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Remembering Pearl Harbor? An Analysis of Media Portrayal of the Pearl Harbor Attack from 1941 to 1946

by Vikki Doherty

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, remains to this day both a tragic and pivotal event in the American collective memory. It nullified the issue of previously divided public opinion on whether America should embroil itself in WWII, and for the most part unified the people of the United States under a common desire for reprisal. As Gaddis Smith phrased it in his review of Gordon W. Prange’s *At Dawn We Slept*, “The initial American reaction was a combination of patriotism, vengeful indignation, and racism. The attack confirmed American courage in adversity... A banner inscribed ‘Remember Pearl Harbor’ would stream figuratively behind the atomic bombs falling on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.”¹ In the immediate aftermath of the attack, media across the United States reflected this outrage and issued an urgent call to war. In the years to come, however, media depiction of the attack altered, vacillating between accusing military officers of ‘dereliction of duty’ and accusing the government of either deliberately or unwittingly withholding information crucial to the protection of America and the prolongation of her noninterference in the war.

As the Pearl Harbor attack shifted America out of her isolationist state and into another world war, news media reflected the public frenzy to find someone to blame for the incident. Over the next five years—from the day of the attack itself until the final official investigation into Pearl Harbor published its results in 1946—while the government continually pushed the slogan “Remember Pearl Harbor” in propaganda targeted toward popularizing the war effort, the media ‘remembered’ Pearl Harbor as well.² Its memory, however, was skewed, as nationalist and anti-Japanese sentiment spurred the American people to lay the blame at whichever doorstep was convenient. America could not bring herself to believe that Japan had out-maneuvered her excepting through some dereliction on the part of the military or government, and this necessity for inculpation led to continual evolution in the media response to Pearl Harbor in subsequent years.

The transformation over the five years following Pearl Harbor was in large part influenced by events not only directly related to the investigations into the attack itself, but also by the events in the Pacific Theater of WWII, both triumphs and defeats, and the American political arena. In the initial wake of the attack, newspapers and newscasts across the country took up the cry for war, for vengeance. Very soon, however, this cry shifted, and the pointing finger of the media looked to Army General Walter C. Short and Navy Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel as being responsible for the country’s lack of preparedness on the eve of the attack. In response to the findings of the Roberts Commission investigating Pearl Harbor—which FDR and his administration declared classified—and its failure to indict anyone as culpable for the attack, media portrayal of Pearl Harbor again shifted. It reflected the growing discontent of the public at being kept in the dark and the steadily gaining perspective that perhaps Kimmel and Short were only scapegoats. This gradually evolved into suspicion that President Roosevelt either unwittingly withheld information crucial to Kimmel and Short’s operations in Hawaii or deliberately incited a Japanese attack to sway the American public to accept global war. The media cited FDR’s failure to provide a full, public investigation on the grounds that it would ‘hinder the war effort’ and the later disappearance of many of the documents relating to Pearl Harbor during the full inquiry performed under President Truman.

The actual events of the attack on Pearl Harbor began that infamous day, December 7, 1941, when Japanese Lieutenant Commander Mitsuo Fuchida "signaled for the general attack at 0750 [AM Pacific time]."³ By ten o’clock that morning, the attack was over. In just under two hours, 2,403 people, both military personnel and ordinary citizens, were either killed, missing, or died due to wounds suffered in the attack, and 1,178 suffered non-fatal wounds of varying degrees.⁴ In comparison, the Japanese attack force lost only fifty-five men.⁵ Six battleships, two destroyers, and one minelayer sank into the Harbor—although three of the battleships and the minelayer were later raised, repaired, and returned to service in

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3 Prange, *At Dawn*, 505.

4 Ibid., 539

the war—while nine other vessels were damaged in the attack. At Wheeler Field, ninety-six aircraft were destroyed and another 128 damaged, while the Japanese lost only twenty-nine planes. As Gary Gerstle wrote, “Since the War of 1812, no foreign power had carried out so devastating an attack on American soil, and virtually all Americans reacted to this one with shock, disbelief, and outrage.” Pearl Harbor was a turning point in not only American history, but world history as well. It launched the United States into another global war, and as the troops opened fire on the dual fronts, battle cries in remembrance of Pearl Harbor whipped nationalist, anti-Japanese sentiment into a fervor.

On December eighth, at 12:30 in the afternoon and less than thirty hours after the attack rained down upon Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt addressed both Congress and the general public in a nationwide radio cast. Capitalizing on the overwhelming outrage at Japan’s attack, Roosevelt used strong language and calculated diction to incite an emotional response from Americans, culminating in an appeal to Congress to declare a state of war between the United States and the Japanese Empire due to the “unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh.” Roosevelt was careful to note that the “United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific” when it was “suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces.” Roosevelt utilized Americans’ righteous indignation at the Japanese attack to inflame them into accepting America’s entrance into WWII, a direct inversion of the previously strong isolationist sentiment lingering since WWI.

The initial response, in the wake of the devastating attack and in light of Roosevelt’s words to the nation, was a call-to-arms, as media across the nation seconded the President’s call for war. As Harry A. Gailey writes in his book The War in the Pacific: Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay, “The attack on Pearl harbor on 7 December 1941 was the climax of nearly half a century of rivalry between Japan and the United States.” This rivalry coupled with anti-Asian prejudice in the West to form clearly evident racial tension. Thus, when Roosevelt “summoned the nation to fight not just an enemy nation, but a treacherous people who would deceitfully negotiate for peace while preparing a surprise war,” the nation responded with a resounding battle cry. Mass media latched onto the calculated diction and emotional themes of Roosevelt’s address to the nation, and soon such racialized nationalism and emotional rhetoric cropped up in newspapers around the country. A December 22, 1941 article in LIFE Magazine—aptly entitled “Remember Pearl Harbor”—read, “From the tragedy of Pearl Harbor, from the blood spilled and the ships lost and the treachery of the foe, came the U.S. battle cry of WWII.” This quotation stands as evidence that these media depictions cradled Pearl Harbor at their core as a unifying tragedy, a rallying point.

On the same day that Roosevelt delivered his address to the nation, the Springfield Daily Republican, of Springfield, Massachusetts, published an article entitled, “Infamous, Says Hull of Japan’s Note Yesterday,” in reference to the Japanese response to the Secretary of State Cordell Hull’s ten-point statement to Japan which America—much later in the saga of Pearl Harbor media—came to see as an ultimatum prompting the Pearl Harbor attack. This article title echoes Roosevelt’s famous words citing December 7 as a day of “infamy,” and sits directly next to an aerial photograph of the destruction on Hawaii with white billowing smoke filling the air, entitled “How Honolulu Looks to Jap Raiders.” In appropriating the terminology of Roosevelt’s radio cast and juxtaposing the article with a view of the destruction on Hawaii, the newspaper invoked a heavy, emotional response to the attack, emphasizing the treacherous nature of the Japanese with a large dose of nationalism and outrage.

