souvenirs and memorabilia”, which ultimately elicited its popular description as being “kitsch” art or something of mere trivial value (Saunders 174). Saunders cites Susan Stewart’s book, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, where she states that the “kitsch object offers a saturation of materiality”

(Saunders 174). Stewart argues that the act of decorating a piece of military hardware such as a spent artillery shell would ultimately render it overmateralized and thus classify it as a kitsch item.

Contrastingly, some consider that the decoration of the artillery shell “personalizes” an otherwise “anonymous object by inscribing evidence of life, culture, and agency” (Saunders 174). The labeling of trench art as kitsch becomes quite detrimental to its cultural value, as it implies that one trivializes war, reducing it to something that is “commonplace” instead of something “awesome and frightening” (Saunders 174). Saunders believes that while there may be initial tension in accepting trench art as a culturally or artistically significant artifact, one could alternatively seek an anthropological understanding of a trench art item. He cites George Mosse’s summary of a 1916 German exhibition, organized by the Red Cross, called “Krieg, Volk, und Kunst” or War, Folk, and Art (Saunders 175). Mosse remarks how the Iron Cross, the highest German military decoration, would appear on everyday items from needle cushions to candy wrappers. After the Great War, many of these trivial items would be sold to tourists at historical battle sites as souvenirs.

Trench art would not become bound to anthropology. Much like any new idea or concept, trench art would eventually become an accepted facet of intellectual intrigue. Saunders states that the “attitudes toward trench art and its public display appear to be changing rapidly” (Saunders 182). He notes that various museums throughout the world, such as the *Histoire de la Grande Guerre* in France, have begun including a small number of trench art items for public display. Though, the items in questions are generally those that are more unique in appearance such as an “English Tommy’s helmet painted with a landscape scene” (Saunders 182). As more museums begin to organize these trench art items for public display, the museum institution may soon regard trench art as an artifact of great historical, cultural, and artistic significance.

Section 3.3 – Trench Art and Collectability

Outside the realm of preservation, trench art still remains a popular item among some private collectors who seek it not so much for its monetary value, but for its sentimentality. Many collectors often establish emotional connectivity in these items. Perhaps they are like Ryan and Sinnaeve, looking to use trench art as an inspirational source for artistic expression. Others may collect for the aesthetic appeal while some may even have a personal obligation, possibly because an ancestor had once fought in a particular war and had made trench art during their service. Sometimes, historical re-enactors seek these items as a means to enhance their character’s personality during events. Today, many militaria websites, catalogues, and auction houses will sell different types of trench art to the various parties for the purposes above.

Section 3.4 – Repurposing Trench Art for Social Issues

Trench art continues to expand beyond academia, preservation, recreation, and collection. In a polarized age of geopolitical agendas, warfare has become far more rampant, spreading like wildfire of varying sizes. These micro and macro conflicts concentrate themselves into the untamed, postcolonial reaches of the Third World, from the desert brush of Africa and the Middle East to the wet jungles of Southeast Asia. One such conflict was the Mozambican Civil War, which lasted from 1976 to 1992. This bitter conflict began two years after Mozambique had gained its independence from Portugal in 1974. In many ways, the Mozambican Civil War, like many other African civil wars during this time period, resembled the various proxy wars instigated by America and the Soviet Union in the heyday of the Cold War. Brutal violence would resurge as the Mozambican ruling party, Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), and its national armed forces, violently clashed with the Mozambique Resistance Movement (RENAMO).

The Mozambican Civil War was a complicated military situation, but can be simplified to an ideological struggle between two political groups. RENAMO, which was sponsored by a white-ruled Rhodesia, was founded in 1975 as part of an anti-Communist movement against Mozambique's more socialist, ruling party FRELIMO. After 16 years of fighting, the Mozambican Civil War would ultimately end in a stalemate following the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers and the commencement of multiparty elections in 1994. The conflict, though partially resolved, had scarred Mozambique, leaving behind a death toll that numbered in the millions, most of which were attributed to famine and war crimes committed by both sides.

Much like the Great War, the Mozambican Civil War would also see an influx in trench art, many of which have are still being presented in mobile exhibitions. Trench art would be revitalized for a new mission during this conflict, as it will with many others. Rather than simply serve as expressions of the individual, trench art would be repurposed to bring awareness about the bloody nature of the conflict. In addition, in the stead of the Mozambicans, trench art would help demonstrate the ability to build peace and heal a war-torn country after nearly 15 years of unrelenting armed conflict.

The transformation of trench art into a powerful social weapon for peace can be seen in Figure 41 (Saunders 207) of Appendix L¹⁰. This trench art sculpture, shaped as a bird, is comprised of various dismantled weapons that were traded in for tools as a means to help rebuild Mozambique¹¹. The reinvigoration of trench art ultimately makes it a viable and flexible medium by which one can

communicate not just individual identity during war but also messages for social change.

Conclusion

Trench art, the longstanding practice of transforming materiel into artwork, utilitarian items, and novelties has supplanted itself as a recurring movement in worldwide conflicts. Whether it is in the trenches of Western Europe, the jungles of Vietnam, or the desert brush of Mozambique, trench art seeks to express the desires of its creators, while codifying their cultural heritage and communicating their social messages. Trench art transcends the mere notion of a trivial item made to pass time. Rather, trench art serves as a dynamic element of material cultural studies that lends itself as a rich resource for understanding not just its materiality, but also its immateriality when glimpsing at the human side of war.

It has become increasingly imperative that we study, analyze, and interpret the messages behind these unconventional forms of art. The stressful and oftentimes traumatizing atmosphere of the battlefield drastically differs from the more comfortable mental environment of the civilized world. As such, a civilian on the home front and a soldier on the battlefield become isolated entities, separated by the sights, sounds, trauma, and desires each party encounters within their respective environment. For those residing in the theater of war, conventional methods of artistic expression such as painting are no longer deemed fully sufficient for communicating one's traumas and desires.

Instead, more rustic approaches à la trench art become the norm for soldiers seeking to cope with their experiences and convey their emotions to the outside world. Since these trench art pieces are often codified for a soldier's or war-exposed civilian's understanding, its meaning to us home front civilians is usually lost in translation. Henceforth, as these makeshift art pieces become collectables and museum exhibits, it has now

¹⁰ Appendix L also contains images of Ryan's 3D models and Sinnaeve working on his trench art tin soldiers.

¹¹ In 1995, the Mozambican government initiated a weapon trade-in program, where militants on both sides of the Civil War could turn in their weapons for tools, which could be used for rebuilding their war torn country.

become our mission to begin deciphering the hidden messages behind trench art. It has become our mission to bridge the gap of understanding between civilian and soldier, bringing us closer to understanding one's humanly desires, traumas, and experiences in warfare.

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Appendix A – Stationary Trench Art



Figure 1: “*Crescent Blade Letter Opener*”: Several ornate WWI-era crescent-bladed letter openers made from brass scrap with bullets for handles. Note the King’s Crown on the leftmost letter opener, indicating that a British or Commonwealth soldier likely crafted the item.

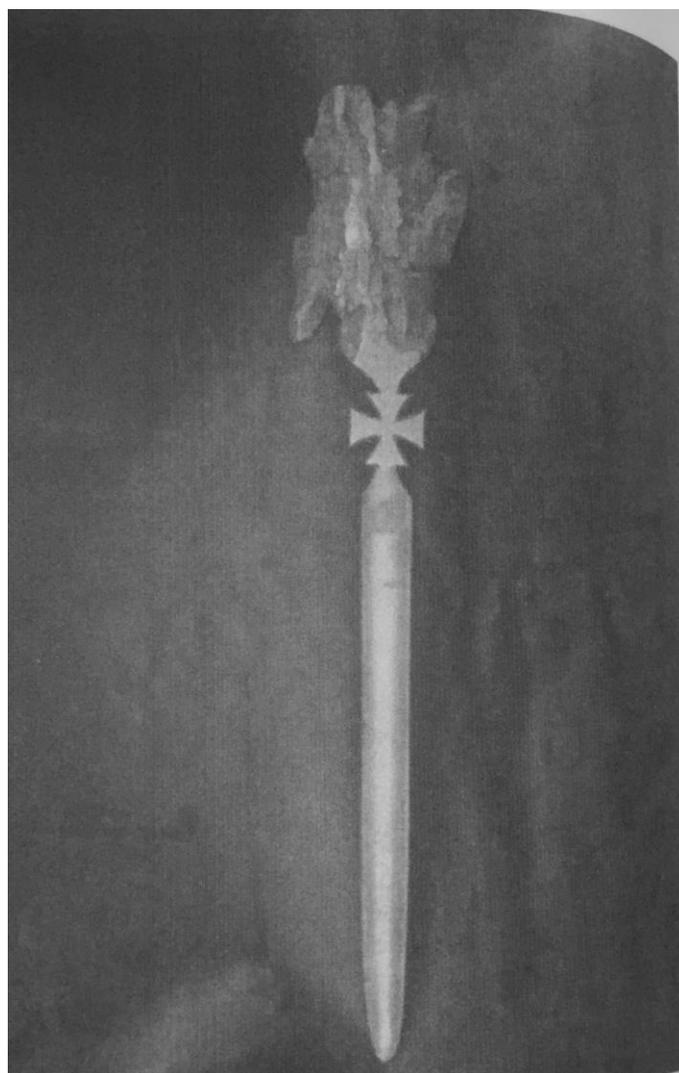


Figure 2: “*German Shrapnel Letter Opener*” – A WWI-era German-style letter opener with the handle fashioned from a piece of steel shrapnel. Note the German Iron Cross at the neck of the letter opener.

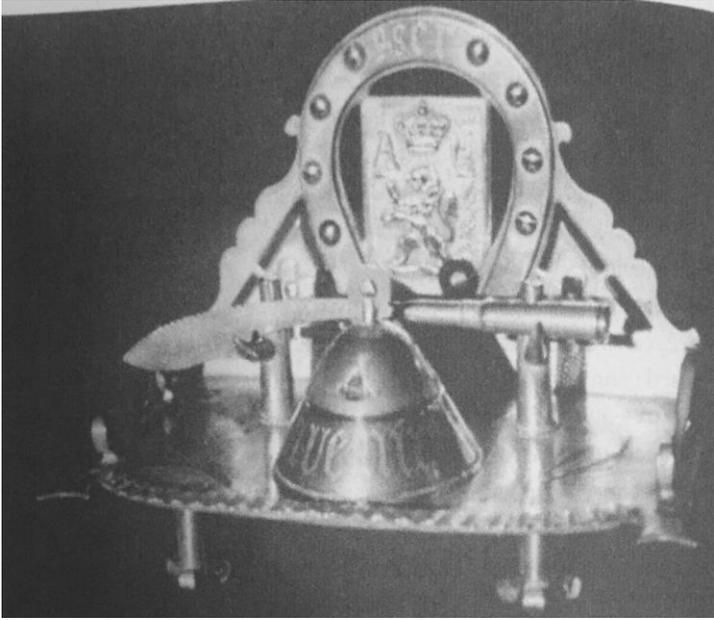


Figure 3

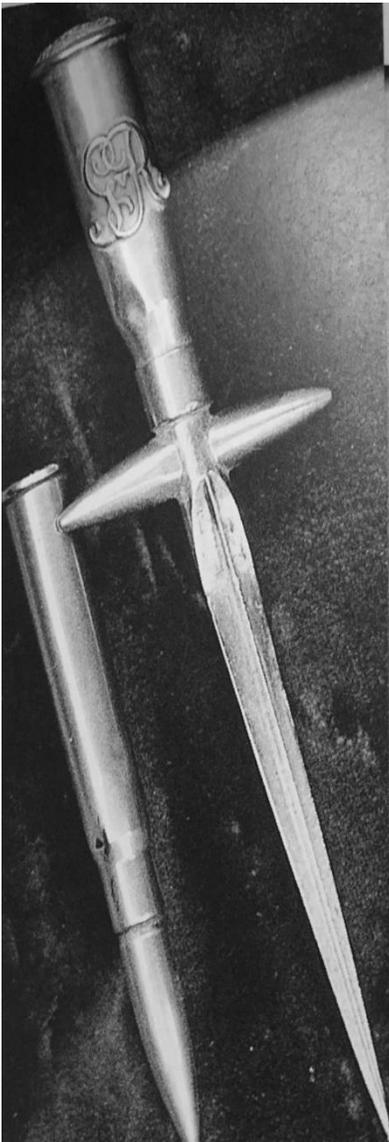


Figure 4

Figure 3: “*Belgian Writing Set*” – An ornate WWI-era writing set made from different types of materiel. The words “Yser” and “Souvenir” have been inscribed onto the writing set alongside a Flanders Lion engraving, indicating that the creator was likely a Belgian soldier.

Figure 4: “*Trench Dagger Letter Opener*” – A WWI-era letter opener doubling as a trench dagger. Made from a bayonet blade, a Belgian bullet handle, and a British .303 bullet cartridge as a sheath. The letter opener serves a dual purpose of being a stationery tool and a personal defense weapon.

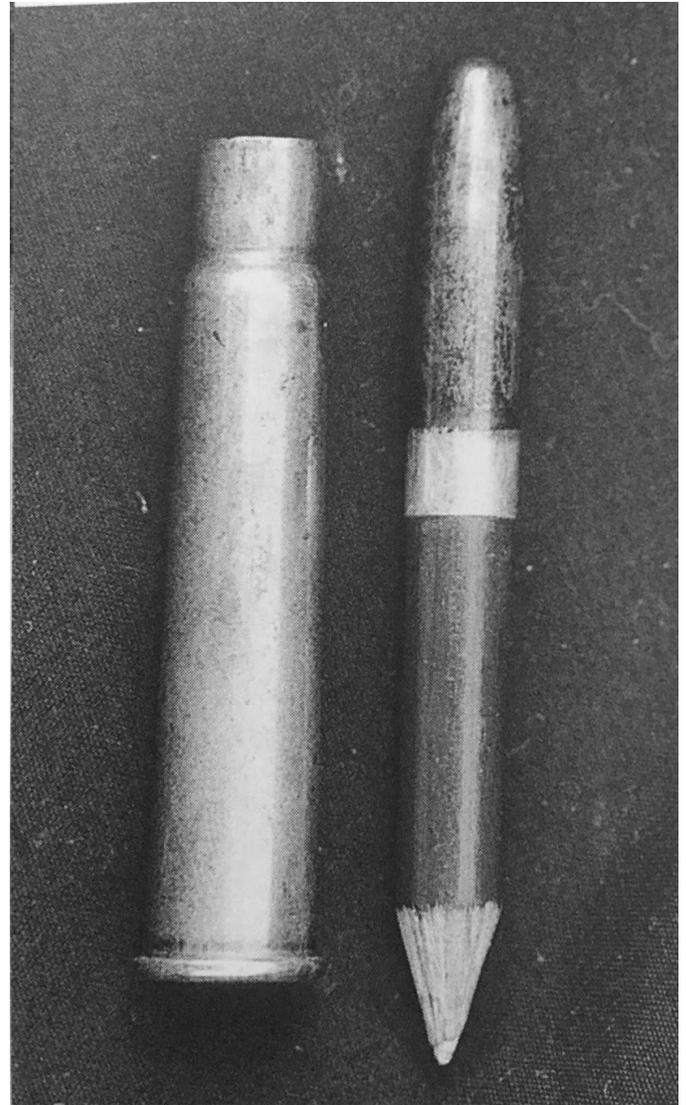


Figure 5

Figure 5: “*Bullet Pencil*” – A WWI-era pencil that has been combined with parts of a bullet. The bottom half of the bullet casing acting as a protective cover for the pencil.

Appendix B – Smoking Item Trench Art

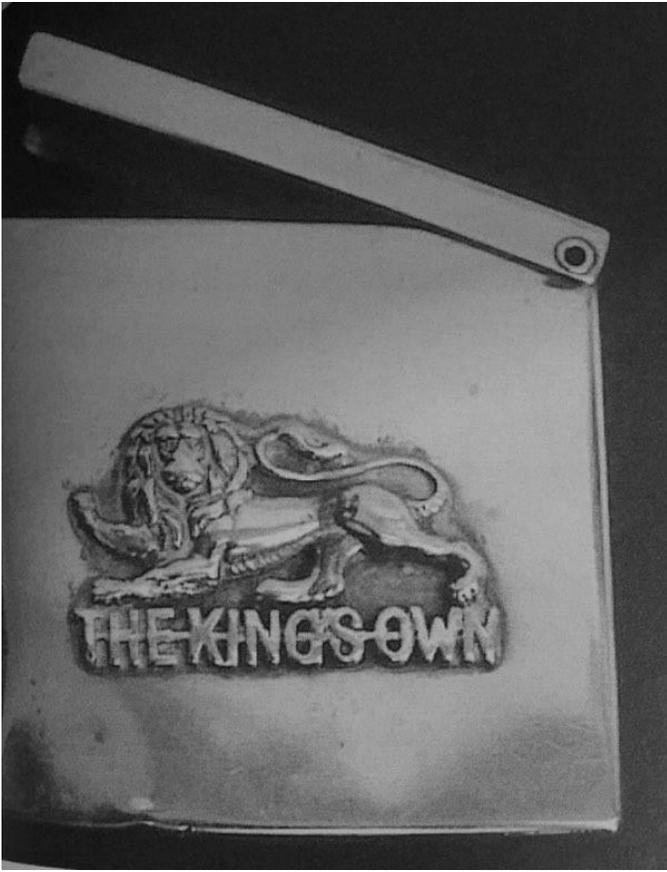


Figure 6

Figure 6: “*British Cigarette Case*” – A WWI-era cigarette cases made from scrap brass and emblazoned with the crest of The King’s Own Royal Regiment of Lancaster.



Figure 8

Figure 8: “*Souvenir Ash Tray*” – A post-WWI souvenir ashtray made from brass and decorated with bullets.



Figure 7

Figure 7: “*Ornate Smoking Pipe*” – An ornate WWI-era soldier’s smoking pipe made from a bullet cartridge stem and an aluminum bowl. The pipe has the engraving, “Iser.”