Many other articles and news sources took up this trend of rampant, conspicuous nationalism in the weeks following Pearl Harbor. The Dallas Morning News ran an article claiming "Civilian Dies First," citing the owner of a civilian airport as "perhaps the first to die as Japan opened war on the United

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid, American Crucible, 191.
11 Prange, At Dawn, 558.
12 Gailey, War in the Pacific, 1.
13 Gerstle, American Crucible, 162.
14 Rosenberg, A Date Which Will Live, 12.
15 “America Goes to War,” LIFE Magazine, December 22, 1941, 15.
16 “Infamous, Says Hull of Japan’s Note Yesterday,” Springfield Daily Republican, December 8, 1941, America’s Historical Newspapers, 5.
17 Ibid.
States," in a clear example of emotional rhetoric.18 In the weeks following the attack, other forms of media commemorated that Sunday as well, as with the prime example of Carson Robinson's hit song of December 1941, "Remember Pearl Harbor." This racially inflammatory song contains lyrics such as "Hiding behind their "peace talk" / They stabbed our boys in the back," and calls for America to "Remember Pearl Harbor, the crime we can never forgive."19 These, and the countless other examples of news and popular media in the direct aftermath of the attack, display the way that the "Roosevelt administration fashioned the 'infamy' at Pearl Harbor into a resonant and long-lasting symbol of nationalism," which the media directly reflected until questions arose in the following months about culpability.20

As the initial shock of the Pearl Harbor attack wore off, American retained the question of how the Japanese had enacted such a stunning blow on their country. The media depictions of the attack mutated, and suspicion turned, perhaps only naturally, to the officials in positions of high command of both Army and Naval forces on Pearl Harbor. Only a week post-attack, President Roosevelt established a commission consisting of two Army and two Navy officials and a civilian third party, namely Supreme Court Associate Justice Owen J. Roberts from whom the commission took its oft-repeated unofficial name.21 The purpose of what is known as the Roberts Commission was to establish with factual certainty, the events leading up to the Pearl Harbor debacle and determine who was at fault. As phrased by Gordon W. Prange in At Dawn We Slept:

The Roberts Commission began its work too near the stunning events of December 7, 1941 to have a proper historical perspective... The American people wanted a quick definitive answer to how the Japanese had been able to inflict upon the United States the most incredible, disgraceful defeat in history. The Roberts Commission uncovered no deep, dark secrets, dredged up no astonishing revelations... [It] verified only what the American people already knew.22

The media responded to both the formulation of this commission and the findings reported only two months later on January 28, 1942—a summary was released to the public soon thereafter—with a firestorm of accusation against Navy Rear Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and Army Commander Walter Short. Almost immediately after the formulation of the Roberts Commission, media began to stigmatize Kimmel and Short for their roles in the Pearl Harbor attack. On December 17, 1941, the Dallas Morning News ran an article on the front page with the headline “Three Hawaiian Commanders Removed,” citing that Kimmel, Short, and Major General Frederick L. Martin, commander of the Army Air Corps on Hawaii, were "not on alert when the Japanese attackers struck their murderous blows."23 Other articles, such as one in the New Orleans Times-Picayune, declared that “someone was asleep”—someone responsible for the defenses.”24 Later, after the publication of a bare-bones summary of the Roberts Commission report, Short and Kimmel were censured further, with media citing that they were "surprised and asleep when the Japanese attack came"25 and even "incompetent and indifferent to their obligations."26 An editorial from the San Francisco Chronicle stated that it was "no wonder the board found...Kimmel and...Short guilty of 'errors of judgment' amounting to ‘dereliction of duty!’...The attack was a surprise, merely because the precautions against surprise had not been taken."27 Essentially, these newspaper articles and editorials compose only a small selection of the firestorm of recrimination against Kimmel and Short.

The media latched onto the portion of the Roberts Report that stated "it was a dereliction of duty on the part of [Short and Kimmel] not to consult

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18 “Civilian Dies First,” Dallas Morning News, December 8, 1941, America's Historical Newspapers, 16.
19 Frank Luther, writer, and Carson Robinson, performer, Remember Pearl Harbor (New York: Bluebird Records, 1941).
20 Rosenberg, A Day Which Will Live, 32.
21 Prange, At Dawn, 592.
22 Ibid., 602.
24 “Critics Rebuked After Blast at Hawaii Defense,” Times-Picayune, December 10, 1941, America's Historical Newspapers, 12.
and confer with the other,” and ran with it. The response of the media, in many cases, was an overreaction that “made it appear that Kimmel and Short had been far more culpable than they actually were or than the Roberts report had charged,” because America refused to believe that the Japanese could have had the nerve, or the superiority, to pull off a surprise attack without a very serious miscalculation on the part of the United States. The media response to the search for a guilty party, and the smearing of Short and Kimmel, was heavily influenced by the same racialized nationalism that characterized the earlier call-to-arms in the aftermath of the incident, but in a different way.

One Washington D.C. Times-Herald article clearly illustrates this in comparing Pearl Harbor to the Japanese attack on Port Arthur, South Manchuria, on February 9, 1904, that resulted in a Japanese defeat of the Russian navy. This battle, the article writes, is where “the story of Pearl Harbor really began... For the first time since the Turks were in their heyday a non-white nation had licked a white nation, and a big and powerful one, at that.” The writer compares this to “December 7, 1941, [when] the Japs struck at Pearl Harbor, and hit a grisly jackpot,” all the while reiterating words such as ‘Jap’ and ‘non-white’ to demonize and dehumanize the Japanese. As phrased by Gary Gerstle,

Japan’s attack on the United States...inflamed ingrained prejudices against Japanese among white Americans...The American-Japanese war in the Pacific, meanwhile, took on the coloration of a “race-war”...in which the two opposing sides engaged in savage struggle...to determine which race would triumph. Battles between the Japanese and the Americans were, on the whole, more vicious than those between the Americans and Germans and Italians in Europe.

Gerstle situates the heavy sentiment of racialized nationalism—a factor in the public’s overwhelming support for the Pacific War after Pearl Harbor—within the narrative of WWII, and emphasizes the strong, anti-Japanese feeling both at home and on the ground.

The driving force behind America’s search for a culpable party at Pearl Harbor, after the initial patriotic smoke cleared and American troops dug into the Pacific, arose out of an inability to believe that Japan could have gotten the better of the United States, which was heavily rooted in these racist themes and the strong nationalism uniting America in the face of a national tragedy. An article entitled “As the Parade Passes By,” from the Cleveland Plain Dealer on December 6, 1942—in commemoration of the first anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack—illustrates this resounding question most clearly. The article, addressing the public, reads, “You despised the treachery of the Japs and wanted to start right out to kill as many of them as you could find. But you wondered how such a thing could happen, why could the Japs get away with such an attack?”

This blunt expression of disbelief at the Japanese attack was written even as public opinion was heavily implicating Admiral Kimmel and General Short for the attack. It illustrates clearly America’s inability—specifically through the question of “why could the Japs get away with such an attack?”—to accept the losses at Pearl Harbor as a mark of military superiority on the part of Japan, rather than some fault of her military or government officials.

In the wake of the publication of the Roberts report, depictions of Pearl Harbor in the media began another transition, gradually shifting from defaming Kimmel and Short to expressing suspicion that perhaps the government was withholding the whole truth. This was not without reason, as President Roosevelt placed restrictions on the full release of the findings of the Roberts report and deferred a full congressional investigation on the grounds that “such disclosure would endanger military security.” FDR’s reluctance to fully expose the events leading up to the Pearl Harbor attack, coupled with the fact that neither Short nor Kimmel nor anyone else had been court-martialed or charged in relation to the incident, affected a shift in the tide. Suspicions grew—in the public consciousness and therefore the media as well—

29 Prange, At Dawn, 603.
31 Gerstle, American Crucible, 201-2.
that perhaps officials in Washington—members of FDR's administration—were partially at fault for the events of December 7, 1941.

In large part, this transitional period in the media portrayal of Pearl Harbor was heavily influenced by the events of WWII, specifically in the Pacific Theater. In 1942, America was losing the Pacific War. Although she suffered heavy losses beginning with Pearl Harbor and continuing into 1942, the tide of the war in the Pacific began to shift toward the United States with the Battle of Midway on June 4-7, 1942. By 1944 and 1945, during this transitional period, the American public no longer gave credence to FDR's excuse that a full investigation and report on Pearl Harbor would harm the war effort. As the media turned its eye on Washington officials and inklings of outright accusation of FDR trickled through the papers, articles across the country cited the shifting upper hand in the Pacific with discontent. One article explicitly states, "There can now be no possible excuse for keeping the mystery of Pearl Harbor under wraps any longer. The plea of military security, indeed, wore thin along about the end of 1942, when the tide began to turn in our favor.\(^{35}\) Another, very similarly, states, "That excuse [of military security] may have been valid during the black months of 1942, when the Japs were kicking the Allies around the South and Southwest Pacific. But this is 1945—well into 1945—and the Pacific war situation changed for the better long ago."\(^{36}\) The frustration of the public at the withholding of answers about the Pearl Harbor attack clearly manifests in the wording and forceful language used in these articles, and was explicitly influenced by the progress of the War in the Pacific, which was juxtaposed with the lack of progress investigating Pearl Harbor.

Another article, from the Washington D.C. Times-Herald, reads:

The Roosevelt Administration kept the solution of this mystery suppressed from Pearl Harbor to the time of Roosevelt's death, April 12 of this year. Its plea always was that military security required the withholding of the full story. It was obvious during the 1944 Presidential campaign that Roosevelt did not want the truth about Pearl Harbor to come out. That campaign is over now. So is the German war. Roosevelt is dead. There is no longer any excuse for keeping the Pearl Harbor mystery under wraps and Kimmel and Short under a cloud.\(^{37}\)

Not only was public opinion—as evidenced in the media—inflamed by the lack of answers concerning Pearl Harbor in spite of America's dominance in the Pacific, but other factors occurring during this period influenced media opinions about the attack as well. The 1944 presidential election marked a bitter struggle between republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey and the current president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Then, only a few months after Roosevelt won his fourth term as President, he died. As the quotation cites, in spite of these events and the shifting tide in the Pacific, Truman and Congress yet failed to release any of the details of the Pearl Harbor investigations, and these contextual events played a large part in the shift in media coverage, during this period, from accusing Short and Kimmel to eventually accusing Washington officials. As the media's unanswered questions piled up, the finger slowly shifted to point more directly at Roosevelt and his Cabinet.

This period in the media coverage, which marked the transition between accusing Kimmel and Short and accusing FDR and his cabinet, is most evidentiary of the change over time in depictions of the Pearl Harbor attack. Although the media all but exonerated Kimmel and Short—calling them scapegoats when previously they had been characterized as derelict—it had not yet quite shifted to directly accusing FDR and specific members of his administration with misconduct and even conspiracy. Rather questions arose in the media concerning the Roberts report's mention of persons "in the field and in Washington" who were also partially to blame.\(^{38}\) As one article in the Washington Post asks, "Who were the officers in Washington who failed in their duty? [Why are] Kimmel and Short in the limelight of public censure while the officials in Washington who are similarly negligent continue under the protection of anonymity?\(^{39}\) A plethora of newspapers and journalists asked similar questions, all the while


\(^{38}\) Roberts Commission Report

reporting Admiral Kimmel’s defense against the accusations of the Roberts report and his desire for a full, open-court hearing to exonerate him. The increasingly broad scope of culpability depicted in the media was reflected not only in written news articles, but—in particular during this period—in political cartoons. These cartoons satirized the growing irritation of the public at being kept in the dark. One, from the Washington Post, depicts a sea chest with the words "Pearl Harbor" emblazoned across the side, which contains the figures of Kimmel and Short attempting to escape as Secretaries of War and Defense Stimson and Forrestal attempt to 'keep the lid on' Pearl Harbor. Another depicts 'The Truth about Pearl Harbo' as a drowned woman with a question mark over her head, while still others depict 'Uncle Sam' withholding the truth about the incident. These images were perhaps the most effective barometer measuring the public’s feeling of being kept in the dark—at the very least the most direct—and they indicate that, while the nationalist sentiment driving the public to assign blame was still extant, it no longer utilized the image of Pearl Harbor as the rallying point that it when America entered WWII.

By 1945, the war was all but complete. With President Roosevelt’s death in April of that year, Vice President Harry S. Truman assumed that lauded office and the clamor for a full investigation of the Pearl Harbor attack reached a breaking point. By this time, news media that had only hinted at and questioned Washington’s involvement in the Pearl Harbor debacle now directly accused Washington officials, from former Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Franklin D. Roosevelt himself of either unwittingly or knowingly causing the events on the infamous day. Newspaper articles cropped up with titles such as "F.D.R. Had Jap Note Night Before Pearl Harbor, Says Writer," "Congress Due to Blare Dec. 7 Role of F.D.R.," "Proof Conclusive F.D. Knew Japs Planned Sneak Attack," and even "Roosevelt Maneuvered for War While Promising Peace." Political cartoons depicting the whitewashing of the Capital Building and the Washington Monument abounded. By November of 1945, WWII was over, the atomic bombs had been dropped, and there no longer existed a security risk to prevent a full investigation into the Pearl Harbor attack.

The Joint Congressional Committee Investigating the Pearl Harbor Attack held its first hearing on the 15th of November 1945. In 1946, after month of hearings, evidence, and examination, the committee published "what can justly be described as the mother lode of data under the title Pearl Harbor Attack ... in 39 lengthy ... volumes." The findings seemed to rehash the earlier Roberts Commission Report, "exonerating Roosevelt and Hull, [and] putting the blame chiefly on Kimmel and Short and with varying emphasis on the military and naval authorities in Washington." Much of the media response was therefore negative, calling the investigation a 'whitewash' that lay only a minority blame at Roosevelt's door and for the most part upheld his actions preceding the attack. As 1946 wore on, it became evident to the public that the investigation of the Joint Congressional Committee was to be the final—official, not historiographical—word on the Pearl Harbor attack. Most of the media reflected the shared blame for the attack, with headlines such as "Sharing the Blame for Pearl Harbor" and "Truman Says Public Shares Dec. 7 Blame," and political cartoons entitled "Room for Everybody" showing the Navy, Army, Congress, the Administration, and finally "all the rest of us" under the dunce had labeled "The blame for Pearl Harbor." The question of remembering Pearl Harbor in the media died out as no new findings came to light and America was pulled into the post-WWII years leading into the Cold War.

In the aftermath of the Japanese attack on the United States in 1941, the nation resounded with the cry of "Remember Pearl Harbor." As America marched into WWII, American public media began a crusade of its own, to lay culpability at someone's—

43 Newspaper clippings, box 38, folder 4, Coll. 3800, Husband Edward Kimmel Papers, 1907-1999, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
47 Articles from box 38, folder 4, Coll. 3800, Husband Edward Kimmel Papers, 1907-1999, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
48 “America Goes to War,” LIFE, 15.
anyone's—door for the debacle that was December 7. As the smoke cleared above Oahu, however, the media quickly transitioned from its rallying cries of barbarism and desecration to ask the question of who held the responsibility for the events of that Sunday morning. What began as a patriotic call-to-arms in the face of a national tragedy evolved into a firestorm of accusation and shifting blame; first military officials and commanders, then government officials and even the President himself felt the accusing finger of the media point in their direction. This transition was not arbitrary, but rather deeply rooted both in the contextual events occurring in the Pacific Theater and at home and in the heavily racialized nationalism characterized by this period in American history. The "banner inscribed 'Remember Pearl Harbor' [which] would stream figuratively behind the atomic bombs falling on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945," was there for a reason.  

As phrased in American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century, "a December 1945 poll found that a quarter of Americans wished that the United States had had the opportunity to drop more atomic bombs on Japan before it surrendered...to the Americans, the Japanese were vermin who had to be exterminated. To the Japanese, the Americans were devils." Pearl Harbor, the Pacific War, and the atomic bombings had clear roots in racist sentiment. That American media struggled so hard and for so long to find a guilty party—other than Japan—for Pearl Harbor suggests that the public truly could not believe the "vermin who had to be exterminated" could have inflicted so much damage on the US of their own volition.