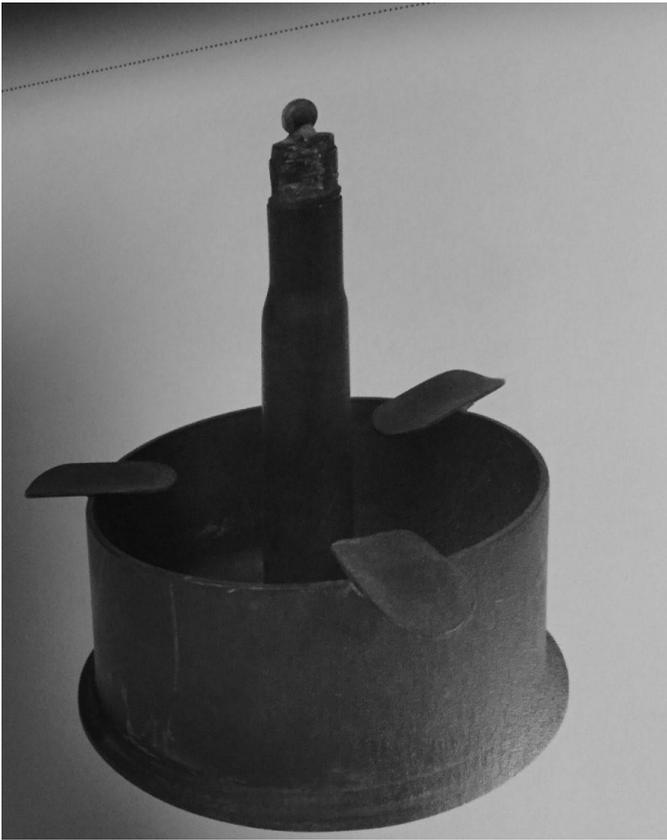


Figure 9

Figure 9: “*Ash Tray and Lighter*” – A WWII-era ashtray with an attached lighter, that appears to have been fashioned from a .50 caliber bullet.

Figure 10: “*U.S. .50 Caliber Cigarette Lighter*” – A WWII-era cigarette lighter made from a .50 caliber bullet cartridge. The bullet itself has been hollowed out into a protective cap for the lighter.



Figure 10

Appendix C – Shell Art

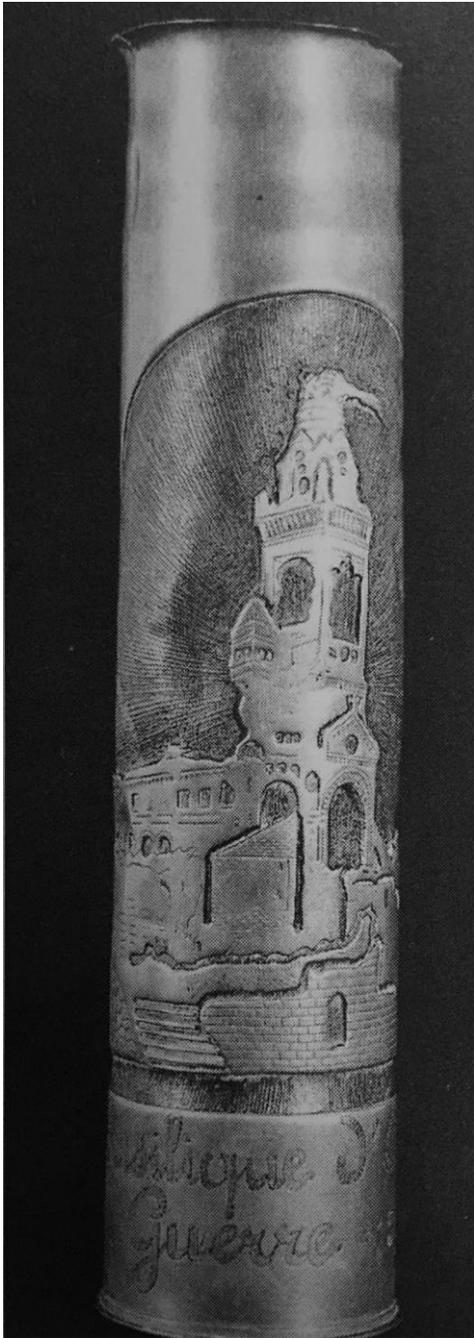


Figure 11: “*Basilica at Albert*” – A WWI-era shell art dating back to 1916. This particular art piece is a 75mm French artillery shell and depicts the Basilica at Albert and its Madonna

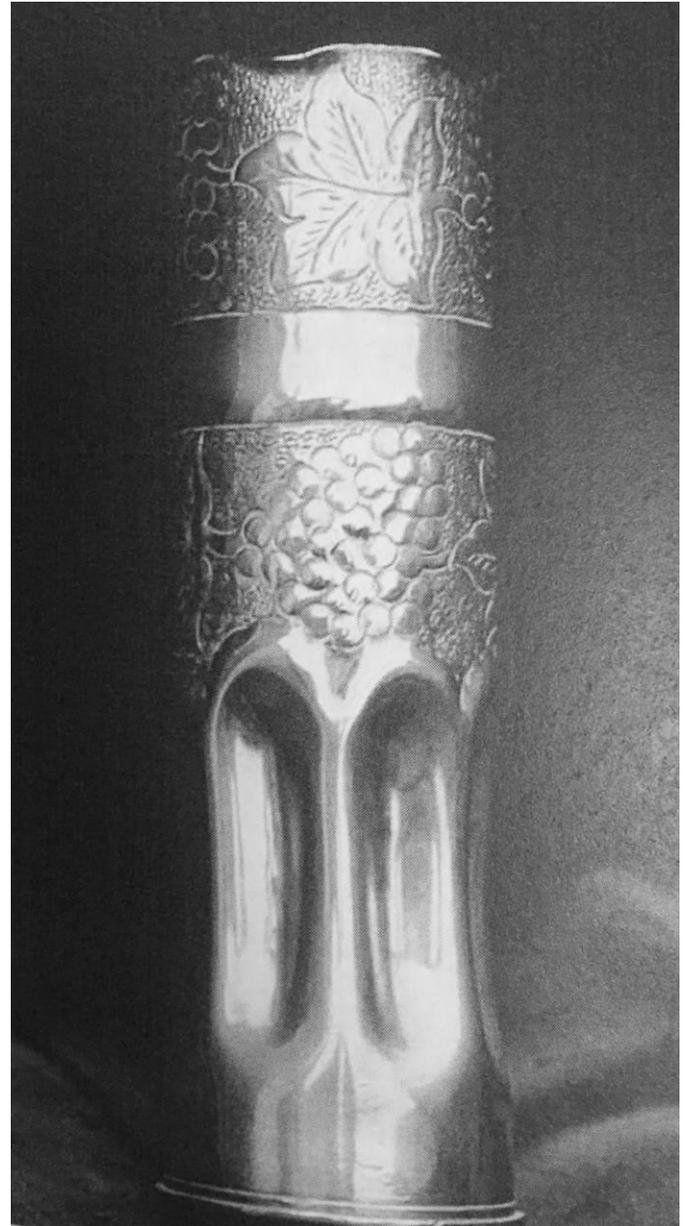


Figure 12: “*Rudimentary Corsetted Artillery Shell*” – A WWI-era basic corsetted artillery shell art.

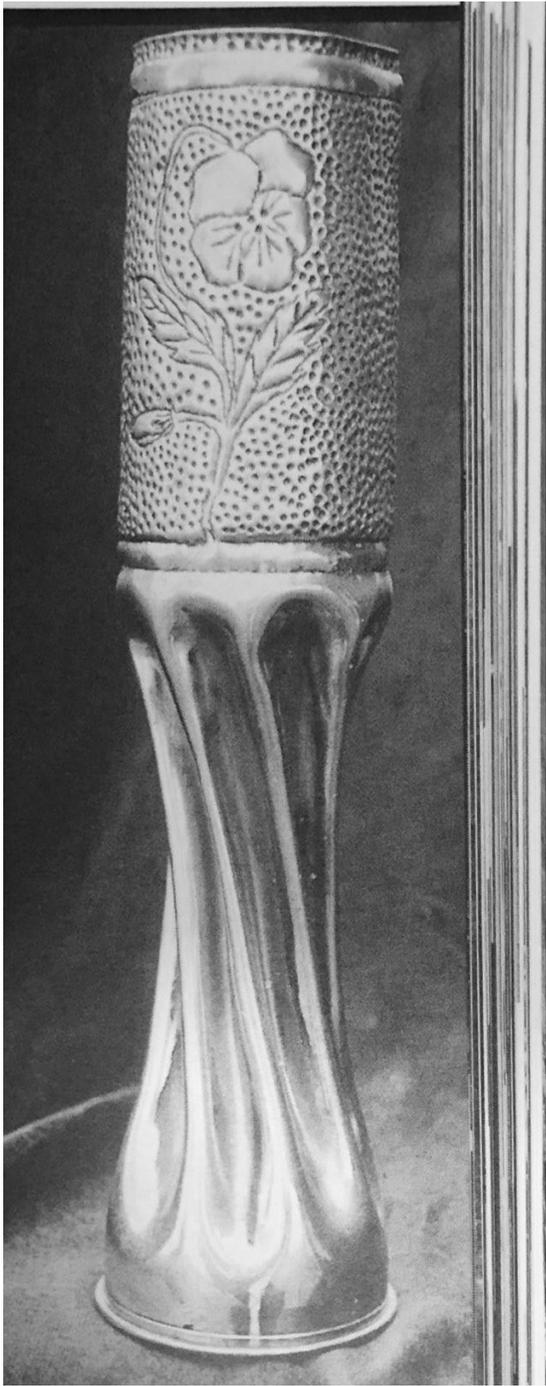


Figure 13: “*Corsetted and Twisted Artillery Shell*” – A WWI-era 75mm French artillery shell. The shell casing has been corsetted and twisted as well as engraved with a flower design.



Figure 14: – “*Art Nouveau Artillery Shell*” – A WWI-era shell art that has been extensively decorated with art nouveau pastoral motifs.



Figure 15: “*Alsace-Lorraine Artillery Shell*” – A pair of WWI-era German artillery shell art. Engraved on each shell is the cross of Alsace-Lorraine.

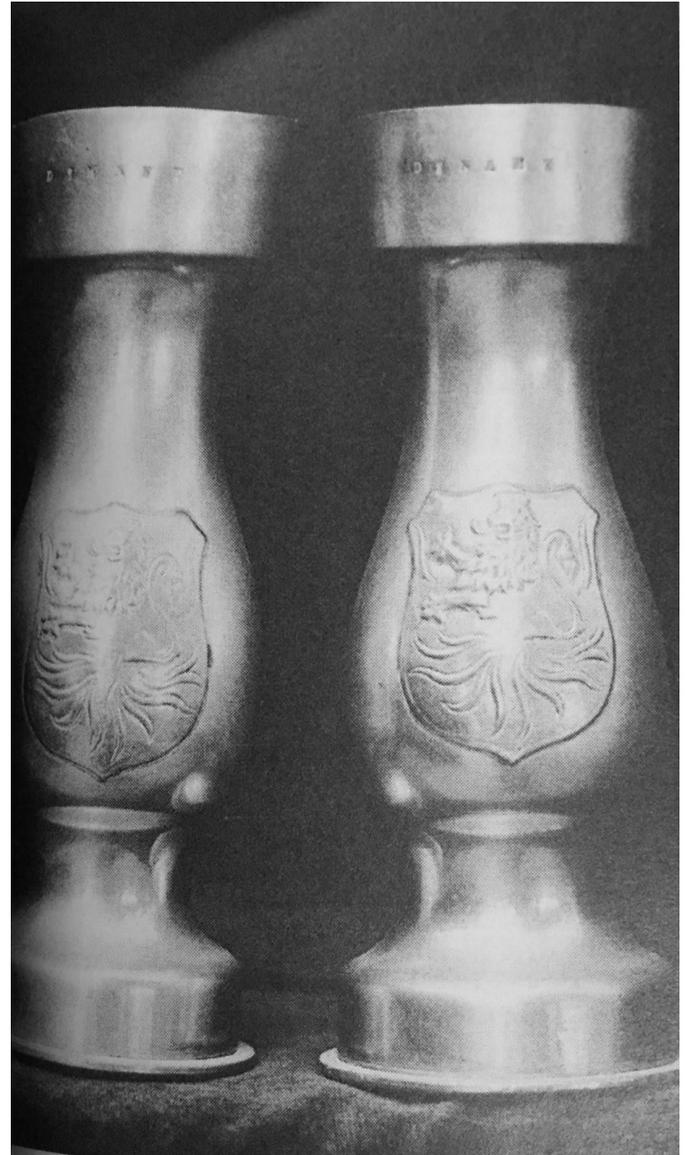


Figure 16: “*Flanders Lion Artillery Shell*” – A pair of WWI-era 77mm artillery shell cases that have been fashioned into vases. Each shell vase has an engraved Flanders Lion, the crest of Flanders.

Appendix D – Jewelry Trench Art



Figure 17: “Souvenir Napkin Rings” – Several post-WWI napkin rings made from aluminum and copper. The rings have the engraving “Ypres.”

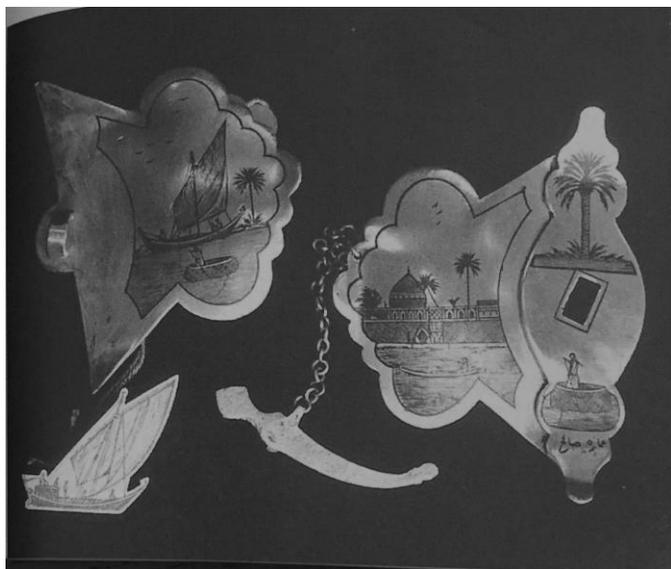


Figure 18: “Scrap Aluminum Jewelry” – Assorted WWI-era trench art jewelry made from scrap aluminum. These pieces of jewelry were bought by British Staff Nurse M. G. Trembath to commemorate the Regatta of 1918 at Amarna, Mesopotamia. The Regatta are a series of boat races popular in different parts of the world, particularly in the UK.



Figure 19: “German Coin Bracelet” – A WWI-era German-made bracelet consisting of Belgian 1 cent coins and German Iron Crosses labeled with the dates 1916, 1917, and 1918.

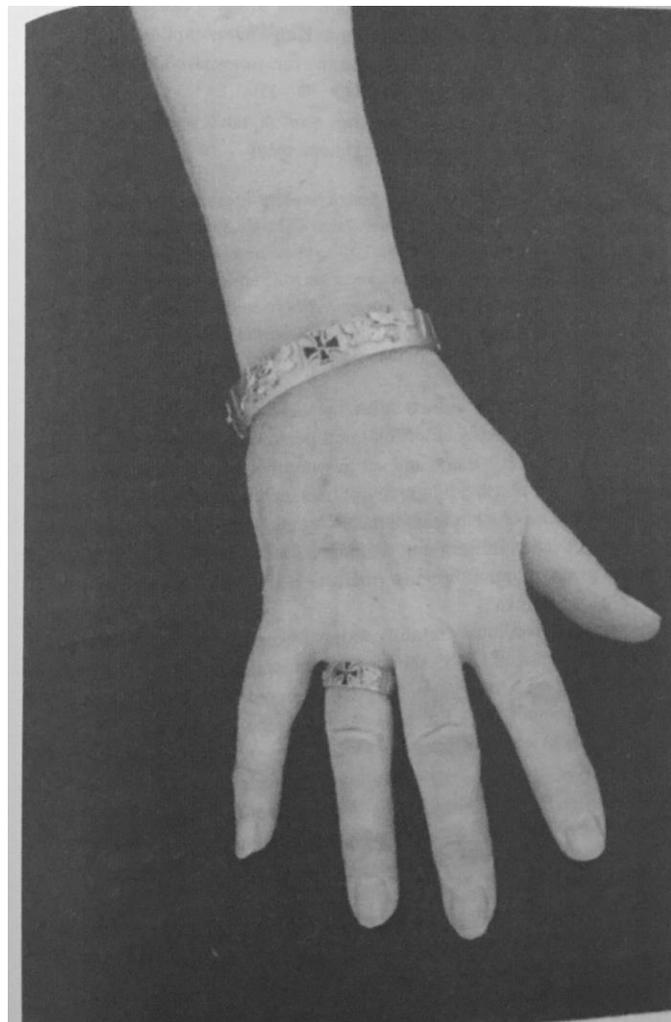


Figure 20: “German Wrist Band and Finger Ring” – A WWI-era commercially made German gold-plated wristband and finger ring. Both pieces are decorated with oak leaf clusters and miniature Iron Crosses.

Appendix E – Trench Art Models

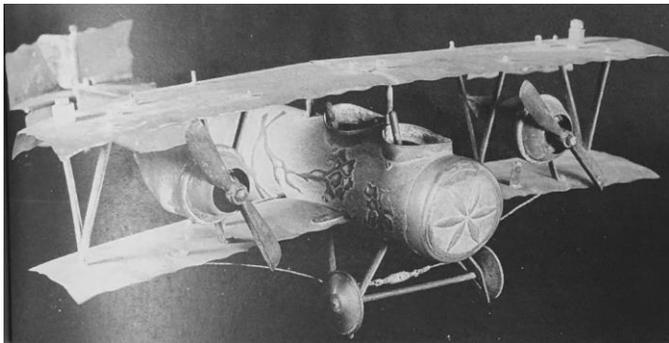


Figure 21: “Trench Art Biplane” – A large WWI-era trench art biplane. The propellers are made from wood and the fuselage is derived from a 75mm artillery shell case. The plane is 56 cm long with a maximum wingspan of 59 cm.

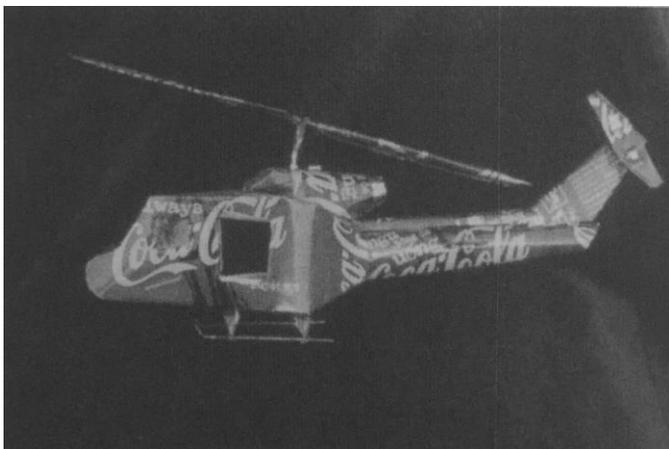


Figure 22: “AAF P-38 Trench Art Planes” – A pair of WWII-era trench art P38 Lightning heavy fighter planes. The planes appear to have been made from a mixture of brass, scrap metal, and bullet cartridges.

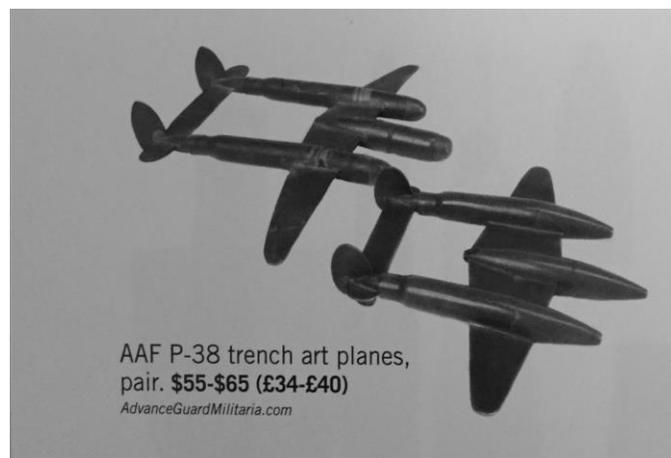


Figure 23: “Trench Art Model Tank” – A miniature WWI-era trench art model of a British Mark IV tank. The model is made from scrap brass and copper, decorated with uniform buttons. Though it is not visible, that author states that there is an inscription on the tank: “To Miss Marple from Private Shearer, Ypres 1917” (Saunders 98). The dimensions of the model are 6 cm x 19 cm x 11 cm. It is likely that the model was meant as a gift for a loved one, perhaps for a girl back at home.

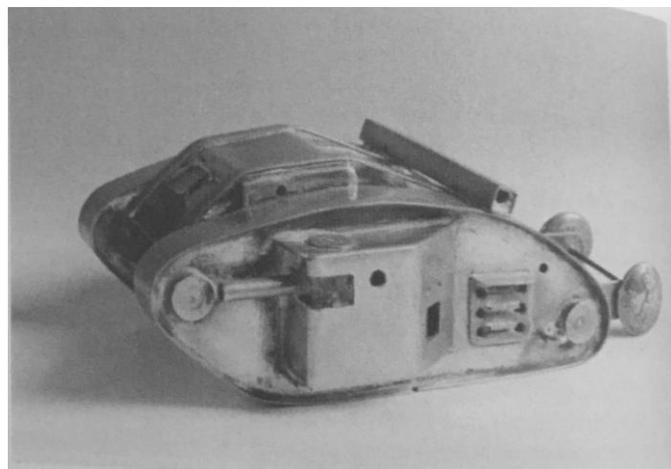


Figure 24: “Coca-Cola Helicopter” – A Vietnam War-era trench art UH-1 Huey helicopter gunship made from Vietnamese Coca-Cola cans.

Appendix F – Trench Art Instruments

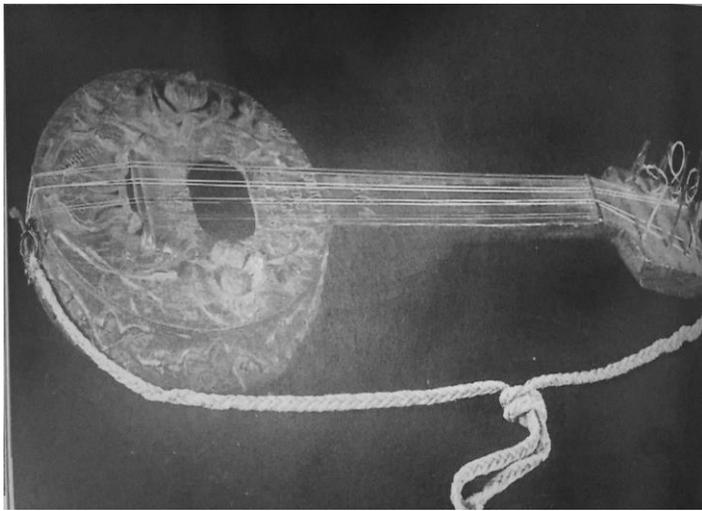


Figure 25: “*Trench Art Banjo*” – A WWI-era trench art banjo. Though difficult to spot, the author states that the banjo is inscribed with the following: “Souvenirs Des Campagnes 1914-1516” (Saunders 100). It is possible that a Harlem Hellfighter, an African-American from the all black 396th Infantry Regiment, made this banjo. Harlem Hellfighters were attached to French military units making the implementation of French language likely, based on their embedding with foreign units. Additionally, Banjos are heavily associated with the deep American south, in particular with African Americans and race tunes.

Appendix G – Religious Trench Art

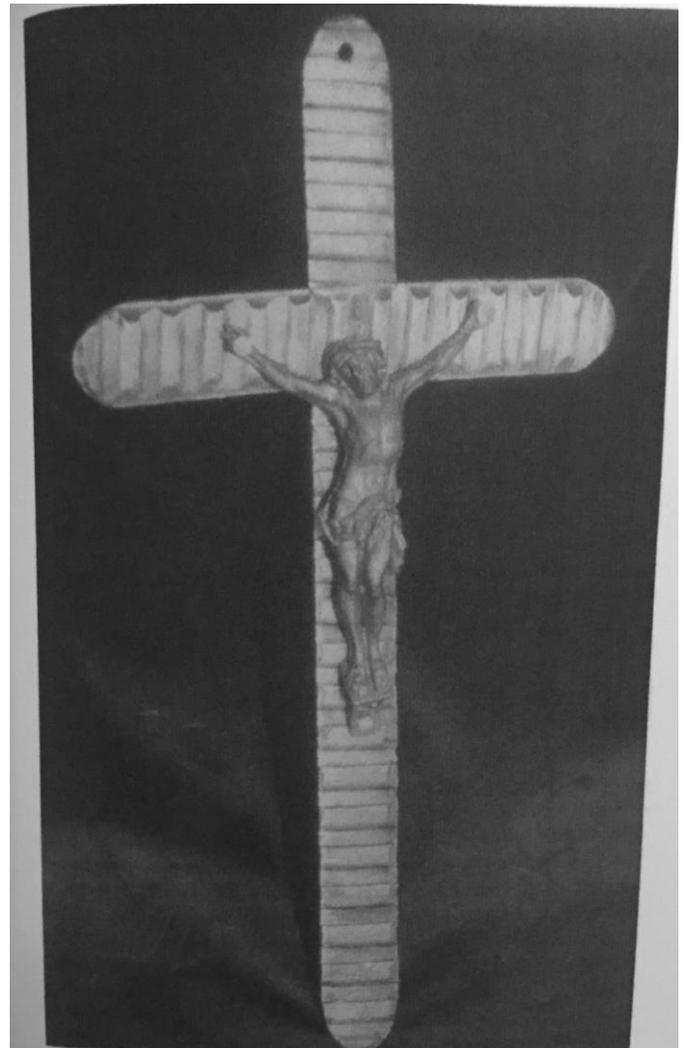


Figure 26: “*Trench Art Crucifix*” – A large WWI-era trench art crucifix made from the copper drive band of an artillery shell. The height of the crucifix is approximately 40 cm.

Appendix H – Sweetheart Grips



Figure 27: “Vintage M1911A1 Sweetheart Grip” – A WWII issued M1911A1 .45 caliber handgun with custom sweetheart grips. This particular grip features a pinup photo of Ava Gardener.



Figure 29: “Nambu Type 14 Sweetheart Grip (Close Up)” – A much more closer view of Figure 28.



Figure 28: “Nambu Type 14 Sweetheart Grip” – A Captured WWII-production Japanese Nambu Type 14 8mm pistol fitted with sweetheart grips. The photo appears to be a picture of an American service member’s wife or loved one.



Figure 30: “GI with Sweetheart Grip 1911” – An WWII-era American service member posing with his custom M1911A1 handgun, fitted with sweetheart grips.

Appendix I – Bone Trench Art



Figure 31: “*Couple’s Photo 1911*” – A WWII issued M1911A1 handgun fitted with custom sweetheart grips, featuring a photo of either a soldier or officer in dress uniform posing with a loved one.



Figure 32: “*Pocket Pistol Sweetheart Grip*” – A WWII-era French-made MAPF Unique mod 10 .25 caliber pocket pistol. The Unique was a slightly modified French copy of the American Colt 1908 Vest Pocket .25 caliber pocket pistol. The major difference between the two is that the French version sported a safety located just above the trigger whereas the American version had a safety located towards the rear, just underneath the slide. This particular pocket pistol features a sweetheart grip and was likely acquired by an American service member as a possible gift from a French resistance fighter, who would have typically carried such a pistol due to its concealability.



Figure 33: “*Internee Bone Trench Art*” – Several examples of WWI-era German internee bone trench art made at Knockaloe Camp, a British internment camp for German aliens.

Appendix J – Japanese Internment Trench Art



Figure 34: “*Tin Snips and Pliers*” – A plier (left) and tin snip (right) made from molten scrap metal by Akira Oye, a Japanese American interned at a camp in Rohwer, Arkansas. Tools such as these were often made melting down scrap metal in a boiler furnace and then hammering it out into a desired shape.



Figure 35: “*Palm Branch Table*” – A table made from scrap wood and palm tree branches by Mr. Tokieko while at the Fresno Assembly Center in Fresno, California. Mr. Tokieko made this table as a thank-you to his former neighbors, Effie and Emanuel Johnson of Compton, CA. The Johnsons had nursed Mr. Tokieko’s ill daughter Mary.

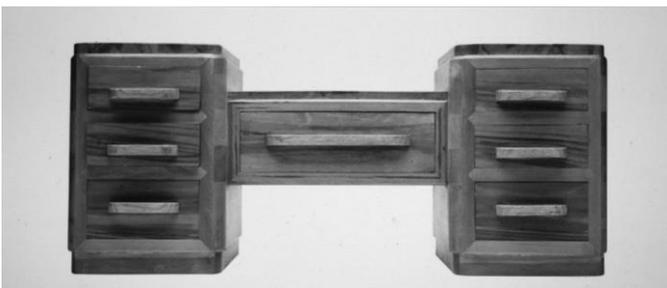


Figure 36: “*Japanese-Style Vanity*” – A Japanese style vanity made from persimmon wood. The creator, Pat Morihata of the Rohwer, Arkansas internment camp, was courting a woman he intended to marry with this vanity. Traditional Japanese vanities would often have a mirror and were situated in a very low position in keeping with the Japanese custom of sitting and kneeling. This particular vanity was made without nails and was held together through a process called dovetailing.

Appendix K – POW Trench Art



Figure 37: “*POW Bone Trench Art*” – A WWI-era bone trench art made from an ox bone by a German POW, likely named Heniz Cremer. The emblem is probably an insigne of Cremer’s unit.



Figure 38: “*Italian Chapel*” – An interior shot of the Italian Chapel Trench Art Nissen Hut in the present day.

Appendix L – Recreated and Repurposed Trench Art

Figure 40 (Left): “*Sinnaeve at Work*” – Belgian artist Ivan Sinnaeve in his workshop, making WWIstyle trench art miniature soldiers from lead and shrapnel balls.



Figure 39 (Above): “*Trench Art Figurines*” – A pair of recreated WWI-style trench art figurines made from copper artillery drive-bands. The figures depict a wounded British and German soldier helping each other. The figures’ creator is Rik Ryon, a Belgian artist

Figure 41 (Right): “*The Bird that Wants to Survive*” – A leaflet publicizing the exhibition of Mozambique trench art entitled “Swords into Ploughshares at the Oxo Gallery London, January 2002. The featured sculpture, which was made by Fiel dos Santos, is entitled *The Bird that Wants to Survive*. The Bird is made from various weapons, most notably the buttstock of an H&K G3 battle rifle and either a Tokarev TT-33 or Norinco Type 54 handgun frame.



Figure 40

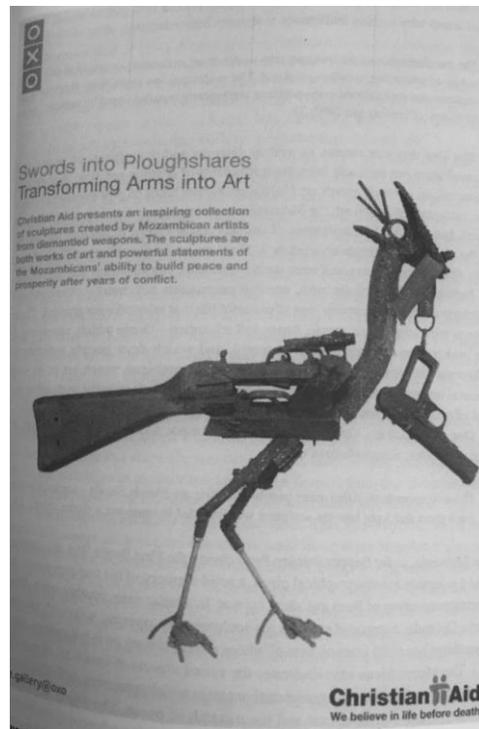


Figure 41

Comparing and Contrasting the Women's Rights Movement from the 1960s and Today

Christina Tsoplakis
Rowan University

Throughout history, society has downgraded women. They have not been treated equally and did not have many rights. Women used to not have rights in education and were seen out of the norm when they wanted to seek an education or a job before the late 20th century. In the 1920s, after the Suffrage Movement women won the right to vote based on the Nineteenth Amendment. After many years, in the 1960s, women felt that the first movement was not successful enough and created a second wave of feminist movements pushing for more equality in the workforce and abortion rights. Some movements women created in the 1960s were NOW and Women's Liberation movement. Although the years have passed, women today still protest about their right of their own body and equal pay. In January 2017, over one million people protested for women's rights around the nation, which shows how women still feel downgraded by society in a way. Despite the fact that the Women's March Movement has been inspired by the Women's rights movement from the 1960s, there are many differences such as diversity, the image of women, and the goals.

For many centuries, society viewed women as a reproductive creature instead of a human. Men were seen as superior because of their physical strength and their way of thinking. Despite that fact, women as well could think and were physically strong equally. Women were expected to give birth to children and follow their husbands even if they were not happy. According to Anne Koedt, a radical feminist, unmarried women were not seen as women because they did not follow society's standards.¹ Based on this statement, unmarried women could not feel the fulfillment a married women with children could feel. This is the reason they were not seen as women. These women were

seen as failures that did not meet their society's norms.

Although society and the men in society viewed the unmarried women as failures, they never asked how married women actually felt. Married women felt frustrated during the 1960s era that they did not have the freedom their husbands had in society. They wanted to pursue the same careers and contribute to their husband's income as well. Society put women in a position that only considered them a reproductive machine and not a human. The frustrations on how women felt made them connect and unite with each other.

Before the Women's Rights Movement started in the 1960s, middle class white women were living at home, mostly taking care of their children. Women were not considered intelligent and if they sought to look for a job or even to participate in a sport event, they were not considered normal by others. For example, in the PBS film *Women Who Make America*, it is seen that a woman was attacked by a man while participating in a marathon during the 1960s². This is a case that showed how society viewed middle class white women. The woman that was attacked by the man in the marathon was supposed to stay home and not be doing activities that men did. Women were expected to be always happy, thankful, and cheery. Commercials would show them always being happy while cooking and taking care of their family.³ For instance, a woman in one of the following advertisements below seems to be portrayed a better wife if she works hard. In addition, another commercial shows how a woman is happy when she gets a vacuum as a gift for Christmas.

¹ Koedt, Anne "Notes from the First Year: New York Radical Women." *Women's Liberation*. New York Radical Women. New York City. 1968. Web

² Magner, Pamela and Goodman, Barack. *Women Who Make America*. PBS. Film Documentary. February 2013.

³ Ibid. Magner and Goodman.



Examples such as the above falsify what a white woman really wanted to be. Society did not let middle class white women expand. Middle class white women were held at a certain standard during the 1960s that did not let them grow.

In the workforce, women were not being paid well during that period. In the newspaper columns under the “hiring” section, women had separate columns from men.⁵ For example, one column would say “males wanted” and another column would say “females wanted.” Due to this discrimination, many white middle class women were not being hired. As a result, white middle class women stayed at home and that made them miserable. They wanted the same opportunities as men.

Women were getting tired of their lifestyle, which led to one of the movements to be created, the National Organization of Women. This organization had multiple origins, where women came from different background religions and were

mostly from middle class white areas. Betty Friedman was the one of the women who created this organization. Friedman was a Jewish middle class white woman who lived in New York during the 1960s with her family. Although she had earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology in 1942, she was a housewife who hated her lifestyle.⁶ After a meeting other women at a reunion, she realized that other women were dissatisfied with their lives as housewives as well.⁷ Following a lot of research including interviews, statistics, and personal stories Betty Friedman wrote the book *The Feminine Mystique*.

The *Feminine Mystique* was a book that transformed society and culture by giving an insight on how women felt. Betty Friedman was seen as the mother of the second wave of feminism. By writing the book *Feminist Mystique*, Friedman described what women were going through and the change they wanted. Although this book discussed about the problems of women as a whole, it only focused on the problems that middle class white women were experiencing and not women from different backgrounds. This was one of the weaknesses of this book. The research and the interviews that were conducted were only from middle class white educated women, which did not give a voice to other women from a varied demographic background.

This did not stop Betty Friedman though from being one of the leaders for the organization National Organization of Women/ NOW. The members of NOW demanded equality in politics and society. Women wanted to be more involved in politics and have more representatives in Congress. By having women in Congress and involved in politics in general, women were able to work within the system to achieve their goals. For example, because of women in politics during the 1960s, President Richard Nixon created the Task Force on Women Rights in order to encourage women to apply for administrative-level positions in the federal government.⁸ Ever since the Task Force was created, statistics showed that the number of women

⁶ National Women’s History Museum. *The Biography of Betty Friedman*. 2006. Web. <https://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/betty-friedan/>

⁷ Ibid. National Women’s History Museum.

⁸ Grayson, Lee. *The 1960s Rise of Women in U.S Politics*. Classroom. 2012. Web

⁴ <https://weburbanist.com/2010/06/29/vintage-ads-women-and-the-home/>

⁵ Ibid. Magner and Goodman.

in office improved starting the early 1970s.⁹ In addition, one of the main goals of NOW was to bring women into main stream society. By being part of main stream society, women were able to attract the media. For instance, when women were protesting, there was media coverage present. Newspapers and radio stations during the 1960s were covering NOW and other women's organizations who were protesting. The media coverage led to an inspiration by having women who were still housewives get involved and connect with each other. This created a connection and influenced other groups such as the Black Power Movement to support the Women's Rights Movement.

During their protests and sit ins, some rights that NOW demanded were equal rights, maternity leave rights, equal job training, equal education, and the ban of sex discrimination in the workforce and abortion rights. NOW created a "Bill of Rights" that stated and described each of their demands. Some of their demands focused on employment. Demand II specifically stated "That equal employment opportunity be guaranteed to all women, as well as men by insisting that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforce the prohibitions against sex discrimination in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the same vigor as it enforces the prohibitions against racial discrimination."¹⁰ The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission banned gender discrimination along with racial discrimination in the workforce.

Due to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, in 1963 the Equal Pay Act was passed. The goal of this act was to abolish wage difference based on gender.¹¹ Before this law, women were working the same hours as men but were getting paid less. After this act was passed, women's wages compared to men's wages were the same but women's paychecks had more deducted amounts compared to a man's paycheck. Deductions included taxes, Medicare, and social security. This showed that although women and men worked equal hours, women were having

bigger deductions due to the government's policies and rules from the U.S Labor Department. Women were still protesting during this period about this issue after the act was passed.