Throughout the five year period following December 7, 1941, media reflected America's need to "remember" the attack on Pearl Harbor, yet these memories twisted in response to events occurring in the war and the racialized nationalism alive on the home front. These skewed reinterpretations of the events of Pearl Harbor, along with the initial push for vengeance and the government's continual reiteration of this theme, simultaneously reflected and influenced public opinion about the attack through the lens of nationalist and anti-Japanese sentiments. Although already present in the country previous to 1941, these biases intensified due to the destruction at Pearl Harbor and America's inability to answer the questions burning in the collective consciousness—how could such destruction occur on American soil? Who was to blame?—which would prove to be unanswerable.

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Intentions and Interests: Human Rights, Sovereignty, and the Syrian Civil War
by Chandler James

Syria has of late become one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our times. Beginning as civil unrest and spiraling out of control into a full-scale Civil War, somewhere around 2.5 million Syrians have fled from their homes, nearly 600,000 of them fleeing to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. In the three years of war roughly 88,000 people have been killed, the conflict peaking in August of 2012 with nearly 6,000 killed in one month. 73% of the casualties have been civilians. While the war raged on, much of the world failed to pay attention. Only within the last year or so of the war have Western leaders acknowledged the crisis in Syria. But as substantive talks about Syria in the Security Council have unfolded, so too has the question of Sovereignty unfolded. As in other crises of humanitarian significance, the ideal of national Sovereignty has raised its head. In the face of the massacre of civilians and the use of chemical weapons, the question is again raised, which has primacy: Sovereignty or Human Rights? Both arguments have been invoked in debates amongst World Leaders, and both arguments have utilized the precedents of International Law.

On March 15, 2011 protestors took to the streets in Damascus and Aleppo. Inspired by the recent downfall of Hosni Mubarrak in Egypt, a number of Anti-Assad Facebook Groups began calling for widespread street protests. One such Facebook group, “The Syrian Revolution Against Bashar al-Assad 2011” is credited with organizing the March 15 protests. During the protests the security forces arrested six people but otherwise the demonstration was peaceful overall. But what the regime had failed to realize was that this was just the beginning of a long and bloody struggle. Following the unrest in Tunisia, that is widely regarded to have sparked the Arab Spring, President Bashar al-Assad spoke to the Wall Street Journal. In his interview he stated in essence that, “Syria was more stable than Tunisia and Egypt. He said that there was no chance of political upheaval, and pledged to press on with a package of reforms.”

Within two months Assad was ordering tanks and riot police to clash against protestors. By June for the first time the Opposition took up arms against the regime. Within eight months of Assad’s statement the Syrian Arab Republic was in the midst of a full-scale war. In the two and a half years of warfare, somewhere around 89,000 people have been killed. Of that number nearly 64% of the deaths were civilians caught in the middle between the Rebel Forces and the Regime. The war has proceeded with a “gradual escalation and desensitization” of the public in Syria and abroad” as Emile Hokayem with the International Institute for Strategic Studies has put it. As the war has become prolonged the war has likewise become more brutal. The Regime has indiscriminately fired artillery shells into populated suburbs, government snipers have targeted unarmed civilians, as well government soldiers have been reported dropping improvised barrel bombs from helicopters into populated areas. On top of these tactics, it is highly likely that the Regime has deployed chemical weapons against civilian and rebel targets as early as April of 2013. The Rebels likewise have become progressively radicalized and brutal. Reports of Rebels directly targeting Christians and Alawites in Sectarian Inspired attacks are all too common. There is one infamous video of a rebel soldier eating the heart of a government

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4 “Mid-East Unrest.”
6 “Statistics for the Number of Martyrs.”
8 Barnard, “Accusations of Chemical Attack.”
soldier.¹¹ Such actions have gone further, the Rebels imposing Sharia based law in some areas they control.¹² Both sides of the conflict have grossly violated human rights laws.

The Radicalization of the Opposition in Syria is both interesting and shocking particularly in its speed. The Opposition initially began solely as a reformist movement, wishing to work with the Regime to expand rights within Syria. Very quickly the tone of the Opposition’s rhetoric changed. “Crowds took to the streets after Friday prayers,” Barry Neild writes, observing scenes in Latakia and Qusair in August of 2011, “The chants calling for Assad’s death are seen as a sign of how much the protest movement has changed since its initial demands for minor reform, but not for regime change."¹³ The Opposition early on attempted to show itself as non-religious or at the very least nonfundamentalist, this was done in an attempt to garner the support of the Western powers, particularly the United States. Reporter Graham Usher observed as late as May of 2012 that, “At a recent anti-government rally in Idlib protesters raised the chant: ‘When are you going to understand? There is no Al-Qaeda here.”¹⁴ The Opposition knew that any links with radical Islamist groups would serve to dissuade their prospective supporters.

However, the United States did very little to convey support in the early months of the war. In August 2011, “U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said sanctions against Syria’s vital oil and gas industry were needed to put pressure on Assad.” Clinton called upon China and Russia in particular to halt this economic support with Syria. But as Khaled Oweis notes, such talk of sanctions rings hollow as “there is little prospect of Western states putting teeth into the sanctions on Assad by targeting Syria's oil because of vested commercial interests against doing so.”¹⁵ In evidence of this statement, it must be noted that the Government of Venezuela gave no regard to these sanctions. In February of 2012 Petróleos de Venezuela, the state-run oil company of Venezuela, sent 600,000 barrels of oil to Syria. The Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez stated, “Syria is a blockaded country, if it needs diesel and we can provide it, there's no reason not to do it.”¹⁶ In this instance, as in many others, alliances between anti-Western Regimes as well as the ideals of national sovereignty trump human rights in the logic of State actors.

The EU has likewise been lax in its acknowledgement of the crisis. While it is true that the EU has contributed nearly 53% of the humanitarian aid to Syria, around $486 million, it has done very little else that would be of service to the Opposition.¹⁷ In May of 2011 the EU set up an arms embargo against Syria for two years, as a way of punishing the Assad Regime.¹⁸ But such an embargo was applied to both sides of the conflict, which in essence served only to disarm the Opposition. The Regime continues to get its weapons and logistical support from its allies, Russia and Iran.¹⁹ With the Western nations unable or unwilling to give military support to the Opposition, and with the Regime receiving support from Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah; many groups within the Opposition began to turn towards alternative options to receive weapons and aid. Specifically, they began to turn towards radical Islamist elements in the region. “The leader of a militant group fighting on the side of Syria’s rebels has for the first time pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda...Al-Golani said that the Iraqi group was providing half of its budget to the conflict in Syria.”²⁰

¹³ “Syrian Refugees: A Snapshot.”
gunned down in the streets and mosques were laid siege to by Regime forces, the moderates within the Opposition became marginalized. While “whole neighborhood[s] echo...with the sound of bullets,” the Opposition felt abandoned by the West, they turned to the only groups that seemed willing to help them. In Hama thousands took to the streets chanting, "We will kneel only to God."22