NOW was not the only organization of the Women's Rights Movement that focused on employment. The banning of sex discrimination in the workforce was a goal of another feminist movement called Women's Liberation Movement. The Women's Liberation Movement was created by a group of college girls when they were disrespected by their male classmates in meetings, and spread in many college communities and cities in America.¹² Since the 1960s era was a period of revolution, college students were one of the biggest groups that were involved in this revolution. During meetings and sit ins though, men from the different movements in colleges were in charge and did not give a voice to their female college mates.

This issue caused an uprising of female college students that spread quickly around the nation and created their own movements. They wanted change and they wanted to achieve equality and access in the workforce. Members of the Women's Liberation Movement were able as well to work within the system by having women in higher positions of federal government jobs in order to make sure the laws such as Equal Pay Act were enforced.¹³ Due to these laws, Kenneth Walsh, a United States journalist believed that most young women, at least in the middle class, were expected to have access to the same careers and to receive the same compensation as men.¹⁴ Although the Women's Liberation Movement focused a lot on improving employment for women, it also focused a lot on abortion. Reproductive rights were one of the key themes of this movement's goals.

The article "1960s: A Decade of Change for Women" discusses how the Women's Rights Movement changed the role of women in society. Kenneth Walsh who is a journalist that covers mostly politics and major historical events uses

¹² Magner, Pamela and Goodman, Barack. *Women Who Make America*. PBS. Film Documentary. February 2013.

¹³ Ibid. Magner, Pamela and Goodman Barack.

¹⁴ Walsh, Kenneth. *The 1960s: A Decade of Change for Women*. U.S News. March 12, 2010.

⁹ Ibid., Grayson, Lee

¹⁰ NOW Members. *Bill of Rights*. National Conference. 1967.

¹¹ *The Equal Pay Act of 1963*. U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/epa.cfm>

quotes from women who are educated to explain his thesis throughout the article. His main argument that is stated in his thesis is that the 1960s freed women from unwanted pregnancies and gave them opportunities in their personal and workforce lives.

Kenneth Walsh used a quote from Kati Norton and discusses how the antiwar and civil rights movements helped women get involved in politics and get away from the family and the picture of the “happy household wife”. He agrees with her by giving examples of women who succeeded such as a women winning the Nobel Prizes. He mentions how the Equal Pay Act was passed but it did not help women. In addition, he states how with this movement, women were now given opportunities to pursue the same careers as men but still with no equal pay. Women over the years have pursued jobs in the entertainment field, politics, and even in the justice system such as in the Supreme Court, where before the Women’s Right Movement of the 1960s, these jobs were only a dream for women.

From the article, it is indicated that Kenneth Walsh supports feminism and writes his article in a more historical view by just presenting facts but not criticizing women in a negative way. He does this by giving examples of women who succeeded in many fields. An issue though that he does not discuss and is important is abortion. Abortion was a huge issue during this period. Although he states in his thesis about how women were freed from unwanted pregnancies, he did not mention anything in the rest of the article but instead focused more on equality in the workforce. The article is very useful for using it about equality but not about the abortion issue.

Abortion has been a very debatable topic throughout the years. Religious views were involved which made the process of abortion hard to understand by many. In the period of the 1960s, abortion was taking place but many doctors were getting punished and the risks that put women’s lives in danger were enormous. This occurred because abortion was illegal. In the late 1960s, the Women’s Liberation Movement created an underground feminist abortion service called the Abortion Counseling Service which had trained doctors that performed safely abortions in

Chicago.¹⁵ This group provided safe, inexpensive but illegal abortions. Over a four year period, the Abortion Counseling Service provided more than eleven thousand abortions with a safety record comparable to today’s legal medical facilities.¹⁶

Women in the Women’s Liberation Movement marched and fought hard in order to make abortion safe and legal. During their marches, when they were speaking in front of the public, women talked about their illegal abortion experiences and how some almost lost their lives because of the risks. For instance, during a speak out, one woman stated “I had an illegal abortion, which led to infection, and I was close to death. I ended up in a legal hospital with a real doctor who managed to pull me through.”¹⁷ This example showed how dangerous it was for women to illegally have abortion and that change had to be done immediately. After the court case of *Roe v Wade* in 1973, states reformed their policies and made abortion legal but with some restrictions.

Women from the Women’s Liberation Movement fought hard to protect women from the risks of illegal abortions. That was when the Women’s Liberation Movement and NOW collaborated with the movement Army of Three in order make abortion legal and fight abortion laws.¹⁸ The Army of Three was a movement created by three pro-choice advocates named Pat Maginis, Rowena Gurner, and Lana Phelan.¹⁹ The Army of Three distributed names of doctors who performed abortions illegally and held classes for women to learn how to abort safely their child.²⁰ In 1969, with the involvement of other women’s rights movements, the NARAL/ National Abortion Rights Action League was created at the first National Conference on Abortion Laws in Chicago.

The purpose of NARAL was to “Recognize the basic human right of a woman to limit her own reproduction, it dedicated to the elimination of all

¹⁵ OBOS Abortion Contributors. *History of Abortion in the U.S. Our Bodies Our Selves*. March 2014. Web. <http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org>

¹⁶ Ibid. OBOS Abortion Contributors.

¹⁷ Ibid. OBOS Abortion Contributors.

¹⁸ Marcus, Steven. *Women Throughout History*. Class notes. Egg Harbor Township High School. 2011-2012. Print.

¹⁹ Kellway, Brooke. *Letters to the Army of Three*. Walker Magazine. 2012. Web

²⁰ Ibid., Marcus, Steven

laws and practices that would compel any woman to bear a child against her will.”²¹ NARAL had six parts in its program that all were focused on taking action and raising funds in order to organize the operation of legalizing abortion laws. A committee was created in order to make sure that everything was followed precisely as a means to achieve the goals of this movement. Although after *Roe v. Wade* made abortion legal in the United States, NARAL is still present today. It is one of the oldest pro-choice movement active in America.

The Women’s Right Movement fought a lot in order to have women equal to men in society. It was successful on a legislative view point by passing the Equal Pay Act in 1963 and creating the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which enforced these laws. Women fought hard in the 1960s to make abortion legal nationwide and after the court case of *Roe v Wade* in 1973, abortion became legal. Since these laws were passed and it is considered that women became equal to men, then why is there another women’s rights movement today, in 2017? The answer is because the Women’s Rights Movement in the 1960s was partially successful. Women today unfortunately are still not equal to men, which is a reason why the Women’s March Movement has been created in today’s society.

The Women’s March Movement was created in order to fight and protect that rights of women from the views of President Donald Trump and his administration. This movement was created by Teresa Shook in Hawaii when after Donald Trump was elected in office in November 2016, she created a social media page inviting friends to march in Washington in order to protest in January.²² After that page, similar pages in other parts of the United States such New York City and Philadelphia were created by Evvie Harmon, Bob Bland, Breanne Bulter and many others for the same cause.²³ When these people all collaborated, they created the Women’s March Movement. They encouraged people to march in Washington DC on

January 21st 2017, which was the day of Donald Trump’s Inauguration in Office.

After the collaboration of the people stated above, a main webpage was created along with local chapters in the United States. The main goal of the Women’s March Movement is the “Protection of our rights, our safety, our health, and our families- recognizing that our vibrant and diverse communities are the strength of our society.”²⁴ This goal was created because due to the Election of 2016, women were in danger. Throughout his campaign, Donald Trump showed that he did not support women by wanting to defund Planned Parenthood and showing no respect for women in general by one of his comments referring to women “Grab her by the p***y” and calling his opponent Hilary Clinton during a debate “Nasty Woman”.²⁵

The comments were not the most concerning part of his campaign though. What was most disturbing was the defunding of Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood was created in 1916 and is an organization that provides free health care to women regarding their reproductive health.²⁶ This means that women with low income are able to visit doctors who are well trained for a checkup, pap tests, breast mammograms, STD tests and treatments, and even to end an unwanted pregnancy. This organization has currently over a thousand clinics nationwide and gets funded by the government.²⁷ Before President Barack Obama left office in 2016, he and his administration tried to protect the funding of Planned Parenthood by issuing a final rule aiming to prevent state lawmakers from cutting funding for Planned Parenthood and other clinics that provide abortions.²⁸ Unfortunately this law was passed. After President Trump has already set rules to start defunding these type of organizations, not taking into consideration Obama’s rule and overwriting his law.

²⁴ *Mission and Vision*. Women’s March. www.womensmarch.com

²⁵ Presidential Debate, October 19th 2016

²⁶ *Planned Parenthood at a Glance*. www.PlannedParenthood.org

²⁷ *Ibid.*, www.PlannedParenthood.org

²⁸ Leonard, Kimberly. *Obama Administration Moves to Protect Planned Parenthood Funding*. U.S News. 14 December 2016. Web.

²¹ Author and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women. *Records of the National Abortion Rights Action League*. Harvard University Library. 1968-1969. Web

²² Kelsey, Adam. *Everything You Need to Know About the Women’s March*. ABC News. 20 January 2017.

²³ *Ibid.*, Kelsey Adam

This is the reason why the Women's March was created in the first place. Following the statements and plans of Donald Trump and his administration, memories from the 1960s started to emerge from the surface again. After Donald Trump's election in office, people but especially women started to become frustrated. This caused many women from diverse backgrounds especially those who had an education background to join the movement and march on January 21st 2017, the day that Donald Trump was being sworn into office. The march of January 2017 was conducted in order to "send a bold message to our new administration on their first day in office and to the world that women's rights are human rights."²⁹ From the statements and actions of Donald Trump, it was viewed by society that he did not consider women as humans due to the reason wanting to take their reproductive rights way.

In addition to abortion, the Women's March Movement focused on equal pay for women as well. During the march in January 2017, women were protesting about demanding equal pay. Despite the fact that the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1963, women today are getting paid less than men. According to statistics, women today are paid eighty cents where a man is paid a dollar.³⁰ Women have been fighting for years about this issue and still nothing has been done. On the other hand, women today still face discrimination in the workforce. Unfortunately, women have to work harder than men in order to get higher positions at their jobs. This term is called the glass ceiling, which is basically invisible barriers that keeps women from rising beyond certain level of hierarchy in their job.³¹ This occurs because women again are seen in a more biological way. For example, if you place a woman in position of a CEO in a company and she gets pregnant, that woman has to leave her job. This causes chaos in the company according to men because everything she has done for the company will be done differently since she is not in charge. Women in the workforce are seen first as mothers than humans,

which cause them to work harder in order to earn the position they want.

Due to the above reasons, over five million people marched nationwide on January 21st 2017 in order to protect women. It is estimated that approximately 500,000 people marched only in Washington D.C.³² The march that was organized by the Women's March Movement in January is one of biggest march in the United States throughout history.³³ By having so many people march, it delivered a message. People are united for the same causes. Compared to the Women's Rights Movement during the 1960s, more men are involved in the Women's March Movement today. During the 1960s, less men were involved publicly because they did not have enough resources to be more familiar with the movement. In today's society in America, men are educated and have access to many resources in order for them to understand that women are humans as well and deserve the same rights. That is the reason why men fight along with women instead of staying neutral like it happened during the 1960s.

In contrast to the demographics of the Women's Rights Movement in the 1960s, the Women's March Movement had a more varied demographic background. During the 1960s, one of the top women's rights movements, NOW focused on the demands of middle class educated white women.³⁴ Women of color were not included and that is the reason why the Third World Alliance movement was created by Black women that were members of SNCC³⁵. Also, Betty Friedman was opposed to lesbians being part of NOW and kicked out many homosexual women who were openly gay. This resulted into them joining the Daughters of Bilitis and other movements such as the Women's Liberation Movement.

Today though, the Women's March Movement has members that are homosexual and from minority groups. For instance, the co-president of the Women's March movement is Tamika

³² www.womensmarch.com

³³ Frostensen, Sarah. "The Women's Marches May Have Been the Largest Demonstration in US History." *Vox*, January 31, 2017.

³⁴ Class Notes. Senior Seminar of American Studies. Spring 2017

³⁵ *Ibid*, Class notes from Senior Seminar of American Studies 2017

²⁹ Organizers of the Women's March on Washington. *Message to the New Administration*. 2017

³⁰ Staff of NOW. *Women Deserve Equal Pay*. National Organization of Women. www.now.org

³¹ Reeves, Nancy. *Social Problems*. Class notes. Rowan University. Fall 2014

Mallory, who is an African American and the treasurer is Carmen Perez, who comes from a Hispanic background³⁶. Despite African American and Hispanic cultures, women from other cultures such as Indian and Middle Eastern are part of the national leadership for the movement as well. Linda Sarsour, the daughter of Middle Eastern immigrants is the assistant treasurer, while **Mrinalini Chakraborty, who comes from the Indian culture is the head of field and operations strategy.**³⁷ More women today are educated and have access to many resources in order to understand that being different is not a problem and that everyone is and should be equal. The Women's March movement did not want to do the mistake that the Women's Movement in the 1960s did, of excluding certain women due to race or sexual orientation. Instead of creating separate movements, by uniting together, today women from different demographic backgrounds are able to achieve their goal with greater success and make their voice louder to Trump and his administration. The organizers understand how essential unity is to success.

During the protests in the 1960s and today, women make signs and display them during their march. This is a type of speaking out since the 1960s. Women during their march would write signs and hold them up high so the people and the media especially were able to see them. For example during a march in the 1960s, women were holding a huge banner saying "SAFE LEGAL ABORTIONS FOR ALL WOMEN" and walking down the street. It is indicated in the photo by the way they are dressed that these white women come from middle or higher class on social statues with a background education. While they are marching down the street, it is believed that they are yelling out their demands. Although these women's banner demands abortions for all women, there is a smaller sign an older woman is holding that states "The Poor Deserve Safe Abortions". Despite the fact that middle class or higher women were mainly the ones that were protesting, it shows that they were also concerned about poor women. The socioeconomic classes might have been different, but the goal for

white women was the same. This shows unity just like it is displayed today but in a different way.



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At the Women's March in January 2017, everybody came together in order to fight for women's rights. Celebrities, politicians and others walked with women yelling about reproductive rights and that women's rights are human rights. An image from the march shows a group of women holding signs stating "KEEP YOUR POLICIES OFF MY BODY" and "ONE LOVE" with the heart colored in the rainbow colors showing support for lesbian women as well. Another picture shows a white educated woman holding a sign stating "1968 IS CALLING, DON'T ANSWER" suggesting that history is attempting to repeat again.³⁹ The above images show that the Women's March Movement is a more diverse movement compared to the 1960s movement with common goals that all women benefit from.



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³⁶ National Team. Women's March Movement. <https://www.womensmarch.com/team/>

³⁷ National Team. Women's March Movement. <https://www.womensmarch.com/team/>

³⁸ <https://kquane.files.wordpress.com/215/01/feminist-rally-7.jpg>.

³⁹ Books, Abram. *Why I March Images from the Women's March Around the World*. Abrams Image, 2017. Print

⁴⁰ Ibid. Books, Abram.

Feminists in society are seen as tough, less feminine and humorless women.⁴¹ In the current movement though, women use humor to protest about their rights. For instance, in the picture below, a young woman uses pop culture and made a sign about how the women will fight back if their rights are taken away. She combines her message with a popular hip hop song called “My Neck, my Back” by Kia to deliver her message in a humorous way.



In addition, in the Women’s March in January 2017 an older woman was holding a sign that stated “I can’t believe I still have to protest this f**king s**t”.



This was one of the highlighted and symbolic signs of the march. It shows how the Women’s Movement in the 1960s did not resolve issues such as reproductive and labor rights, which are still a

problem today. This is the reason why the third wave feminism emerged the past few years.

Furthermore, considering the fact that the Women’s Movement from the 1960s and the Women’s March movement had similar goals, they are actually different in so many ways. Although, the Women’s Movement in the 1960’s focused on reproductive rights and equal pay rights, some other goals were education and women’s role in society⁴³. “The middle-class suburban housewife downplayed the importance of women’s education. Feminists in the 1960s knew that girls and women must be encouraged to seek an education, and not just as “something to fall back on,” if they were to become, and be seen as, “fully” equal.”⁴⁴ In contrast to the 1960s, the Women’s March movement does not focus on education but on LGBTQIA rights, immigrant rights, and domestic violence.⁴⁵ For instance, today’s feminist movement wants to protect people from gender stereotypes and discrimination.⁴⁶ Compared to the 1960s movement, the homosexuals were not protected by the women’s movement but today, the Women’s March movement want to make up for that and include gender protection in their goals.

By comparing and contrasting the two Women’s Rights Movements from today and the 1960s, it is shown that there are still problems regarding women in society. Women have been downgraded in society. Due to this, women in the 1960s and still today have issues being in higher career positions because they are viewed as mothers first and in order to achieve that position they have to work extra hard. Although the Equal Pay Act was passed in the 1960s, women today still fight for the wage gap between men and women. During the 1960s, women were undergoing abortions in a dangerous way that put their lives in danger. After a long battle to make abortion legal, women are able to have abortions safely but after Donald Trump was elected President of the United States, women still feel they are in danger again of losing their right to their own body. These issues show that

⁴³ Napikoski, Linda. “Goals of the Feminist Movement”. 31 December 2017. <https://www.thoughtco.com/goals-of-the-feminist-movement-3528961>

⁴⁴ Ibid. Napikoski, Linda

⁴⁵ Mission. Women’s March Movement. <https://www.womensmarch.com/mission/>

⁴⁶ Ibid. Mission.

⁴¹ Class notes. Senior Seminar of American Studies. Spring 2017.

⁴² Mccausland, Phil. “Women’s March Marked by Brash, Funny, and Signage Raised High”. NBC News. January 21st 2017.

history is being repeated. Topics that were a problem in the 1960s are starting to emerge again, that is the reason why a third wave of feminism is present today. The Women's March Movement though is better because women from all different backgrounds are united and are fighting for a common goal. Over the days and the months, this wave of feminism is growing and will become bigger until there is change.

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How Early German Immigration and the Establishment of Germantown Influenced Philadelphia

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Philadelphia, the sixth largest city in the United States, is a city forged from decades of immigration. The City of Brotherly Love's foundations rest on its immigrant communities that have developed over the past several centuries, including one of the most influential settlements in Philadelphia, established by early Germans who migrated to the New World in the seventeenth century. Germantown, along with the German migrants who founded it, influenced the Greater Philadelphia, not only with their founding of one of the oldest neighborhoods in America, but also through their religion, ideology, language, culture and industry.