The Regime and al-Assad have also changed significantly in their approach to the situation as the war has dragged on. Bashar al-Assad became president of Syria in 2000 after his father died. While al-Assad maintained the authoritarian rule of the Ba’th Party and the domination of the Alawis, al-Assad hoped to be less repressive than his father, and began implementing liberalizing efforts. Al-Assad declared Amnesty for the Muslim Brothers in 2001, he released 800 Brothers from prison between 2001 and 2004, and in 2006 he lifted the ban on prayer in military barracks; the younger al-Assad seemed to represent a “willingness on the part of the Syrian state to open a new chapter in its relations with the country’s religious groups.”23 Even at the beginning of the Arab Spring al-Assad seemed to be positioning his Regime towards being more open towards reform.24 Al-Assad has been adamant in denying the legitimacy of the Opposition, denying their grassroots genesis. He has gone so far as to imply that the Rebels themselves are foreign agents, seeking destabilize the Regime, and that the will of the Syrian people is still in support of him.25 Labeling the Opposition as “Terrorist Criminal Gangs,” al-Assad has declared that Syria "will not relent in pursuing the terrorist groups in order to protect the stability of the country and the security of the citizens,"26 By August of 2011, the Regime had positioned its forces in such a way that in many of the major cities “tanks occupy every main square and roundabout,” strategically positioned near key mosques to counter Opposition organization.27 Al-Assad has also done his best in silencing the Opposition’s attempts to get support from the outside world, expelling most independent journalists within the first five months of the uprising.28

The ways in which the international community has reacted to this crisis is very telling, and to be honest speaks more to the priority of geopolitical alliances placed above ideals of human rights. For over a year the government of the United States was largely silent about the massacres in Syria. Senator John McCain of Arizona was one of the first to break ranks in Washington to speak about what role the US ought to play in Syria. He spoke quite openly about his own personal frustrations with the International System and made an argument from morality and human rights for intervention. In April of 2012 he stated bluntly that:

For the United States to sit by and watch this wanton massacre is a betrayal of everything we stand for and believe in...Over there, they [the Syrian rebels] are waiting for American leadership...We have announced that we are now providing them with non-lethal equipment. That does not do very well against tanks and artillery. We need to get a sanctuary for the Free Syrian Army; we need to get them supplies; we need to get them weapons. And there are many ways to get weapons to them. We showed that in Libya, we showed that in Afghanistan [in the 1980s]... Again, Russia and China continue to veto any significant effort that comes from the United Nations. How many times are we going to push that reset button? It’s time for the United States to lead.29

A few months after McCain’s statements, the Obama Administration itself began to address the crisis in Syria more succinctly, though without the interventionist air that McCain leant such sentiments. Obama’s statements about Syria

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21 Owels, “Syrian Forces Kill 10.”
22 Ibid.
24 “Mid-East Unrest.”
26 Owels, “Syrian Forces Kill 10.”
27 Ibid.
were much more measured, suggesting that the Administration itself, while acknowledging the crisis, did not wish to intervene directly. Obama stated in a press conference that:

> We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus. That would change my equation. But the point that [was] made about chemical and biological weapons is critical. That’s an issue that doesn’t just concern Syria; it concerns our close allies in the region, including Israel. It concerns us. We cannot have a situation where chemical or biological weapons are falling into the hands of the wrong people.\(^{30}\)

The argument made by the Western, primarily NATO, powers was that there were limits upon the ideal of national sovereignty. A decade earlier Prime Minister Tony Blair, when discussing the Balkans Crises put the case quite succinctly when he stated that, "The principle of non-interference must be qualified in important respects. Acts of genocide can never be a purely internal affair."\(^{31}\) Many politicians from many nations also leant moral arguments towards the enforcement of human rights over national sovereignty, if not to the same end that McCain was suggesting. French President Francois Hollande declared to the United Nations in September that, "These are not just numbers, they are people, who need food, water, shelter, sanitation, electricity, health care, and more."\(^{32}\) President Obama clinched the international argument for interventionism in the face of human rights violations in a statement on September 4, 2013. In the weeks following the chemical attacks in Damascus that left over 1,000 dead, the United States began to discuss openly the option of direct military intervention against the Regime. In defense of this position, Obama declared clearly: "I didn’t set a red line. The world set a red line."\(^{33}\) Such internationalist arguments of morality and interventionism have been used many times before, particularly in the examples of Kosovo and of the 2011 bombings of Libya. However, while the arguments made by the Obama administration speak of a moral horror at these violations of human rights, what is clear in Obama’s statements in the summer of 2012 is that the potential regional destabilization is of more importance to the calculus of decision makers than necessarily the human rights violations themselves. The fear of chemical weapons being utilized against Israel and US interests in the region obviously trumps the horror of tens of thousands being murdered by "conventional" weapons. But the argument for international order and international law is not solely held by NATO and the Western powers. The powers that have been actively supporting the al Assad Regime, particularly Russia, have likewise appealed to international law to justify non-intervention or at most continued support for the Regime. Russia has been a longtime ally of Syria, for the Russians, Syria is a key doorway influencing the Middle East as a whole. Likewise Iran is a close ally to Syria, particularly for Syria’s hostility towards Iraq as well as a mutual hostility towards Israel. Both Russia and Iran have a direct geopolitical interest in maintaining the power of the al-Assad Regime and as such are willing to glance over the human rights violations of the Regime. Whether as a willing blindness towards these violations, for instance Putin’s stated skepticism of the Regime’s involvement in the chemical attacks of August 2013,\(^{34}\) or blaming the Rebels themselves for the chemical weapons attacks; the crimes of the Regime are largely ignored. In this regard Russia has been using arguments of international law to great effect. President Vladimir Putin states clearly in a September interview with Russia Today that:

> Under international law, the only body that can authorize using weapons against a sovereign state is the UN Security Council. Any other reasons and methods to justify the use of force against an


\(^{33}\) Kessler, "President Obama and the ‘red line.”

independent and sovereign state are unacceptable and can be seen as nothing but aggression.\(^{35}\)

But of course, Russia having a seat upon the Security Council can negate any legal international attempt at intervention against Syria, due solely to the fact that Syria is a client of Russia. Such political posturing and couching geopolitical interests in the rhetoric of international law has been recognized by many people. In the same September 4 interview with Putin, the interviewer attempts to flush this out, asking a moral question of Putin. The interviewer asks directly, “Are you afraid that you may be seen today as standing by a Regime that is committing crimes, are you afraid that you will be seen today as a protector of this government?” Putin, without a moment’s hesitation responds to the question by reiterating the rhetoric of sovereignty and international law. Putin replies:

>We are not defending the current government, we are defending other things entirely. We’re defending the principles and norms of international law, we are defending the current world order, we’re defending the rule that even a possibility of using force must be discussed within the framework of existing world order and international law. This is what we’re defending. This is the absolute value. When decisions regarding the use of force are made outside the UN and the Security Council it raises a concern that such illegal actions could be taken against any country under any pretext.\(^{36}\)

This is not the first time that Russia has placed priority upon sovereignty over human rights, nor is this the first time that Russia has directly criticized Western foreign policy in this regard. In the Spring of 2011 (at the same time protests in Syria first began) the Libyan Civil War had escalated in a similar fashion to the Syrian Civil War. The war going in favor of Colonel Ghaddafì and with threats to massacre entire cities that supported the Rebels; NATO, lead by the United States, engaged in a bombing campaign specifically targeting Ghaddafì and his regime. Putin once more showed skepticism towards the allegations made upon the Regime’s forces, and likewise was skeptical of the motivations for the intervention itself. He alleged that humanitarian aid was merely a pretext for the European Union to seize control of Libya’s oil reserves. Putin further did not accept NATO’s legitimacy in intervening in the internal affairs of an independent nation. At a press conference in April of 2011 Putin stated:

>Now some officials have claimed that eliminating [Gaddafì] was their goal, who gave them that right...? The bombings are destroying the country’s entire infrastructure. When the so-called ‘civilized’ world uses all of its military might against a small country, destroying what’s been created by generations, I don’t know if that’s good.\(^{37}\)

It is very clear that Russia has consistently utilized the arguments of international law and placed such arguments over and above the arguments for the enforcement of human rights.

Over the last few months, the war has dragged into a stalemate, strategic positions trading hands again and again. It is for this reason that it was speculated that al-Assad deployed chemical weapons against the rebels. With the stalemate persisting for such an extended amount of time, it has motivated both sides to consider negotiations for peace. Peace talks were scheduled to convene between the two sides in Geneva in January 2014. It was the first time that representatives from the Regime and the Free Syrian Army have come to the table.\(^{38}\) Both sides came to the conference skeptical of any possible reconciliation, particularly given how brutal the conflict has been. The International Community is well aware of this, Secretary of State John Kerry stated in a press conference on November 25 that, “We are well aware that the obstacles on the road to a political solution are many, and we will enter the Geneva conference on Syria with our eyes wide

\(^{35}\) Ibid.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.


open."  

Despite this very rational wariness, international leaders are hopeful overall. And it is telling to note that both NATO as well as Russia have expressed support towards the furthering of peace talks. Neither side was at all willing to take the first step towards reconciliation. While but they were both unwilling to properly negotiate, they likewise blamed each other for sole responsibility of the impasse. The Regime’s chief negotiator, Bashar Jaafari, told the press that “those people are not really committed to properly negotiate, they refuse to take the first step towards reconciliation. The Opposition’s spokesman, Louay Safi, likewise told the press that “the regime wants to stall. There is nothing positive we can take from these rounds.”  

The failure of these negotiations was devastating, both for the Syrian People as well as the global community. The UN mediator of the negotiations, Lakhdar Brahimi, seemed to take the failure personally. He told reporters, “I am very, very sorry. I apologize [to] the Syrian People.”  

The Civil War in Syria, with its myriad of factions, of complexities; with the brutality and disregard for civilian life; with the desensitization of Syrian society towards the horrors of war. This war is the greatest modern example of how the violations of human rights affect societies as well as the machinations of international politics. For while both the United States and Russia utilize high-minded rhetoric of humanitarianism and international order; nevertheless the actions they directly take ultimately are only taken in the furthering of their own self-interests. The United States was largely quiet about Syrian human rights violations, until the war began to spill into Turkey and Lebanon, and threatened to destabilize the region to the detriment of Israel. Russia speaks highly of defending the international order and law; but in reality they are defending their long-term ally, their access to influencing the region as a whole. Russia has refused to cease its support of Syria for this reason. It is apparent that there is a disconnect between intentions and rhetoric. There is a disconnect between such abstract ideals as sovereignty or human rights and with the true interests of the powers that be.  

For these reasons the conflict in Syria continues to escalate, because the international community at large cares more for their own interests in power and politics. Syria is truly a tragic example of the failure of human rights within the international community.

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Complex Social Memory: Revolving Social Roles in Holodomor Survivor Testimony, 1986-1988

by Jonathon Vsetecka

During 1932 and 1933, a man-made famine struck Ukraine, and in its path of destruction, the famine took millions of lives. Not until the 1980s did the famine of, now known as the Holodomor, gain the attention of academic scholars. Dr. Robert Conquest’s book, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, published in 1986, was the first detailed monograph to document the famine. 1986 also saw the birth of the United States Commission on the Ukrainian Famine, headed by Dr. James Mace. The Commission collected testimonies from Holodomor survivors and published two interim reports that captured everyday Ukrainian experiences during the famine. This paper focuses solely on Holodomor survivor testimony from the Commission’s reports and examines the ways that survivors construct their social roles after the Soviet disruption of everyday life in Ukraine. Ukrainians constructed and adhered to various social roles during the famine and the complicated positions that many Ukrainians found themselves in due to food shortage, disease, and death forced them to alter their everyday roles. More specifically, this paper will emphasize the role of teachers and children during the famine, as survivors in their testimonies often identify the two groups when recalling the situations they found themselves in during the Holodomor. In short, survivor memory functions as social history. These survivors, using detailed language and rhetoric, employ their memories to break down common conceptions of social barriers that limit their role in participating, fighting, and surviving famine conditions.

The Ambiguous Role of Teachers during the Famine

One of the more common memories present in the testimonies of the Holodomor survivors is that of teachers. Several survivors, in their testimonies, expound on teachers and the types of roles they played in everyday life during the famine. In the eyes of Soviet policy during the 1920s, the Ukrainian teacher was responsible for integrating Ukrainian students into the Soviet political system. Matthew Pauly argues, “The Soviet republican government had to conduct its affairs in Ukrainian if it was to justly serve the interests of the predominantly Ukrainian-speaking population and integrate Ukrainians into the new political order.”¹ Some survivors were teachers while others remember distinct moments concerning their teachers during the famine. Mr. Nicholas Chymych elaborates on the role of teachers in his testimony. He states, "I was a teacher, and all teachers were considered helpers in the socialization of the village, so that we were automatically recruited as activists to encourage people to join the collective farms."² To understand the multifarious role of the teacher, Mr. Chymych’s statement must be broken down. He emphasizes that he was a teacher with his first statement, but he shifts from “I” to “all” to note he was not the only teacher involved in socialization. This important shift denotes an effort to tell the truth about the involvement of teachers in political affairs, but it also attempts to establish a sense of empathy because he states that “all teachers were considered helpers”, as if it was unavoidable. Memories like Mr. Chymych’s confront past themes in a present context, which can provide problems for memory as a source. Although memory provides challenges in circumstances like these, the benefits outweigh the negatives. As Lynne Viola argues, “And although memory is always a problematic vehicle for information, its weakness can be its strengths as it provides reflections of past and present and serves in a topic in itself.”³ Memory, as a category, provides a new portal into the past that allows, rather than hinders, the development of new narratives based on ambiguous social roles.

Testimony by other survivors grounds Mr. Chymych’s memory with further evidence. If one calls Mr. Chymych’s testimony into question at all because of the problematic nature of memory as a source, then the hesitations become less burdening with the assistance of further testimony on the subject. Ms. Maria N. explains her role as a teacher in the assistance of the party: “The teachers were forced to

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³ Lynne Viola, “The Cold War in American Soviet Historiography and the End of the Soviet Union,” *Russian Review* 61 (January 2002): 31. The memories present in these testimonies are important to the larger Cold War context present during the duration of the Commission’s work on the Holodomor between 1986 and 1988. The divide between American democracy and Soviet communism allowed memories to develop about each, and the Holodomor survivor testimonies capture such memories of the Soviet Union’s policies in Ukraine.
enter into ledgers the amount of grain confiscated by the grain search brigade and name of the victim. Her memory offers the same results as Mr. Chymych’s memory. Ms. N. describes her role as one that records the grain confiscation numbers, where as Mr. Chymych was forced to encourage people to join the collective farm. Both individuals, however, helped in the collectivization process, just in different ways. A third survivor further elaborates on the roles expected of teachers. Ivan Kononenko says, “In the Soviet political system, a teacher had to be a helper to political system.” Kononenko’s statement reflects an important reminder that teachers “had” to help the political system, indicating they had no choice in the matter. Mr. Chymych and Mr. Kononenko both gave testimonies that became a part of the second interim report conducted by the Commission. Ms. Maria N’s testimony became part of the first interim report. The Commission conducted the two reports in different cities across the United States, but also in different months and years. The continuity of the memories, however, survives the lapse in time and each individual felt this as an important topic to discuss during the hearings.