For the purpose of clarity, "early" German immigration refers to the first arrival of Germans to Philadelphia in 1683 up until the onset of Revolutionary War, around approximately 1775, when German immigration to America was halted for a period of time.¹

Early German immigration to Philadelphia began in the second half of the seventeenth century, when German lawyer Francis Pastorius² purchased several thousand acres of land from William Penn to establish a settlement of German Lutherans and Quakers in a wooded area, located just outside of the city limits of Philadelphia. The settlement, known as Germantown, was officially founded by

¹ Marianne Wokeck. "The Flow and the Composition of German Immigration to Philadelphia, 1727-1775." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 105, No. 3 (1981): 249-278.

² Samuel Pennypacker, *The Settlement of Germantown and Pennsylvania and the Beginning of German Emigration to North America* (New York, NY: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1899), 54-57.

Pastorius in 1689, making it one of the oldest neighborhoods in America as well as the first permanent German settlement in the United States. While Germans settled throughout Pennsylvania and other areas, approximately 75% of German-speaking immigrants came to America through the port at Philadelphia.³

Considering that a unified German state did not exist until 1871, migrants from the Palatinate who found their way across the Atlantic to Southeastern Pennsylvania shared a common language, but distinguished themselves by religion, which included mystics, Moravians, Mennonites, Quakers, Lutherans and members of the Reformed Church, as well as a few others.⁴

The religion of the Germans in itself was crucial to their immigration to Philadelphia because it was the pushing force, as many sought religious freedom and tolerance that they did not receive in Europe. The ideology of many Germans was also developed around their religious practice. For example, early German Quakers were one of the first promoters of religious tolerance in America, as well as other social justice issues such as the abolishment of slavery, voting rights for women, and prison reform. Pastorius, a former Pietist turned Quaker, even organized the first antislavery protest in 1688.⁵ These beliefs, considered radical for the period, formed from the foundation of Quakerism, the belief that God is everyone, which makes all people are equal.⁶

³ Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 70.

⁴ *Germantown and the Germans: An Exhibition of Manuscripts, Prints and Photographs from the Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA: the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1983).

⁵ Craig W. Horle et al., eds., *Lawmaking and legislators in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

⁶ Robert L. Davidson, *War Comes to Quaker Pennsylvania, 1682-1756* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1957).

The settlement of Quakers in Germantown contributed to Philadelphia being known as the “Quaker City,” as well as the rise of abolitionism in the North and the establishment of almshouses to provide housing and food for the poor.⁷

Germans in Philadelphia also rose to action with the onset of the Revolutionary war in and the British occupation of Philadelphia. Once again, religion influenced ideology in wartime; for example, the Moravians pledged their support to King George III in the war because he enabled them to have religious freedom. On the other hand, groups such as the German Quakers opposed the war due to their pacifist beliefs. Despite their pacifism, German-Quaker influence extended in the Battle of Germantown with the use of the Wyck House, then occupied by the German Wister family, as a hospital for British soldiers.⁸

Like German Quaker immigrants, German Mennonites also established a stronghold within the Germantown area during the same time. The Mennonite Church bears a strong resemblance to the Society of Friends in terms of plain dress and speech, as well as fundamental beliefs. However, Mennonites exercised their influence differently than members of the Society of Friends. While Quakers provided agency to oppressed peoples through the promotion of social justice issues, Mennonites exercised their influence on Philadelphia from an economic standpoint, through the production of woven and knit fabrics by Mennonite artisans and weavers.⁹

In addition to religion, language also factored into German influence on Philadelphia, in both positive and negative ways. While the German

language linked Palatine migrants, it also prompted a sense of suspicion of Germans throughout the Anglo-centric colonists, who feared a takeover of Germanization.¹⁰

The influence and abundance of German-speaking immigrants was evident from the fear of Germanization that took hold in many English-speaking colonists. German-speakers struggled with acclimation into colonial society, clinging onto their native language by passing it down through their generations and operating German-speaking schools.¹¹ However, this was not the case for all Germans, including Pastorius. Very early in German migration to Philadelphia, Pastorius founded the first school in Germantown area that was conducted in English because of his belief that German children should learn English to aid with the assimilation process into American society. The school closed upon Pastorius’ death in 1701.¹² In the following years, more schools were opened by Germans in the Greater Philadelphia area, and all of them were German-speaking schools.

To combat the anti-assimilation tendencies of German migrants, in 1727 the Pennsylvania assembly made it a requirement that German-speaking immigrants take an oath of allegiance to the king.¹³ Anti-German sentiment in Philadelphia only continued to worsen in the coming years, as evident through Benjamin Franklin’s referral of Germans in Pennsylvania as “Palatine Boors.”¹⁴

The increase of fear of Germanization in not just Philadelphia, but also Pennsylvania, is a representation of the growing hold that German settlers maintained in the area. Consequently, the conflict escalated to the point of Reverend William

⁷ John Alexander, *Render Them Submissive: Responses to Poverty in Philadelphia, 1760-1800* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980).

⁸ Sara Pennell, “The Quaker Domestic Interior, Philadelphia 1780-1830: An Artifactual Investigation of ‘Quaker Esthetic’ at Wyck House, Philadelphia and Collen Brook Farm, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania.” (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 1992).

⁹ Samuel Pennypacker, *The Settlement of Germantown and Pennsylvania and the Beginning of German Emigration to North America* (New York, NY: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1899), 10-11.

¹⁰ Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 41.

¹¹ *Germantown and the Germans: An Exhibition of Manuscripts, Prints and Photographs from the Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA: the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1983), 50.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

¹⁴ Ibid., 40.

Smith, former provost of the University of Pennsylvania, attempting to Anglicize German-speakers by opening charity schools conducted in English. Despite his attempts, German speakers invoked their power and influence by strongly resisting the schools, which were shut down by 1763.¹⁵

While German language dominated within their own community enabling them to hold on to the culture of their homeland, the rejection of Americanization ousted Germans living in the Greater Philadelphia area as “the other” in some regards. Despite initial resistance from other colonists, the German language has persisted in America and continues to permeate American society, including Philadelphia. Streets throughout Germantown and other sections of the city still carry the names of prominent Germans-Americans such as Pastorius, Wistar and Rittenhouse.

German influence on Philadelphia was also present in the job industry, particularly in the fields of manufacturing and publishing. Germantown became a center of manufacturing, primarily because of its location near the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers as well as the travel route provided by Germantown Road. The proximity of flowing water routes coupled with a main road enabled Germantown to become a hub for producing raw materials by providing a “social and economic structure necessary for the growth and prosperity of these mills.”¹⁶

The first paper mill in America, opened in 1690 and situated just outside of Germantown, was founded and funded by German immigrants.¹⁷ William Rittenhouse opened the paper mill on the Wissahickon Creek, only two years after the first paper mill in England was built.¹⁸ Though the original mill was destroyed in 1701, Rittenhouse

rebuilt the mill and the paper mill industry grew exponentially. At one point, even Benjamin Franklin used the Rittenhouse mills to print his “Poor Richard’s Almanacs,” as well as other texts.¹⁹

Gristmills and textile mills were also opened and operated by Germans in the late seventeenth century. The establishment of these mills in the Germantown area, located between a port city and rural, southeastern Pennsylvania, promoted industry and contributed in boosting the local economy, therefore reflecting German influence on Philadelphia from an economic perspective.²⁰

Many German immigrants in the Greater Philadelphia area also took to the publishing business, using an imported German style of printing known as the “fraktur” type.²¹ Printed items typically included religious books and children’s books, including the first Bible in America printed in a European language, which was printed in German by Christopher Saur, who settled in Germantown in 1724.²² In addition to the publishing of a Bible in German, Saur also founded the first German newspaper in America.²³ His contribution to German publications in the New World was extremely prominent because it promoted the cultivation of German language and culture not only in Philadelphia, but also across America. Additionally, German culture in Philadelphia advanced through founding the German Society of Pennsylvania in 1764. This organization, the oldest of its kind in the United States, was established to provide relief services to new German immigrants.²⁴

While most Germans held onto the culture of their homeland, some eventually embraced American culture as well, especially in 1765, when over 2,600 German immigrants in Philadelphia became

¹⁵ Ibid., 40.

¹⁶ *Germantown and the Germans: An Exhibition of Manuscripts, Prints and Photographs from the Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA: The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1983), 54.

¹⁷ Ibid., 55.

¹⁸ Harvey Whitten, "The Rittenhouse Paper Mill Circa 1690...the Beginning in America," *PaperAge*, Nov. & Dec. 2009.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ *Germantown and the Germans: An Exhibition of Manuscripts, Prints and Photographs from the Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA: The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1983), 55-62.

²¹ Ibid., 88.

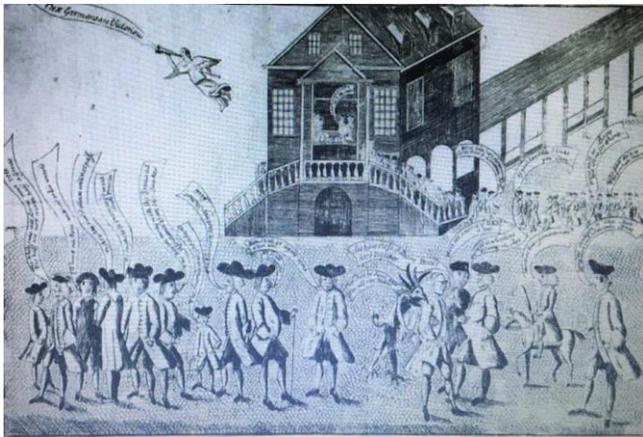
²² Ibid., 94.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

naturalized citizens.²⁵ The rush for German naturalization aligns with the beliefs of Horace Kallen, a Polish-born philosopher who stressed the importance of cultural pluralism, the idea that immigrants should assimilate themselves into American society, while still holding on to their native culture in their private lives.

The picture below is an anonymous political cartoon from 1765 that shows crowds of Germans waiting to become naturalized. In the background, there is a group of newly naturalized citizens in line to vote. At the top left corner of the cartoon, there is an angel with a banner that reads “the Germans are victorious.”²⁶



This cartoon coincides with the belief system of Kallen because it emphasizes the compatibility of maintaining one’s ethnic identity, in this case German, and the assimilation into American society, which is depicted through these German immigrants becoming naturalized citizens and waiting to vote. However, it must also be noted that while this cartoon demonstrates Kallen’s concept of cultural pluralism, it is also from 1765, when the colonists were still under British rule.

²⁵ Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 127.

²⁶ Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 128.

Consequently, “Americanization” in this sense does not align with how Kallen views it; nonetheless, the concept is still applicable.

In terms of future research on how German immigrants contributed to the shaping of Philadelphia, a closer look at individual figures such as Saur, Johannes Kelpius, Caspar Wistar, David Rittenhouse and other influential German-Americans will provide more insight on individual accomplishments and contributions of Germans in Philadelphia, rather than focusing on the group as a whole.

Future research could also examine other ways that Germans influenced Philadelphia, such as through politics, science, food, music, social clubs, etc. It must also be noted that, as a whole, Philadelphia is understudied in terms of immigration, so further research on immigration patterns to Philadelphia should also be conducted.

Early German immigration and the establishment of Germantown at the end of the seventeenth century have greatly influenced the city of Philadelphia through German language, religion, ideology and industry. While German immigration to the United States increased greatly in mid-nineteenth century, German migration from the founding of Germantown to the end of the Revolutionary planted the seeds German culture which still exist through institutions such as the German Society of Pennsylvania. Though the landscape of Germantown has changed, the influence on Philadelphia remains.

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The *Frozen* Formula: A Reading of the Film's Calculated Rise to National Popularity

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Once upon a time there was a man with an odd sounding name. This man loved to tell stories and dreamed of bringing happiness to all the world, especially its children. The man started his own company and as he grew in success his company also grew. From this company came many stories and songs. These stories and songs gave the world joy and wonder. One day, this man's company, long after he was gone, created a story and songs so wonderful it took the world by storm- a snowstorm as a matter of fact. This creation, so intense, so satisfying, amassed immense popularity with old and young alike. People everywhere were so taken by the company's new masterpiece that they couldn't control themselves; they couldn't let it go. But why?

I. Introduction

On November 27, 2013 popular culture in America was forever altered with the release of Walt Disney Animation Studios' *Frozen*. Cruising along a highway paved of dollar signs, the Walt Disney Company (Disney) has long established its reign on not only the animated film industry but all aspects of popular culture. With release after release of feel-good films filled with loveable characters and good messaging or life lessons, Disney has virtually cornered the market in movies. Disney's line of princess movies has done exceptionally well with lasting impacts. From this good fortune, the funny, musical, and tear-jerking film *Frozen* emerged. Instantly Disney had hit it big as box office totals and music downloads soared, and merchandising and society became flooded with the film's imagery, lyrics, and quotes. Four years later, *Frozen* and its showboat of commercialization is still going strong with short clip reincarnations and

a barrage of material culture. How is it though that this 109-minute children's film has so entirely and effectively permeated American culture and why can people not "let it go"? What is it about *Frozen* that makes it so popular and transcendent? It is this crucial question which this paper will attempt to answer.

Spawned from a classic, but drastically different fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, *Frozen* is evidence of the classic Disney touch which turns horrific or despairing original stories into warmhearted and loveable animated gems. Classics such as "Cinderella" or "The Little Mermaid" with grotesque plotlines that sour even an adult's stomach, are proof of the magical transformation Disney employs on its capitalist quest. This metamorphosis, however, is not where *Frozen* is set apart- though it shares in its own shapeshifting process. It is rather this new creation, the film itself, which is unique among its predecessors but for an entirely new Disney-devised make-over scheme, is the first of its kind. With the advent of *Frozen*, Disney created and rewrote an entirely new code for storylines and filmmaking. Harnessing underlying elements of American culture which establish appeal, Disney has created its own formula for destined successful films. Through the use of a devised formula composed up of an attractive icy aesthetic and catchy music, blatant girl power or feminist shadowing, and perfectly imperfect imperfections, Disney's *Frozen* is a road map for calculated success and ineradicable popularity.

II. Film Summary

Set in a northern Nordic land surrounded largely by mountains and water, *Frozen* instantly has all the makings for a grand adventure. Opening with a chilly and vaguely ominous opening chant scene which showcases manly ice cutters working in a barren and unforgiving icy wasteland, *Frozen* instantly seems to tell its audience how exactly it got its name. Progressing on to introduce the main characters of royal sisters Anna and Elsa, the latter and older shows off her magical powers. Proud of the joy she and her younger sister get from the conjured snowflakes, ice skating rinks, and snowmen, Elsa freely exercises her powers. As

rambunctious Anna eggs on her magical sister, disaster strikes when Elsa's rescue attempt shoots frosty ice into Anna's head leaving her unconscious. The tone of anxiety increases as the family must race to the mountains seeking a cure by the hands of rocky trolls. With Anna's memory erased of all her sister's magical powers, Elsa is solemnly ushered into hiding her powers and ultimately herself. In a musical montage the sister's age distanced from one another as Anna grows lonelier upon failed attempts to connect with Elsa whose life inside her bedroom becomes totally encompassed by fear of her powers and her proposed inability to control them. This sad downward spiral concludes with the tragic death of their parents, the King and Queen.

Musically ringing in the current day, Elsa's coronation as queen, Anna happily laments and hopefully looks towards the day's events where she will finally be surrounded by people and life will fill the castle for the celebration. Despite Elsa's trembling hands, all goes as planned until lonely Anna literally tries to reach out and connect with her sister. Icy sparks fly as Elsa fears losing control and hurting someone she cares about. Instantly taking flight from her confused kingdom, Elsa leaves a snowy and frozen landscape in her wake. Desperate to not lose her sister again, Anna immediately sets out on mission to find Elsa and consequently thaw the kingdom. In her absence, Anna leaves her newfound love, Prince Hans, in charge.

As Anna traipses and trudges through the snowy mountains to find Elsa she meets a menagerie of characters. Serving as reluctant but humoring guide, ice cutter Kristoff and his jolly reindeer Sven accompany Anna. Shortly after this team-up, a snowman from Anna and Elsa's past—now alive—named Olaf comedically lends his services to the mission. After a few hiccups, Elsa is finally found in her sparkling and majestic, self-created ice castle perched atop a peak. Anna's hopeful reconciliation does not go as plan when Elsa is overcome by fear and strikes Anna again—this time in her heart. Now Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf set out to cure Anna before she becomes solid ice with a true love's kiss. Meanwhile, Anna's supposed true love Prince Hans has led his own mission and captured Elsa in chains as he returns her to the palace prison. Moments grow short as Anna is raced back to town to kiss Hans and be saved but her

“true love” denies her for his evil scheme to take over her kingdom of Arendelle.

Events continue to worsen as Hans informs Elsa that Anna has died at her hand. Now heartbroken with the idea that her fears have become reality the escaped Elsa lies at the hands of Hans who raises his sword to strike and likely kill her. Simultaneously, the near-frozen-death Anna is weakly making her way to Kristoff who she realizes she loves when through the hurricane-like blizzard she spies Elsa in trouble. Turning away from nearing Kristoff, Anna rushes to Elsa and just in time stops Hans' blade with her now ice figure. All quickly resolves itself as Elsa's tears of love for her frozen sister help save Anna. With her newfound love and happiness, Elsa thaws the kingdom and can control her powers as all rejoice with the reunited sisters.

III. On the Surface: The Icy Aesthetic and Catchy Music

Quite unlike anything else Disney has produced, *Frozen* is a film where severe weather is the cause for the story's movement and progression. The icy settings which fill nearly every scene of the film are one of the key reasons for its popularity. This first taste of *Frozen* that viewers get, the aesthetically pleasing and captivating landscapes of ice and snow are the initial draw and reasoning for the film's popularity. The surface layer of Disney's calculated formula for success and wide-spread popularity is rooted in *Frozen*'s icy theming. Whether allowing the perverse delight of glimpsing a potential apocalyptic future, discovering a secret and elaborate culture previously unknown, or seizing upon a favorite American holiday season and its connotations, *Frozen* is a snowy solution that reacts with and engages viewers' most basic desires and likes.

Today's America has relatively little to fear in comparison with its early days when the environment held great power over its subjects. As progressive and accomplished as America has become in terms of subduing and conquering its surroundings and nature, there are still the cataclysmic natural disasters which can subdue this great nation. Powerful workings of nature, like blizzards constantly pose a threat to a species so concerned with climate change and the threat of an ice age. No matter what an individual might fear

most, one still cannot help being drawn to glimpses or previews of a devastating fate. *Frozen* provides exactly this opportunity. Similar to how different types of apocalyptic films draw large audiences who might hope for some clue as to what might be coming in the future, *Frozen* gives a glimpse- if highly comical and fantastical- into a possible fate which Earth might face.

Just as people are drawn to the dangerous, lands or worlds different from that of their own are equally alluring. Set in a fictitious but realistic and plausible place, *Frozen* offers viewers a landscape, culture, and people much like themselves but different enough to prove interesting. Strewn with slightly Nordic symbols, architecture, and customs *Frozen* gives viewers a glimpse into a possibly secret land and culture which they do not know about or understand. The combination of fjords, climbing mountains, and simultaneous environments of snow and summer situates the imaginary kingdom of Arendelle as some place made up of a mixture of recognizable features mashed into a single location.

The icy aesthetic of *Frozen* also attracts a number of fans for its obvious Christmas connotations. Released in late November a few days after Thanksgiving, *Frozen* had the perfect timing and story to be the year's great Christmas movie. With several states in America no stranger to snow before or shortly after Thanksgiving, many could empathize with the frosty and glistening white landscapes of the film. Chilled from the trek to the theater, viewers relished the idea of enjoying wintry landscapes but without the necessary parkas and snow boots. With the conclusion of Thanksgiving as the official start of the Christmas season, the icy aesthetic and well-timed release date of *Frozen* likewise gave Disney the advantage for enthusiastic viewers. Following Thanksgiving many Americans rush the next day to put up their Christmas decorations, find the perfect tree, and most of all start wishing for snow to fall to make the dropping temperatures bearable. Disney used these customs to its advantage with the release and story of *Frozen*. As Anna hopes her and Elsa will finally come together and celebrate the coronation as many gather to celebrate the holidays, snow and ice come into play ultimately uniting them. The attractive winter weather of *Frozen* draws even more fans for the characters it allows to come forth. As a reindeer,

Sven, is a popular symbol of all things winter and Christmas. Born literally from the snowy landscape *Frozen* displays, Olaf the snowman (also a popular symbol of winter and Christmas) attracts viewers with his adorable laugh and key quotes; he *is* the attractive icy aesthetic come to life. For Disney who sees its own fair share of financial boom during the holiday season, *Frozen* is the goldmine they couldn't resist creating.

Sparkling icy scenes and all that they entail are not the only surface element which keeps people enamored with Disney's *Frozen*, the catchy songs are another of Disney's calculated candy for the masses. In typical Disney fashion, an impeccable score is a crucial element to a moving and successful film. Even more a necessity however, are the handful of songs sung by the main characters which no one can help but subconsciously memorize. The catchy, uplifting and emotional melodies of *Frozen* are yet another cog in the wheel of Disney's formula of success for this film.

Employing popular music's long-utilized concept of "earworm" where through a devised equation of repetitive lyrics and rhythms a song essentially forces itself into popularity, Disney's *Frozen* is filled with repetitive and catchy lyrics set to their equal in musical notes (*Music in the Social and Behavioral Sciences: An Encyclopedia*, 353-355). Thanks to *Frozen*, the phrases "let it go", "for the first time in forever", and "do you want to build a snowman" will never be the same or able to be spoken without the remaining lyrics or tune continuing on in one's mind. The characters which sing their perfectly apportioned are as much to thank for sealing the deal on the song's and film's success: confident and beautiful Elsa's "Let It Go", Anna dealing with loneliness and heartbreak in "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?", and Olaf's cheery but naïve dreams of his future warm weather enjoyment in "In Summer". The combination of each of these elements illustrate the crucial role *Frozen*'s songs play in unraveling Disney's formula and the film's incredible popularity.

IV. Secondary Level: Girl Power and Feminist Shadowing

Just within the past few decades feminism and notions of "girl power" have overwhelmingly taken hold of American society and, more importantly, popular culture. From songs by female

singers giving words of empowerment, to newly evolving leading ladies in television and film, popular culture is craving strong females who are fearless and can get things done. Never one to look a proverbial “gift horse in the mouth”, Disney seized upon this notion and incorporated it into its carefully constructed formula for *Frozen*. As the world continues along with a policy of every (wo)man for themselves, parents seek out positive and empowering role models and messages to pass along to their daughters. Disney comes to these parents’ rescue and presents *Frozen* as the answer to all their problems.

In striking contrast and as evidence to Disney’s new formula, *Frozen* is virtually the first movie of its kind to not only have two strong female leads, but also to convey the acceptability of single women going about their lives without the constant thought of getting a man or marrying. This solidarity in female solitude is pivotal to understanding *Frozen*’s wide spread appeal. This effect is especially amplified when this female self-sufficiency is doubled, as two same-sex individuals use each other for strength. In the wake of their parents’ tragic deaths shortly into the film, Anna and Elsa must at relatively young ages face a world and ruling a kingdom alone. This heartbreaking development is a powerful deployment utilized by Disney as it instantly causes audiences of all ages to empathize with the characters and connect to the film. Disney’s tear-jerking apparatus does not stop there, however. As young sisters moving forward in life parentless, Anna and Elsa’s aloneness is multiplied by their own emotional distance. Following up on an earlier established precedent, Elsa has physically distanced herself from Anna prior to their parents’ deaths. This type of familial separation consequently strikes a chord with many Americans who suffer troubles with their relations. Shameless, Disney exploits audiences’ emotions as they identify with *Frozen*’s story and increase its popularity.

More than anything, popular culture adores a character that can overcome despite oppression. Here too, Disney has carefully crafted *Frozen* to satisfy and appeal. Plagued by inter-family disaster and separation, Anna and Elsa early on and throughout the film are resilient. Though disheartened by her sister’s distance, Anna insists on making her own entertainment as a child and

later young adult. Often expressing her boredom and loneliness like in the song “Do You Want To Build a Snowman?”, Anna prevails and maintains her hope for a sister reunion and company as evidenced in the tune “For the First Time in Forever”. Not content to stop there, Disney has also formulated Anna with a perseverance to quickly dive headfirst into a mission to find Elsa after she flees to the mountains in escape. Clad only in her party dress and a cape, Anna is an inspiration to all as she seems relatively impervious to her snowy surroundings- and more importantly frostbite and hypothermia.

The equal parts envy and admiration Disney calculatingly incites in *Frozen*’s audiences for its characters overflows from Anna onto Elsa. The elder and more responsible sister, Elsa must shoulder the burden of her misunderstood powers. In thought protecting Anna and those she loves, Elsa resigns herself to a solitary existence. Admirably, Elsa bears her confinement with strength and gracefully “weathers the storm” in a way that film viewers aspire to in their lives. Elsa’s, and largely *Frozen*’s, popularity stem from the extraordinary way in which she ultimately overcomes her fears heroically through the discovery of her sister’s love as a means to control her powers.

Wasting nothing, Disney utilizes the heartbreaking, raw emotions left in viewers from Anna and Elsa’s complex loneliness to turn *Frozen* into a tale of girl power and feminist ideas. Scared of herself and the power she possesses, Disney has created in Elsa a prime figure ready to self-realize her greatness and potential. Like many females who are told by society to control themselves and cover up their true selves, Elsa is constantly pushed to “conceal, don’t feel” so her powers remain hidden and less dangerous. As the women’s movement and feminism has pushed itself to the forefront, strong and dynamic women are feared as much as they are revered. Such a powerful character, for both of these reasons, is who popular culture wants to see and experience. In actualization of this popular role, Elsa in her Grammy and Academy Award-winning song “Let It Go” is virtually transformed at the hands of her newfound freedom to be herself. Originally frightening herself and others with her powers and unknown potential, Elsa hides herself away, though secretly yearning to be set free. It is in

her eventual self-created freedom, that Elsa embraces her powers and potential- as many female viewers wish to do themselves. This means of living vicariously and the great role model which Disney gives to viewers through Elsa, are key to *Frozen*'s astounding popularity, especially among females who crave their own freedom to be themselves.

V. The Connecting Glue: Perfect Imperfections

Finally, each part of Disney's carefully calculated *Frozen* is held together by one crucial element: its precisely designed imperfections. Without this common glue linking them all together, neither the icy scenes, catchy songs, compelling characters, or empowering female messages would rise *Frozen* to the excessive popularity it holds today. The common misconception of perfection as the key to success no longer applies or is effective in a recognizably flawed and criticized American society- imperfection is what sells. As popular culture seeks out the unique and different, those who can reach self-actualization in their imperfections are now attractive and desirable. Disney has designed the characters and story line of *Frozen* to be perfectly imperfect, which is the greatest key to the film and its resounding success.

Often in an attempt to spur on conflict, Disney has allowed in many of its movies a family or social structure that is removed from the ideal- namely in the form of one long-deceased parent. With *Frozen*, however, Disney utilizes a plethora of dysfunctions to shatter a family unit in a manner similar to many modern American families. For a few brief moments of a single scene at the beginning of the film, the royal family of Arendelle is perfect and happy. Following this short stint of perfection, the remainder of the film focuses on and is a driving force of the story of a family unit plagued by imperfections. With the deaths of father and mother, Anna and Elsa's family unit is instantly shattered and not heeding to the ideal structure. From this fracture, the family structure is further distorted as the two remaining members, sister and sister, are physically and emotionally separated. For two members of the same family to be so distanced from one another, far from what is considered perfect, the family unit of *Frozen* is one that instantly gleams audience sympathy and empathy. This personal connection which many Americans

feel towards this element of *Frozen* reflects the common and convoluted structures which often make-up American families- broken, blended, or likewise.

With the haunting echo of the scripted and rigid Victorian era or poised and charismatic early to mid-twentieth century still ringing, many Americans look to shake off such structured behavior. Anna, younger and naïve, is the personification of this changing focus and values. Bubbly and bumbling, Anna repeatedly stumbles and stutters through the film in a manner that many audience members see themselves going through their own lives. When Anna, singing and unaware, falls off the dock into a rowboat and then drags her handsome would-be rescuer into her clumsiness, each viewer recalls their own stumbles and embarrassment in front of a crush or attractive individual. Anna's completely disheveled hair upon waking up on coronation day likewise resonates with many viewers who envy the sexy bedhead look. Whether she is attempting and failing to climb a cliff wall, goofily daydreaming of meeting her true love, or stammering out unexpected and jumbled phrases when nervously speaking, Anna's abundant imperfections that leave her far from graceful and perfect are all purposefully placed by Disney to appeal to the masses. Anna allows viewers to vicariously live through her as she seemingly flaunts her imperfections without embarrassment which many self-conscious Americans dream of doing themselves.

Where Anna's planted imperfections are readily apparent, Elsa's are hidden beneath an attractive surface. While Anna showcases her freckles and red hair, Elsa is a frosted Barbie doll come to life. Whether in her concealing and proper queenly attire or in a glistening and sleek ice dress and sheer cape, Elsa is arresting in beauty and elegance. A supermodel and the envy of females everywhere on the exterior, Elsa's apparent perfection is reversed into a self-conscious and conflicted chaos on the inside which is perfectly contrived by Disney to resonate with viewers. The mere fact that Elsa has ice powers she was born with is an imperfection all its own. This inherent imperfection is utilized by Disney to its advantage. As many viewers identify themselves as being born with their own unique and natural talents, a personal connection is made to Elsa while she struggles

between suppressing and showcasing her gift. When Elsa's powers are viewed as an oddity or out of the norm, she is encouraged to keep them, and consequently her true self, concealed as others fail to understand their beauty. Feeling equally misunderstood by others, audience members relate strongly to Elsa.

To top off the "imperfection" of her magical but alluring powers, Elsa also is inwardly wrought with a mess of conflicting emotions. In one scene after another, Elsa can be seen feeling a constant rollercoaster of emotions such as fear, insecurity, confidence, and power. For example, at the beginning of the film, Anna and Elsa are playing among Elsa's snowy creations when suddenly the positive mood shifts as Anna is knocked unconscious by Elsa's powers. Additionally, later in the film, Elsa's triumphant scene of self-expression as she builds a shimmering ice palace comes to an abrupt halt when Elsa becomes flustered and afraid upon Anna showing up and trying to bring Elsa back to Arendelle to undo the damage she has caused. Finally, at the end of the film, in a matter of minutes Elsa goes from heartbroken crying over Anna's frozen figure to being encompassed by intense love as she thaws the kingdom from snow into sunshine. This exhibition of such a wide range of emotions in a short time period causes many viewers to identify with and understand Elsa in a way that those around them do not. Carefully crafted by Disney, *Frozen's* Elsa elevates the film's popularity through the intense personal connection many viewers make to the gifted, misunderstood, and emotionally complex character.

While the inner and outer turmoil *Frozen's* leading ladies experience at their own faults seems to take center stage, Disney makes certain to not exclude the males from its contrived and appealing imperfection. Though obviously taking the backseat to the females in a revolutionary and surprising twist, the male characters in Disney's *Frozen* do not let their own imperfections be outshone. The most imperfect and skillfully contrived character present in Disney's *Frozen* comes in the form of Prince Hans of the Southern Isles. *Frozen* would not have truly been fulfilling the template of its princess movie predecessors if there had not been a prince figure present. While Prince Hans fill this royal call in name, Disney's calculated design of the character upsets the traditional standard. Unlike his fellow

characters, Prince Hans' imperfection stems less from a deeply flawed and complicated personality and speaks more to the contrast between his officially named role and the plot's necessity of a villainous archetype. Prince Hans begins as Anna's destined true love- thus fulfilling the assumed typical Prince/Princess love story- but ends in a perfectly calculated twist as her sister's would-be murderer. With Prince Hans as an outwardly and presumably perfect character contrasting against his very imperfect inner villainy, Disney expertly formulated the moment when the audience let out a gasp as their mouths dropped open when Prince Hans refuses Anna a life-saving true love's kiss. Previously, no other Disney film had presented such a shocking about-face which kept audiences re-watching and obsessing over the film as they were repeatedly confounded for having missed any potential warning signs of this treachery.

Where Prince Hans is intentionally written imperfect to highlight his dual statuses ("Prince" and villain), Disney's *Frozen's* Kristoff shares in the female characters' flawed personalities. While Prince Hans acts as a deeply flawed being, Kristoff-like Anna and Elsa- is perfectly contrived to be imperfect in his personal nature. An iceman, adopted troll, and best friend to a reindeer, Kristoff is hardly a Prince Charming or knight in shining armor. Crafted by Disney in a fashion very similar to Anna, Kristoff stumbles over his words and limbs throughout the film in a relatable and likeable manner which appeals to audience members. As cute and clumsy as Prince Hans is composed and groomed, Kristoff fills the true love role in his own gruff and comical princely fashion. Kristoff is designed by Disney to be the perfect man via his awkward faults and is the perfect compliment to Anna, his equally imperfect counterpart in the film. *Frozen's* flawed leading man is a product of Disney's cunning calculation as he lends yet another level for audiences to identify with and further seal the film's formulated popularity.

VI. Other Opinions

A film of great popularity, Disney's *Frozen* has puzzled others as they try to unravel its incredible success. Skirting around the obvious contrived formula Disney has put forth in the film, *Frozen* critics believe to have each found their own reasoning for the film's popularity. Taking a more critical and decisively feminist approach, University

of California's Madeline Streiff and Lauren Dundes of McDaniel College discuss *Frozen* in terms of gender-stereotyping. Seeing Elsa and *Frozen*'s storyline as achieving popularity for its lack of romance and use of a uniquely powerful female character, Streiff and Dundes assert, "...Elsa is just a variation on the archetypal power-hungry female villain whose lust for power replaces lust for a mate and who threatens the patriarchal status quo. The only twist is that she finds redemption through gender-stereotypical compassion" (Streiff and Dundes 9). Using a different reading, clinical psychology professor Maryam Kia-Keating and Children's Digital Media Center researcher Yalda T. Uhls examine *Frozen* through the lens of children's culture. Focusing specifically on females and preschool age individuals in a *The Washington Post* article, Kia-Keating and Uhls state that *Frozen*'s success stems from four key elements: (1) Elsa's passionate emotional similarity to that of a preschooler, (2) the rampant imagination of preschoolers can identify with magic, (3) a genuine sisterly connection that family-driven preschoolers understand, and (4) "The sing-along music seals the deal". Perhaps the most compelling and unique assessment of *Frozen*'s popularity comes from Michelle Resene of the University of Connecticut. Resene examines in her *Disabilities Studies Quarterly* article *Frozen*'s success and popularity in terms of its representation of Elsa as disabled and Disney's first princess to be such "...her status as a much-beloved princess figure allows the animators at Disney to position disability as a universal experience and in turn to create empathy for PWDs both on and off screen".

VII. Conclusion and Wrap-Up

Today a multi-billion dollar company, Disney maintains a firm hand in all aspects of popular culture. At the same time a theme park, television channel, and consumer product tycoon, Disney has had its greatest success as a film maker. Constantly imagining tales of fantasy and magic, Disney has become a well-oiled machine in turning out films instantly devoured by American society. Though well-versed in making popular movies, with the creation of *Frozen*, Disney has charted and formulated its way into new territory.

Unlike any other film before it, Disney's *Frozen* has achieved a far-reaching and lasting popularity, thanks to careful calculation and

planning. In making *Frozen*, Disney utilized and exploited the underlying characteristics of American culture to create a film destined for success and incredible popularity. Whether it's manipulating a snowy world to inspire post-apocalyptic or ice age possibilities, sharing a world and culture in an attractive appeal to those with wanderlust, or pumping viewers up with wintry and holiday implications, Disney focuses on an icy aesthetic on its road to success with *Frozen*. Also skyrocketing *Frozen* to popularity on the surface level, catchy songs fill the film and viewers' subconscious. Going deeper, *Frozen*'s secondary level focuses on Disney's cleverly designed messages of girl power or feminist overshadowing. Invoking intense loneliness at the hands of strained familial situations, Disney's makes use of *Frozen* characters as alone in the world, these singular and steadfast female characters ultimately draw audiences in as they overcome obstacles and oppression- eventually reveling in their own self-created freedom to be themselves. The essential element that holds all of Disney's contrived aspects of *Frozen* and cements the film's popularity comes into play through perfectly constructed imperfections. Connecting on a deeper level to many viewers, Disney uses *Frozen* to bring the modern, nontraditional American family structure to life, show the faults or imperfections many repress in a character's open display, and recognize the complex mess of emotions that viewers undergo daily beneath a perfected outward appearance. The clever mixture of an attractive icy aesthetic and catchy music, girl power messaging or feminist shadowing, and perfect imperfections, gives Disney's *Frozen* a formula for success and absolute popularity. To put it in the film's wording, Disney's *Frozen* is a movie that "For the First Time In Forever" will not allow American culture to "Let It Go".

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“On My World, It Means Hope:” Superman as Symbolic Propaganda to Cultural Icon, 1939-1945

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Truth, justice, and the American way. This iconic phrase is instantly familiar to anyone who has interacted with popular culture in the past seventy-five years, and immediately recalls an image of the paragon of American comic book heroes: Superman. Superman’s idealistic motto has endured throughout American culture almost as long as Superman himself. These well known words can be first attributed to a 1942 *Superman* radio serial, and were originally conceived as encouragement for home-front audiences struggling to come to terms with a war not yet going in the Allies’ favor. Once American forces began to experience success during World War Two, the phrase was largely forgotten until the Cold War, when it became popular to contrast American values with those of the Soviet Union.¹ With the removal of such a direct reminder of these patriotic values, how did Superman become such a cultural icon, connected so strongly with American ideals? Why did his character endure as a symbol of American virtue and hope beyond World War Two, while other more explicitly patriotic comic book characters faded out of the limelight once victory was secured?