Other survivors recall how their teachers became more than educators during the Holodomor. In many ways, the mobility of teachers during the famine explains the ways in which individuals were able to navigate these social roles. Mr. Chymych remembers this role very clearly: “Yes, I could move freely from one village to another. I could go anywhere, including Moscow, as a teacher.” He uses the word “freely”, indicating there were no restrictions on his movement through Ukraine, which a great deal of scholarship argues otherwise. The progression of his testimony is important because his boundaries expand as he talks. First, he can move from village to village, then he says he can go “anywhere”. This term lingers because one might ask why he chose not to leave. Mr. Chymych finishes by saying that he can even go to Moscow. This is important for context because people living in Moscow between 1932-1933 did not suffer from famine, so it becomes an important detail in Mr. Chymych’s memory. In Mr. Chymych’s case, he voluntarily remembered the point about Moscow, which became the emphasis of his statement. This resulted from the involuntary memory of Mr. Chymych’s point about mobility. Beginning in 1932, the Soviets hindered Ukrainian movement by introducing the passport system. The passport system required Ukrainians to obtain the passport document for identification and travel purposes, but such individuals could choose their own nationality. As Terry Martin states, “When passports were introduced in 1932, there was no special concern about nationality, and individuals were allowed to choose their own nationality when acquiring a passport.” Many everyday Ukrainians, however, were not privy to that information.

Not all survivors who provide testimony remember the mobility of teachers, but many remember distinct details that allow them to recall a certain memory at a certain time. Ms. Lydia K. recalls the expression of her teacher: “Some, like my teacher, had sad faces and I knew that they did not want to do what they were sent for, but others in the group forced them.” Her testimony hints at a type of resistance, saying, “They did not want to do what they were sent for”. Ms. K. took the time to present this detail in her testimony to explain that although some Ukrainians worked for opposing forces, their

4 U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 151.
5 Ibid., 70.
6 Matthew Pauly examines the roles of Ukrainian teachers in the 1920s and 1930s in his article, “Teaching Place, Assembling the Nation”. Pauly notes that Soviet authorities allowed Ukrainian teachers some say in the development of curriculum. The freedom was little and Pauly notes, “There was a danger that educators’ emphasis on teacher self-training and independent activity in the schools might have negative consequences.” Pauly, “Teaching Place, Assembling the Nation,” 84.
7 U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 127.
8 Numerous publications on the Holodomor insist that the Soviets hindered Ukrainian movement beyond borders in order to contain the knowledge of the famine. This is in juxtaposition to what testimonies have provided. Many Ukrainians, Russians, and members of the press all crossed Ukrainian borders during and after the famine, including Walter Duranty, the Moscow Correspondent for the New York Times who denied the existence of the famine. For more information on the borders and the famine, see Christian Noack, Lindsay Janssen, and Vincent Comerford eds., Holodomor and Gorta Mór: Histories, Memories
and Representations of Famine in Ukraine and Ireland (New York: Anthem Press, 2012), 38. For information on the ambiguity of Ukraine’s borders, see Kate Brown, A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
9 Involuntary memory does not necessarily mean the memory is unimportant, but the voluntary remembrance, which follows the involuntary memory, becomes the emphasis or main point after the recollection process has occurred. See John H. Mace, ed., The Act of Remembering: Toward an Understanding of How We Recall the Past (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 48. For more information on this and the use of collective memory in the recovery process, see Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). The text is originally published in French, Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire (The Social Frameworks of Memory, 1925).
10 Terry Martin, 450-451. Martin also notes that in 1938 the NKVD required that individuals register under the nationality of their parents, thus limiting choice in the passport system.
11 U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 128.
actions did not always represent their desires. She also notes that “others in the group forced them”, which does not elucidate on who the “others” were. Although she most likely meant Soviet authorities, it could have been Ukrainians who were sympathizers, or Ukrainians who thought compliance was easier than resistance. After all, the famine forced diverse groups of people together in a ways in which they might not otherwise meet. Ms. N. remembers one such occasion where these different groups met: “One evening, the party leadership of the village ordered a meeting of party activists and school teachers to take place at the village Soviet.”

This short sentence from Ms. N.’s testimony reveals a great deal about hierarchy and the revolving roles of Ukrainians and others during the famine. She establishes a hierarchy by noting that “party leadership” ordered a meeting, purposely separating ‘party leadership’ from ‘party activists’. She groups “party activists” and “school teachers” together, indicating they share similar roles even though they have different titles. It is also important to note that schoolteachers were present at party meetings as other testimony highlights that teachers were often party workers by force.

Teachers played numerous social roles during the famine, not all of them by choice. The actions and roles of the teachers made a lasting impact on their pupils, which further muddled the lines of social identification. Ms. K. remembers what the students were forced to do in her school: “I also remember in 1932 they made the students in my school go around to various houses in the village and smear over whitewashed walls the following words in tan “Zlisni nezdatchiki khliba”, identifying the occupants as having maliciously failed to give bread to the State.”

This testimony makes students active participators in party business, but on a social level, much like their teachers who taught socialist education on behalf of party members. Ms. K. does not make clear whether she was a teacher or student in this testimony, but it is more likely she was a teacher because she says “they made the students”, leaving the personal pronoun “I” out of her association with the students. Ms. K. also uses the word “they,” which does not directly answer who was at fault. It was most likely the party members and local authorities who encouraged this behavior from students. Teachers understood the circumstances surrounding their classroom. No longer was the classroom a place of proper education, but a space for political propagation. It is in this context that teachers take on another social role, that of a hero. During one survivor testimony, Mr. Michael Smyk recalled a scene in which he heard a teacher describe her role. The teacher said, “For the pupils in my class, I am not merely a teacher; I am a mother. These children grew up without affection. In addition to teaching them reading and writing, I must also read them fairy tales.” The teacher describes her role as that of a mother, but she is fully aware of the situations her students face. She says “I must also read them fairy tales” which shows her desire to not only care for her students, but also her desire to take them to a better place. This also references the parental roles many teachers often faced after parents were unable to care for their children. In some cases, teachers were helpers to political activism, other times they saved children from an unyielding fate, but nonetheless, they aided in the construction of new social roles based on the famine environment. The next section examines the complex social roles of children, often the hardest hit victims of the famine.

Social Roles of Children during the Famine

Another one of the most common memories of the Holodomor survivors in their testimonies is the memory of children. Although many were elderly at the time of the Commission’s work, many of them experienced the famine as children. In the summary of the public hearings, the Commission found that “The age of the witnesses at the time of the Famine varied, with most between seven and fifteen years old, but occasionally the age of a particular witness deviated drastically from the norm.” It is likely that the survivors remember a great deal about children during the famine because they were also children, and likely to be cognizant of the surroundings that affected their age group. In some instances the survivors remember children as victims, and in other testimony, survivors remember children as active participators in the local, Ukrainian social order.

One of the conventional ways that survivors remember children is as victims. In his comments on the conditions that children faced during the famine, Mr. Ivan Kasianenko remembered the sobering details: “The children had nothing to eat. It was
impossible to keep clean. We were literally eaten by lice. But nobody cared. We were the progeny of the defeated class enemy." He notes not only the lack of food, but also the lack of hygiene. Ukrainians did not have enough to eat and they did not have access to proper health care. He also states that they were the offspring of the class enemy, hinting that the famine would harm future generations. Mr. Kasianenko says, "We were the progeny of the defeated class enemy", including himself in the group of children that became victims. The victimization of children took place outside of the villages and the countryside as well. Major cities, such as Kiev and Kharkiv also experienced child hunger: Mr. Oleksiy Keis remembers, "There were so many hungry children not only where I lived, but also in the city of Kharkiv, where I travelled once in a while." This memory by Mr. Keis differs from Mr. Kassianenko’s in the fact that Mr. Keis is describing children he saw, rather than describing his own conditions. Mr. Keis points out that children went hungry in major Ukrainian cities, an idea that many believed only existed in the countryside. The cities allowed children to find each other, and it was the cities that allowed children to survive.