The answer is likely to be found in Superman’s unusual position as a wartime propaganda figure who was deliberately kept out of fighting the war in his comic book appearances. The American comic book was the perfect vehicle for

propaganda due to the wide audience it attracted and the relative speed by which the medium could react to the events of the war. Superman comic books served this propaganda end, and the character quickly built up a mythos of hope that provided a coping mechanism for both younger and older readers during the war.

This mythos of hope sustained Superman’s relevance beyond 1945, in a way that might not have occurred if writers had permitted him to take a more active role in fighting the war throughout the pages of his comic books.

Such an integral spirit of hope carried on through the publication of Superman, and also into other media depictions of the character, such as in the film *Man of Steel*, from which this paper’s title quote “on my world, it means hope,” derives. Superman delivers this line in response to a question about what the “S” on his costume stands for, which he reveals is actually his family crest that translates to “hope” in his native language. While this was not part of his character’s history at the time of World War Two, it displays how necessary the concept of hope has continued to be for Superman. For terms of clarity, Superman’s “mythos of hope” can be defined as an optimistic spirit that has been integral to Superman’s character throughout his eighty-year history. Additionally, a mythos of hope can be viewed in how this character trait functions towards Superman acting as a symbol of hope in American popular culture. This development can be examined through the ways in which Superman’s creators, as well as American citizens, thought about the character in terms of what it meant for him to be used for propaganda purposes. Superman’s interactions with the events of the war, and how his stories line up with those events, further the assertion that he was used as a symbol of wartime hope. This was a vital morale-boosting function that eventually came to define his character and extend his cultural usefulness beyond World War Two. Such a timeline is especially noteworthy when considering how the character

¹ Erik Lundegaard, “Truth, Justice and (Fill in the Blank),” *New York Times*, June 30, 2006, accessed February 1, 2018. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/30/opinion/truth-justice-and-fill-in-the-blank.html>.

was written to amplify morale following Allied victories, as this thesis will explore. Taking all of these factors into account, this thesis seeks to consider how Superman was built up into a symbol of hope while being used as a propaganda figure in World War Two, and how this symbolic nature and wartime role enabled the character to transcend propaganda purposes to become a cultural icon following the war.

Literature Review

The use of comic books in academic study is a relatively recent phenomenon. Much of the work that has been done in relation to comic books can be seen as biographical or encyclopedic, depicting the change of a particular character over years of publication.² More recently, however, scholars have been turning to comic books as a popular culture lens to look at specific moments in time.³ That said, only a small handful of historians have examined the uses of superhero comics as propaganda during World War Two. Most of the work done relating to comics as propaganda examines the negative aspects of this phenomenon, such as racial and ethnic stereotyping of villains, rather than considering the positive impacts of comics on national morale. Furthermore, Superman has not appeared in any academic work as a focal point for this area of study. In general, the existing literature presents an incomplete picture by failing to analyze Superman as a propaganda symbol during World War Two. Additionally, none of the existing literature in this vein takes time to consider how comic book characters were able to move beyond

² Such resources include *The DC Comics Encyclopedia* (London: DK, 2016) by Matthew K. Manning and Alex Irvine, and *Superman: The High-Flying History of America's Most Enduring Superhero* (New York: Random House, 2013) by Larry Tye.

³ Most recently, these efforts can be seen in Jill Lepore's *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* (New York: Vintage Books, 2015) which relates Wonder Woman and her creator, William Moulton Marston, to the feminist movement.

their propaganda purposes in World War Two to take on additional cultural significance following the war. This transition from patriotic tool to cultural icon is a point on which this thesis seeks to elaborate.

To this end, this literature review will focus on the work of two historians who have written about comics as propaganda during World War Two, Cord A. Scott and Paul Hirsch. Also included are comprehensive works on propaganda and the American World War Two home front, as well as a biography about Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, Superman's creators. These respective works survey the fields of World War Two propaganda, as well as Superman's cultural usefulness to the American home front.

Cord A. Scott's most relevant work on comics as World War Two propaganda is his 2011 dissertation published by Loyola University Chicago, "Comics and Conflict: War and Patriotically Themed Comics in American Cultural History From World War II through the Iraq War."⁴ Scott's dissertation is a broad overview of how American comics of all sorts evolved to address various American military conflicts over time. Naturally, this leads to Scott covering a wide array of methods and outcomes related to comics being used as propaganda. In the sections discussing World War Two, Scott mainly draws examples from comic books and characters that did not continue to exist long after the war, as well as Superman, Captain America, and Wonder Woman. This dissertation provides analysis regarding the usefulness of comics as propaganda during World War Two and beyond, but lacks the level of specificity required to tackle the time period, or any singular character, with sufficient depth.

⁴ Cord A. Scott, "Comics and Conflict: War and Patriotically Themed Comics in American Cultural History From World War II Through the Iraq War," *Dissertations*, Paper 74 (2011). Accessed December 1, 2017. http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/74. Also of note is Scott's full-length book, *Comics and Conflict: Patriotism and Propaganda From WWII Through Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2014).

In contrast, Paul Hirsch's work presents a more focused and thematic treatment than Scott's survey of 1945 through 2001.⁵ "This is Our Enemy" has a title that accurately and concisely describes the overall message of Hirsch's article, being that the government-funded Writers' War Board (WWB) actively promoted certain racist depictions of American enemies in comics during World War Two. Hirsch discusses the various ways that German and Japanese portrayals in comic books changed due to WWB interference. At the same time, depictions of non-white Americans and Allies improved for the sake of unity while still remaining problematic.

The only issue with Hirsch's work is its similarity to that of Scott's. Both present an overly broad assessment of a multitude of comic books and characters, rather than a focus on one key figure. Hirsch's work has a tighter focus on one time period, however, and elaborates much further about the WWB than Scott, who mentions the organization only briefly. Although neither Scott nor Hirsch discuss Superman at any length, their respective works are still relevant to the overall study of comic books' relationship to propaganda.

When looking at comics as World War Two propaganda, it is also necessary to back up and look at more general works on opinion-shaping and the American home front during that era.⁶ An excellent source for understanding the various uses and methods of propaganda is *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, published in 2013, which contains a series of historiographical essays, an overview of various institutions that effectively used propaganda, and a set of discussions about

propaganda theory.⁷ Altogether, the *Handbook* provides a sufficient comparative study of different methods of propaganda used in World War Two, but fails to include comics in the discussion.

A similarly broad overview of the home front can be found in Allan M. Winkler's *Home Front U.S.A.: America During World War II*.⁸ Winkler divides the U.S. home-front experience into four components: the "Arsenal of Democracy" facilitated by war production and rationing, an assessment of general American society, an examination of attitudes towards different ethnic groups within United States at the time, and a brief discussion of the political climate during World War Two. In the "American society" section, Winkler briefly acknowledges the importance of comic books in wartime popular culture:

Comic book sales rose from 12 million copies a month in 1942 to over 60 million a month in 1946. Eighty percent of the population aged 6 to 17 read comic books during the war; one third of people aged 18 to 30 years did the same...Publishers catered to both a children's and a servicemen's market; a special edition of *Superman* went overseas.⁹

While the inclusion of comics in a discussion of home front life is refreshing to see, Winkler does not connect these statistics to the use of comics as a propaganda vehicle at all. This lack of analysis suggests an absence of connection between comics and propaganda during the World War Two era, which should be addressed.

⁵ Paul Hirsch, "This Is Our Enemy: The Writers' War Board and Representations of Race in Comic Books, 1942-1945," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (2014): 448-486. Accessed December 1, 2017. <http://phr.ucpress.edu.libproxy.temple.edu/content/83/3/448>.

⁶ Not reviewed here but also of relevance is *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion in World War II, Volume 1* (Pennsylvania: Chelsea House Publishing, 1983) by Anthony Rhodes.

⁷ Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁸ Allan M. Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.: America During World War II* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2004).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

An important addition to Superman history is *Super Boys: The Amazing Adventures of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the Creators of Superman* by Brad Ricca. This biography, published in 2013, primarily frames Siegel and Shuster's lives within the context of the business end of Superman. Some liberties are likely taken to make the biography read as more of a story, given Ricca's English studies background.¹⁰ Otherwise, the work presents a thorough, well documented account of Siegel and Shuster's lives. Surprisingly, Ricca does not give the World War Two years much attention, which is strange, considering how formative those years were to Superman's development as a character and a symbol.

Ultimately, there is not much literature that substantially covers the subject of Superman as a conduit for World War Two propaganda. Although there are authoritative works covering the separate topics of propaganda, World War Two, and Superman, few texts provide any kind of intersection for these three subjects. Any intersection that does exist is minimal at best. The work of Cord Scott and Paul Hirsch comes the closest to filling this void, but not in terms of using a specific character such as Superman as a lens to look at comics as propaganda. Therefore, this thesis will benefit historians who share a growing interest in the social utility of comic books, as well as those who seek a more focused analysis of one superhero's place in World War Two propaganda.

Superman and Propaganda

From the outset of World War Two, it became obvious that the comic book industry as a whole would adopt a largely interventionist stance towards the conflict. The industry's talent, composed predominantly of young Jewish men, quickly began to consider their comic book characters' places in

the war, even before it became popular to support U.S. intervention.¹¹ The "Golden Age" of comic books, which began with the creation of Superman in 1938 and lasted until 1950, often presented heroes and villains in exceedingly clear terms, with few gray areas regarding who was "good" and who was "evil." This stark divide allowed creators to incorporate a realworld conflict pitting the virtuous Allies against the vicious Axis powers into their stories with relative ease.

For Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the creators of Superman, this shift in focus was slightly more complicated. During the short period Superman existed before World War Two, the character's main aim was to protect those with little power from domestic crime. His foes were generally thugs, crooked businessmen, and other con artists, who preyed upon weaker individuals. By assuming the alter ego of reporter Clark Kent, Superman could expose this corruption in print, and then handle it physically (but benevolently) in his red-caped superhero identity. This was, and still is, the charm of Superman, someone who had the alien strength and smarts to destroy the human world, but actively chose to embody the best of humanity instead. This sort of characterization, particularly Superman's extreme level of strength, was exactly what made it challenging for Siegel and Shuster to involve Superman in the war.

Even though Superman did not possess the same range of powers during World War Two as he does today (many of which were developed as a product of the Cold War), it was still widely recognized that the original superhero had abilities far beyond that of the ordinary GI going off to war. Considering this, Siegel and Shuster quickly came to understand that they could not place Superman directly into the war and still have a good story on

¹¹ Cord A. Scott, "Comics and Conflict: War and Patriotically Themed Comics in American Cultural History From World War I through the Iraq War," *Dissertations*, Paper 74 (2011): 45-46. Accessed December 1, 2017. http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/74.

¹⁰ Brad Ricca, *Super Boys: The Amazing Adventures of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the Creators of Superman* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2013).

their hands. If they introduced him to combat, they would either have had to severely limit Superman's powers so that fighting ordinary men was a challenge, or let their hero immediately win the war for the Allies. Additionally, Siegel and Shuster could have created a super-powered Nazi, but this still would have forced Superman into direct combat, harkening back to the original concern of Superman needing to win in order to maintain high reader morale and comic book sales. Cord Scott expressed this general problem facing all comic book writers during World War Two: "If a character was too successful at a time when the war was going against the United States, people became demoralized and sales dropped. If the superhero only fought imaginary or relatively nonthreatening foes (such as domestic criminals), he appeared to be shirking his wartime duty."¹² Thus a balance had to be struck to maintain readership while also maintaining morale.

Although keeping Superman out of the war seemed like the popular option at the time, Siegel and Shuster would not have been without support if they had chosen to bring him into the European conflict. A letter to the editor published in the *Washington Post* on February 26, 1940, revealed reader Delbert Clark's desire to see Superman enact a peaceful end to the war. Clark suggested Superman simply "seize all the weapons, and hurl them into opposite camps," where he suspected that soldiers would not have the proper ammunition to fit the weapons.¹³ Even if this clever idea appealed to Siegel and Shuster, they still would not have been able to use it without creating dissonance between Superman's world, and the real world where a war was still raging on. Similar concerns existed with the pacifist nature of this solution. Although it would have been wonderful for the war to just end, it would have been even better for Superman to be seen exacting due justice to the Nazis. Such a turn of events could

¹² Ibid., 51.

¹³ Delbert Clark, "Superman For Peace," *The Washington Post*, (1923-1954), February 26, 1940. Accessed March 22, 2018. https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/cv_701361/docview/151264639/107E445D06C43BDPQ/23?accountid=14270.

have caused morale and faith in Superman to skyrocket, but this kind of event would still be at odds with reality. Even though Superman was nowhere close to being real, the impact he could have on morale was substantial enough to keep his actions aligned with the events of the real world.

The general isolationism that prevailed among Americans was yet another obstacle hindering Superman's foray into the war effort. Although support was growing for intervention following the fall of France and through aid programs to the Allies, Superman was still shown supporting the war from within the confines of the United States up until the Pearl Harbor attack. He frequently battled forms of business corruption that impacted assistance to the Allies, or broke up spy rings that sought to threaten American security and democratic ideals. The Superman comic books during this period often presented several shorter stories within a single issue. In addition to a syndicated comic strip that first appeared in newspapers in 1939, two different monthly comic book titles featured included Superman, *Action Comics* and *Superman*. Both of these titles were published by DC Comics, which had purchased rights to Superman from Siegel and Shuster, under the condition that the creative partners would still provide stories and artwork for the character. Prior to U.S. intervention, these stories followed Superman's adventures through a variety of situations, with one or two tales per issue containing anything that could be perceived as interventionist propaganda.

One significant example of prewar propagandistic imagery can be found in "Superman #8," the 1941 January-February issue. In that issue, Superman engaged with a fifth-column spy organization conducted by a character named Eric Reibel, an obvious German-sounding name.¹⁴ In a clear example of propaganda, Reibel is depicted as an almost near-perfect Hitler look-alike. When

¹⁴ Jerry Siegel, "Superman #8," *Superman: The Golden Age Omnibus Vol. 2* (New York: DC Comics, 2016), 40-52.

Superman stows away underneath a spy plane flying to the organization's headquarters, he discovers a sizable military base hidden within U.S. territory that is covered in short cross symbols similar to those found on German military aircraft and ground vehicles. Superman quickly sets to work destroying the entire base, tearing apart a line of bombers while insisting "these planes will never bomb American cities!"¹⁵

It is evident that Siegel and Shuster were trying to link the fifth-column group with the Nazis, but they do so without actually mentioning "Germany" or naming Hitler's Nazi Party. Even so, they successfully place Superman in a war-time setting without explicitly involving him in the war. The isolated spy headquarters is a more believable target for Superman to eliminate rather than all of Nazi Germany itself, and the threat of espionage was a real concern to American readers. By placing Superman within a smaller sphere of action, Siegel and Shuster allowed him to succeed against American enemies without igniting much controversy, while still addressing an issue Americans may have been concerned about at the time. More importantly, the creators established the idea that Superman was effectively able to protect the home front, where he could still diligently serve his country later on.

This focus on Superman protecting America from within the country's borders constituted a significant step towards his transformation into a symbol of hope. Confining Superman to the home front grounded his patriotic activity in situations Americans might have imagined themselves encountering, such as fifth-column conspiracy. Although most Americans would not be able to dismantle an entire spy ring singlehandedly, they could still alert authorities to potential threats, and hope to make an impact in a similar manner to Superman. This thread of realism within fiction made Superman more relatable, while also exhibiting that Superman was able to be a positive

force for good without using his powers to win the war outright.

In fact, Superman's role as a means for readers to engage with the war in an emotionally safe way is something that Siegel himself understood. In a 1943 interview with the *Washington Post*, Siegel related that Superman would never be directly involved in the war unless the writers received "advanced information when the war will end." Siegel realized that Superman's induction into the U.S. Army "might prove disastrous to child morale," given the confidence that young readers placed in the character.¹⁶ By the middle of U.S. involvement in World War Two, Superman's use as a symbol of hope had manifested itself to Siegel and Shuster, and they kept him out of major combat. To maintain Superman's American patriotism, however, the creators wrote in an excuse for him to not be enlisted. In February 1942, three "Superman" comic strips ran that showed Clark Kent going to his eye test in the Metropolis recruiting office. He quickly becomes distracted while thinking about foiling American enemies. Due to this lack of concentration, the character accidentally uses his x-ray vision to view the eye chart in the next room over, consequently failing his eye test and being designated 4-F.¹⁷

These comic strips served as a response to any potential criticism about what Superman's role was supposed to be during the war. Five days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, fourteen-year-old Earl Blondheim wrote to the *Washington Post*, asking where Superman was "when all the bombing took place."¹⁸ While it is doubtful that a teenager truly

¹⁶ "Superman's Creator Now Pvt. Siegal," *The Washington Post* (1923-1954), August 14, 1943. Accessed February 10, 2018. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/151649698?accountid=14270>.

¹⁷ Brian Cronin, "Comic Book Urban Legends Revealed #49!" last modified May 4, 2006. <https://www.cbr.com/comic-book-urban-legends-revealed-49/>.

¹⁸ Earl Blondheim, "Paging Superman," *The Washington Post* (1923-1954), December 20, 1941. Accessed September 17, 2017. <https://search-proquest->

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

believed that Superman was real, Blondheim's short note still serves as an example of what the relatively new fictional character could represent to readers, and how deeply his absence from the war effort could be felt.

This is not to say, however, that Superman failed to contribute to the war effort. Given the declaration of war following Pearl Harbor, Siegel and Shuster were free to create Axis enemies for Superman, and did so immediately for the January 1942, issue of *Action Comics*. The cover shows Superman bending the barrel of a Nazi cannon, impervious to the bullets fired at him by a surrounding ring of Nazi soldiers. A swastika appears predominantly on the artillery pieces, clearly revealing the Nazis as enemies of Superman for the first time in comic books. The accompanying story has nothing to do with Nazis or the war, but the cover art presented readers with exactly the kind of patriotic imagery they wanted to see following official U.S. entry into World War Two.

Within the Superman comic books released throughout World War Two, this appears to be a common theme. A cover might depict Superman directly involved with the war, triumphantly punching a Japanese plane out of the sky or carrying off a belligerent Hitler, but the stories inside often ignored the war itself. These plot lines, as previously mentioned, frequently showed Superman attempting to stop con-men or other common criminals that plagued ordinary individuals. Some issues also began to depict Superman tangling with larger but more fantastical enemies, like robots, an undersea empire, and his new arch-nemesis, Lex Luthor. This kind of approach, with a propagandistic cover and "fluffier" content, allowed Superman comic books to distract readers from the complications of war, while also utilizing patriotic imagery that left no doubt about the hero's moral alignment and ability. Thanks to

writers keeping Superman at home and successful against realistic fictional enemies, hope could be derived from his success, and readers could justifiably project that hope onto the war due to the patriotic cover art that accompanied each issue.

As the war continued, a number of stories appeared that seemed to be trying to impart some kind of war-related moral lesson to Superman readers. Such an example is "The Emperor of America," a story found in "Action Comics #52," published in September 1942. The first panel of the comic contemplates how "this is a tale that could occur only after the war ... many years hence! It's up to all of us to see it doesn't!"¹⁹ What follows is a story that depicts a "fiend" who easily seizes power from a president who looks suspiciously like FDR (an odd decision, if writers were seeking to bolster faith in American leadership). To meet his aims, the villain uses a ray gun that weakens people's ability to resist persuasion. Superman is able to defy the power of the ray by sheer force of will, and defeats the dogmatic and undemocratic emperor.

It is particularly timely that this story came out following a summer of considerable Allied success in the Pacific theater. A heavy-handed lesson about the will of democracy and justice prevailing over would-be dictators would have suited the mood of American citizens nicely at this time. Although the story had a happy ending, the warning of how such a trial could still occur in America's future reminded readers that the war was not yet won. The idea that Superman beat the potential despot with force of will rather than physical strength again plays into Superman becoming a symbol of hope. If Superman could resist evil through force of will alone, any American could do so, without any superpowers required.

It is questionable if this patriotic imagery originated from Siegel and Shuster's sense of civic duty, or due to some level of governmental influence on their writing. An agency called the

com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/
151427349?accountid=14270.

¹⁹ Jerry Siegel, "Action Comics #52," *Superman: The Golden Age Omnibus Vol. 3* (New York: DC Comics, 2016), 186-200.

Writers' War Board, affiliated with the Office of War Information, made a handful of separate efforts to suggest war-related content to various comic book publishers. As early as February 1942, the chairman of the WWB, Rex Stout, wrote to popular radio personality Clifton Fadiman. This correspondence resulted in Stout sending along a list of pop culture characters whose writers could address "some aspect of the war."²⁰ The list included Superman. In reply, Fadiman sent Stout a sample letter that he intended to distribute to a handful of figures in the entertainment industry, including Joe Shuster, the original artist for Superman. Although the WWB did not disclose Shuster's reply, Superman began appearing in more war-related stories beginning in September 1942. Almost all of these, however, still kept Superman in the United States, maintaining his place as a protector of the home front and the ordinary American citizen. Regardless of the absence of a confirmed response from Shuster, it is obvious that a government organization found enough value in Superman as a potential propaganda vehicle by reaching out to Shuster in the first place.

In addition to this initial mailing list, the WWB began organizing a "Comics Committee" sometime in the summer of 1943 in order to capitalize on ways propaganda could be applied to the medium. This is evinced by a series of correspondence between Frederica Barach, the WWB executive secretary, and various comic book publishers and editors.²¹ There is no record of Siegel, Shuster, or a DC Comics representative sitting on this committee. A May 30, 1944, memo, however, contains a "comics report" detailing the status of various WWB projects within the comic industry. This document includes two separate accounts of "Superman" comic strips adhering to some kind of WWB suggested material, which

involved encouraging anti-inflation, and promoting cooperation across the multiple branches of the military.²² In light of this evidence, it appears that Superman's writers adhered to the WWB's propaganda requests, as Superman's mentions of the war effort also become more frequent following this point. In another instance of the United States government recognizing Superman's propaganda value, a November 1943 *Chicago Daily Tribune* interview with Melville Minton, president of the G.P. Putnam's Sons publishing firm, reveals that comic book titles containing "Superman" stories were comparatively safe from paper rationing. Referencing a potential paper shortage for the coming year, Minton quipped that Superman "had been declared essential to the war program before the Bible by Washington officials."²³ A revelation such as this exhibits how vital the government deemed this form of entertainment to the war effort. Superman comic books would have been more available to potential readers due to this lack of printing restrictions, which could also explain the longevity of the character following the war.

Superman and Morale

Aside from the benefits of being prized by the U.S. government, Superman also won the begrudging respect of child psychologists and educators in the latter stages of the war, along with comic books in general. A December 1944 *New York Times* article examined a study conducted by psychologists and sociologists in relation to the benefits of comics upon early education and mental well-being. The professionals praised the role of comic books as a mediator for reality in children's lives, stating that "children's fantasies are a

²⁰ Rex Stout to Fadiman, February 26, 1942, box 6, Papers of the Writers' War Board, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter WWB Papers).

²¹ Charles Wessell to Barach, July 24, 1943, box 11, WWB Papers.

²² "Comics Report," May 30, 1944, box 11, WWB Papers.

²³ "Book Burocraats Put 'Superman' Ahead of Bible," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1923-1963), Nov 07, 1943. Accessed February 10, 2017. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/176883943?accountid=14270>.

constructive approach to reality, not an escape.”²⁴ This observation validated the concerns Jerry Siegel expressed regarding the impact of Superman’s wartime exploits on child morale, suggesting that comics were a source of comfort to children at this time.²⁵ A July 1946 *Coronet* article published after the war again described the consciousness that Superman’s creators applied to their writing, saying “they have assumed an obligation to instill faith, whenever possible, in the physical reality of Superman.” The article goes on to compare the maintenance of Superman’s spirit of hopefulness to that of the idea of Santa Claus.²⁶ This is an idea that comes across in the comics given Superman’s engagement with fictional villains that he can defeat without readers comparing his successes to those of the U.S. military.

Since a third of all Americans aged eighteen to thirty also read comic books during World War Two, it can be reasonably assumed that the use of such reading material as a coping mechanism was not confined solely to children.²⁷ An April 13, 1942, *Time* article listed monthly readership for Superman’s titles at twelve million people, not including the additional readership from the newspaper comic strip. The same article also predated Melville Minton’s comments about Superman being saved from rationing, noting that Superman comic books earned a “high priority” rating and were deemed “essential supplies” in a shipment to Marines at Midway. According to the article, “for all U.S. Armed Forces, the Man of Steel

²⁴ Catherine Mackenzie, "'Superman,' 'Dick Tracy' Et Al Here to Stay, Educators Find in an Evaluation of Comics," *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, December 15, 1944. Accessed September 17, 2017. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/106931244?accountid=14270>.

²⁵ “Pvt. Seigel.”

²⁶ Mort Weisinger, “Here Comes Superman!” *Coronet*, July 1946. Accessed February 22, 2018. http://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/SUPERMAN_COMIC-BOOK_HISTORY_pdf.

²⁷ Winkler, 41.

is still super-favorite reading.”²⁸ This view was substantiated by the aforementioned *Coronet* article, which also described the various public services Superman had provided during World War Two.²⁹ The article stated that the Air Forces Training Command enlisted Superman’s help with maintaining the morale of airplane mechanics who were disappointed in their positions, compared to the “glamor” of being a pilot during the war. As a result, an issue of *Superman* published for the Training Command emphasized the importance of enlisted men who never got to see combat. Additionally, the article recounted a statement made by an infantry major on D-Day, whose concerns about troop morale diminished when he saw one of his men reading a Superman comic book.³⁰ Given these examples, it is clear that Superman was capable of providing some sense of hope for success to the GIs directly experiencing the effects of war, let alone Americans on the home front who weren’t immediately involved in the conflict.

Part of the appeal of Superman was the universal nature of most of the stories published in the character’s regular issues, which dealt with problems and themes to which any American could relate, like corruption, robbery, and even romantic rejection. Superman’s success at dealing with these smaller-scale problems served as a distraction to readers who were anxious about the larger issues of the war.³¹ Confidence in Superman’s ability to handle any challenge translated well when he ended up engaging with war-related problems on the home front. Confining Superman’s activities to the home front separated him from characters such as Marvel’s Captain America, who thrived in a combat

²⁸ “Superman’s Dilemma,” *Time*, April 13, 1942. Accessed February 22, 2018. <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.libproxy.temple.edu/ehost/detail/detail?vid=6&sid=b17eea00-6eee-4d48-bc4bca62859f82d6%40sessionmgr103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSdzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=54831238&db=a9h>.

²⁹ Weisinger.

³⁰ *Ibid*.

³¹ Mackenzie.

environment rather than in the familiar settings of home. Unlike Superman, Captain America's primary characteristic was his relationship to the war, with his exploits frequently taking place against Nazis on the European battlefields. Captain America possessed heightened abilities as compared to the average man, but not to the same extreme degree as Superman. This allowed his fighting with "normal" German soldiers to be more challenging. While there were certainly some elements of espionage within Captain America comics, it was far more common to see Captain America in open combat as opposed to what a reader would expect from Superman. Captain America also maintained a greater presence on the front than Superman did, a trait that benefited his war-driven storylines, but did little to extend his relevance beyond the war. As a result, the Captain America title was cancelled in 1949 despite efforts to reinvent the character, a situation Superman's publishers never had to confront. As a creation of the war, Captain America did not have the prewar history to thrive in a postwar environment. There was a brief attempt to bring Captain America back into relevance during the Cold War, which failed, and even when the character was fully revived in 1964, he was still heavily associated with his World War Two exploits.³² Superman, with his prewar roots and home front story settings, was able to adapt immediately back to peacetime following the war and thus remained in the public eye.

Engaging with the war effort within American borders also provided the added benefit of giving hope to readers that they too could enact positive change in the war without fulfilling a combat role. This is a sentiment echoed by Jerry Siegel himself, who struggled with how he could help the war effort before ultimately arriving at the idea that he could attempt to provide hope through

³² Carolyn McNamara, "Sentinel of Liberty: Captain America on the Home Front in WWII," *UT Research Showcase*, October 2, 2015. Accessed March 21, 2018. <https://research.utexas.edu/showcase/articles/view/sentinel-of-liberty-captain-america-on-the-home-front-in-wwii>.

Superman. Described as having a "near-paralyzing sense of fear" about the war, Siegel instead manifested his anxieties into a hope that "resonated with a broad spectrum of American readers," according to English scholar Lauren Karp.³³ This resulted in Superman being built upon a foundation of hope that readers could turn to throughout the war and beyond. Americans could look to Superman to boost their morale, something recognized early on by the Nazis who sought to tear down the credibility of such a powerful fictional character. The article, "Jerry Siegel Attacks!," in the April 1940 Nazi bulletin *Das Schwarze Korps*, mocked Superman and his Jewish creators for Americanizing the Nazis' cherished idea of the *Übermensch*.³⁴ The unnamed author criticized the simplemindedness of Superman as a character and a concept, decrying how foolish the American people were for idolizing such a figure. Issue was also taken with Superman's defiance of all laws of physics and common sense, sprinkling in anti-Semitic remarks wherever possible. It is continually stated that *Superman* comics are hypocritical and lack virtue, while the article concludes with a lament for "American youth, who must live in such a poisoned atmosphere and don't even notice the poison they swallow daily."³⁵ These statements heavily relied on painting Superman as laughable due to his obviously unbelievable abilities, a fiction that American psychologists would soon find to be beneficial to children as they coped with the realities of war.³⁶ The article also assumes that Superman's readership consisted only of children,

³³ Lauren Karp, "Truth, Justice, and the American Way: What Superman Teaches Us About the American Dream and Changing Values Within the United States," 2009, 21. Accessed March 20, 2018. https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/.../This_is_LKarp.pdf.

³⁴ "Jerry Siegel Attacks!" Calvin College, 1998, trans. Randall Bytwerk. Accessed February 6, 2018. <http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/superman.htm>. Originally published in *Das Schwarze Korps*, April 25, 1940, 8.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Mackenzie.

which would prove false, especially as comic books became frequent reading material for American soldiers. While the author of the article would likely see adult readership of comic books as yet another weakness of American culture, the U.S. military would, like child psychologists, come to view Superman as an extremely potent source of morale.

It is notable that this article appeared prior to American entry into the war, and even before the early 1941 comic in which Superman eradicates the Nazified fifth-column spy ring. At the point of the article's publication, there was no Superman propaganda that the Nazis would need to counter. Aside from the threat to Nazi ideals from the implications of a Jewish man creating an American *Übermensch* of his own, the American government was increasingly exacting more aggressive policies against Germany, such as FDR's shoot-on-sight order for German U-boats. By mocking Superman, a Jewish creation depicting use of ultimate power for the cause of the greater good rather than ethnic superiority, the Nazis attempted to diminish the popular culture symbols of a hostile America. Clearly, Nazi propagandists saw enough of a potential for Superman to serve as a larger symbol for Americans even without the added propaganda value the character would later provide.

Whether the Nazis anticipated Superman being used for propaganda purposes or not, the character certainly served those ends. "Superman #23," released in July/August 1943, contained the story "America's Secret Weapon," which showed Superman attending a mock battle at a military training base.³⁷ Superman suggests that he be allowed to join one of the drill teams in order to boost morale, with Lois Lane accompanying the opposing team. For once, Superman is bested, but not for lack of trying, when the opposing team rallies together around "America's secret weapon—the courage of the common soldier," as one of the participating GIs pictured puts it. Superman and

Lois marvel over the "magnificent" boys, and Superman proudly proclaims that "American soldiers cannot be defeated by Superman or anyone else."³⁸ A sweeping endorsement such as this served the purpose of bolstering confidence in the American military without minimizing Superman's own might in comparison. It also further justified Superman's lack of involvement in combat, as the story depicts American troops who are even more competent and resourceful than the Man of Steel himself.

Again, the appearance of this story coincided fairly well with major Allied victories. The Soviets reclaimed Stalingrad in February 1943, but even more relevant to American interests was the joint British-American victory in North Africa in May 1943. Although Superman did not do anything within this issue to address any aspect of the war head-on, the story showcases his complimentary statements about the American military, which could have elicited additional hope for victory from audiences already celebrating American success.

While it might have been tempting to place Superman within the full scope of the war given such a huge American victory, it was far safer to keep him in more neutral territory in case American success did not last through the print release of the comic book. If Superman was prevailing at the same time as a sudden loss, the boost to morale intended by this story would have had the opposite effect. Furthermore, Superman's involvement within a military sphere without actually fighting a real battle continued to adhere to Jerry Siegel's wishes that the character not be sent off to war. It is relevant that this request was respected, considering Siegel's inability to write for Superman at the time due to his enlistment.

During Jerry Siegel's enlistment throughout the latter half of American involvement in World War Two, the writer still provided some input for the

³⁷ Don Cameron, "Superman #23," *Superman: The Golden Age Omnibus Vol. 3*, 668-679.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Superman comic books back in the United States.³⁹ Given his special status as a well-known comic book creator, he also produced cartoons for the United States Army, writing for the *Midpacifican* Army newspaper while he was stationed in Honolulu. Siegel produced a comic strip entitled “Super GI,” about a downtrodden private who secretly possessed all of the abilities of Superman. Siegel was proud of this work, and submitted it to the Writer’s War Board for review, claiming it as “the first time in the history of the funnies that a GI version of a leading comic strip has been prepared by its creator serving in the armed forces.”⁴⁰

“Super GI” was short lived, only appearing for a couple months prior to the end of the war and never reaching a readership outside of the U.S. military. Even so, the implications that it had for Superman himself cannot be overlooked. Superman continued to endure and maintain a strong readership in the postwar period. At the same time, those characters created specifically to fit within the scope of World War Two faltered following the creation of a welcome peace, even when those characters were not made solely for military consumption. The fact that a special version of Superman was created for the military speaks volumes about the value the United States placed in Superman as morale booster. This is again further bolstered by the creation of specific Superman storylines at the request of the United States military, as was done by the Army Air Force.

While Superman was not placed in a fighting position during World War Two, his presence in American popular culture at the time proved vital for promoting morale for both citizens and soldiers alike. This role is a critical part of what makes him a symbol of hope for readers today. By

giving Superman some degree of separation from activity in the war, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster maintained his relevance so that the character could continue to enjoy a growing presence in American culture after the conclusion of World War Two.

Conclusion

Fortunately, for the duration of World War Two, Superman’s writers did not risk the credibility of their character by placing him in situations that could put his stories at odds with the course of war. While this might have been playing it safe, this decision maintained Superman’s role as a successful morale propaganda figure. Ultimately, these choices also contributed to the mythos of hope that Superman continues to radiate to this day. Limiting Superman’s interaction with the war to moments when the Allies were doing well connected the successes and power of Superman to the victories of the U.S. military. By limiting activity to within U.S. borders, Superman could be considered a champion of the home front, a distinction that characters who traveled to the battlefield could not possess. This lack of direct war involvement also kept him in fashion once war-related stories ceased to be culturally relevant. Superman promoted the values and attitudes necessary to buoy morale through the end of the war, while also continuing to defend the common American at home as he had since his creation in 1938. This consistent focus kept Superman relevant beyond the war’s end, as the character’s appeal never depended on war-driven stories.

Superman’s original interactions with the war between 1941 and 1945 set the tone for how his long line of writers presented him during subsequent conflicts. During the Cold War, “truth, justice, and the American way” returned to the forefront of Superman’s values system, and his powers grew in scope to include heat vision, as well as the ability to fly rather than just jump to great heights. During the Vietnam War, however, soldiers

³⁹ “10,000 fans Cheer ‘Superman’ Creator,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer Public Ledger* (1934-1969), February 23, 1945. Accessed March 22, 2018. https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/cv_701361/docview/1833942101/72AEB5CBB6924EDAPQ/214?accountid=14270.

⁴⁰ “Super GI” and attached letter signed by Jerry Siegel, December 23, 1944, Box 11, WWB Papers.

specifically requested that Superman be depicted fighting alongside them, something the character would never have done in World War Two. The comic writers obliged, complicating the strict moral boundaries normally maintained by the character due to the controversy of the conflict.⁴¹ Following the attacks on September 11, 2001, iconic illustrator Alex Ross released a moving image showing Superman standing in the shadows of the first responders and citizens who stepped up to help in the face of tragedy. Like the World War Two comic in which Superman is proud to be bested by American soldiers, Superman acknowledges the power of humanity by honoring those who died trying to save others' lives. With that gesture, Superman paid tribute to American pride and highlighted the hope that comes from living in a nation that can produce so many self-sacrificing heroes. The transformation and maturation of Superman's response to national and global challenges finds its roots in the handling of Superman's character when he was first used for propaganda purposes during World War Two. Thanks to Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's decision to keep their character at home as a beacon of hope for American readers in World War Two, the standard was set for Superman's fiction to become a source of comfort for readers struggling to contend with a harsher reality. During times of national strife, Superman acts as a manifestation of the United States' most cherished ideals. As prominent Superman biographer Larry Tye states, "Superman has tapped into the American psyche more effectively than any of our champions and, as a result, has lasted longer than any of them."⁴² This

relationship between character and country began with how Superman was written during World War Two, reflecting the hope and confidence Americans needed during the war. Although Superman's involvement in American conflict has expanded

⁴¹ Ian Gordon, "The Moral World of Superman and the American War In Vietnam," *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 6, no. 2 (2015): 172-181. Accessed February 11, 2018. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21504857.2015.1021491?journalCode=rcom20>.

⁴² Larry Tye, "Superman's America," *The Boston Globe*, June 8, 2013. Accessed March 23, 2018. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2013/06/07/fighting-nazis-and-terrorists-superman-acts-america-moralcompass/u7JMVJkXNLoxKNwltgL5GL/story.html>.

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