In the testimonies, the cities became a symbol of hope for children who were suffering from hunger in nearby villages because many children believed that the cities had foodstuff. One of the results of hunger in the cities was the abandoning of children due to lack of food, shelter, and safety. Mr. Danylo remembers, "Children were eaten, and human flesh was traded at the marketplace." The amounts of abandoned children grew and orphans became responsible for the intake of the children. Cathy Frierson and Semyon Vilensky note, "children lost their sense of social order, domestic security, and hope for adult protectors." Frierson and Vilensky’s gulag description mirrored that of the famine conditions. In some cases, the orphanages transformed the children’s identity with a simple change of the name. Michael Smyk recalls the procedures in the orphanages: "Because they had been brought to the orphanage at such an early age that they did not know their own surnames, the children were given new names and surnames, mostly Russian, like Ivanov, Petrov, and so on." Mr. Smyk reveals that many entered the orphanages at an early age, indicating that many parents probably gave up their children early as a way of trying to save them as famine conditions became worse. The children were young enough to not know their names, which allowed orphanages (some run by the Soviets) to discretely alter their nationalities at a young age by giving the children Russian names. Those who did not make it into the orphanages became a common sight on the street. Mrs. Pawlichka remembers seeing the suffering children: "For 15 years, I, my friends, my sons, everyone who remembers the famine remembers the vivid pictures of children lying on the ground with their eyes open and glazed." The personal recollection notes that Mrs. Pawlichka saw the children herself, but she expands the point by noting that her friends and family also saw suffering children on a regular basis.

Many of the survivors note the difficulties for children during the famine, but the memories of the children remain active in their present context. The memories outlast the delay of time between the famine and the testimonies, and it is clear that the memories of the children engrain themselves in the survivors’ memory almost permanently. Ms. Nina K. notes, "This moment, when I saw such a tragedy happening to little children, remained in my memory for my whole life. When I remember these events tears well up in my eyes." Another survivor remembers a plethora of ways in which children suffered:

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16 Ibid., 12.
17 Ibid., 21.
18 Ibid., 121.
19 Cathy A. Frierson and Semyon S. Vilensky, Children of the Gulag (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 90. Although some children in Ukraine did get deported to work camps such as the Gulag, many children just remained homeless and parentless. Conditions in the Gulag and conditions during the famine remained similar for children as they often took care of themselves and others with no parental supervision. For a survivor account of the Gulag system, see Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago (New York: Harper and Row, 1973). For more information on how the gulag shaped Soviet citizens and attempted to reintegration them into Soviet society, see Steven A. Barnes, Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

20 U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 139.
21 Ibid., 76. Cathy Frierson and Semyon Vilensky argue, "As the most vulnerable members of society, children almost always suffer disproportionately in periods of famine, epidemics, internecine war, and profound social upheaval." Frierson and Vilensky, Children of the Gulag, 4.
22 U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 137. These last memories can also be the result of the innocence image that children often carry. In her work on children after World War II, Tara Zahra asserts, “children sometimes appeared to be the only ‘innocent victims’ left standing in 1945.” Although Zahra’s emphasis is on children post-1945, the innocent image of children is one that can apply universally, especially in the context of war, famine, disease, and other major catastrophes. Tara Zahra, The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe’s Families after World War II (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 241.
Children emerged as the most pathetic victims of Stalin’s policy of starvation. Not only did they suffer extreme privation and the premature loss of childhood, but they were also the victims of a particularly insidious policy orchestrated by the government, a policy of turning children against parents. As Mrs. Pawlichka noted, they would come to school, trying to seduce the children with candies and sweetmeats, in order to get them to betray their parents, to get them to tell the authorities where they had hidden the food.\textsuperscript{23}

This survivor notes the many ways in which children became victims of the collectivization process and the manipulative ways of those who collected the grain. The government would take advantage of the children’s state of being and coax them with food in order to deploy their political intentions. Although these survivors recount the ways in which children suffered, others remember the children in a different way. Some survivors remember the children in a way that makes them active participants in the social order, rather than pawns shuffled by authoritative figures. Not often enough do adults think of children in mature mindsets, but it is important to remember that these children faced adult-like themes on a daily basis during the famine and they took it upon themselves to survive. Children banded together, stole, and looked after each other in an effort to provide a more communal, stable living environment.

One of the more social effects of the famine resulted in new family structures solely run by children. The older children, ages ten to fifteen, would care for the younger children and take over paternal and maternal roles when no one else would. The process of invoking mentalités of children is possible through these memories.\textsuperscript{24} Children quickly faced adult themes, which they handled rather well for their age and circumstance. An Italian diplomatic and consular dispatch recorded a scene of children taking care of each other: “You could see ten-year olds playing mother to three and four-year olds. As night approached they would cover the little ones with their own coat or kerchief and sleep on the ground with a tin can at their sides for a possible coin.”\textsuperscript{25} This image described by the Italian dispatch notes the children taking on parental roles, and in essence, becoming adults. The description of a “tin can at their sides for a possible coin” also invokes the theme of homelessness, a difficult situation for anyone, let alone children. Although children did provide familial structures for others, the fact remains that these were children. Many remained young and naive and typical rumors spread among younger generations as they would in any culture. These child rumors were innocent on the surface, but serious below. Children began providing their own remedies for illness due to lack of knowledge and basic human need for survival. An anonymous survivor remembers these circumstances: “And just imagine! Her friend, the children from the orphanage somehow got the idea that the cure for tuberculosis was to swallow raw eggs.”\textsuperscript{26} This anecdote highlights the collective assumptions made by children when left to their own devices. These memories present rare and unique insights into the survivors’ mentalités, which is hard to come by in other types of sources.

The particular emphasis on teachers and children in Holodomor survivor testimony reveal a specifically Ukrainian narrative that challenges common assumptions about everyday life during the Holodomor. The testimonies deconstruct standard social roles that many scholars and others have used to categorize Ukrainians during the famine. The testimonies allow Ukrainians a chance to share their narrative of events, which develops a rather sophisticated social history while maneuvering through political and economic events that continue to dominate Holodomor study. Although the testimonies are just one piece of the Holodomor story, they reveal important information concerning everyday life during the famine and invite us to rethink the labels that we so quickly apply to history.

\textsuperscript{23} U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 76.
\textsuperscript{24} Anthony D. Smith coins a type of national examination that he calls the ethno-symbolist approach. Smith argues that ethno-symbolism should consist of “long-term analysis of social and cultural pattern over the langue durée, i.e. analysis of persisting long-term structures and processes.” Anthony D. Smith, Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History (Malden: Polity Press, 2010), 61. In this case, the survivors’ mentalités come from memories in the form of testimony. This process is useful beyond the scope of nationalism and in regards to Holodomor survivor testimony. The focus on subjective elements presents a more complicated Holodomor narrative.

\textsuperscript{25} U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 426.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 380.
Red and Hot, Blue and Cold: Jazz Opening the Iron Curtain with Cultural Diplomacy

by Gabriel Martins

During the Cold War when the terrifying prospect of global nuclear annihilation became a postmodern defining point of humanity, the “Communist Reds” and the “Democratic Blues” jockeyed for influence across the globe. The Soviets showcased their standards in classical music and ballet while America shipped jazz overseas as a representation of the country’s democratic and equal society. From the 1950s to the 1970s, the United States and Soviet governments engaged in cultural exchange programs, which led to the creation of the Jazz Ambassadors program. The Jazz Ambassadors Program was effective as a form of cultural diplomacy because the participants exercised agency and autonomy on their tours, disregarded both Soviet and American governmental goals and imposed their own instead, and reached out to the people to form strong bonds of diplomacy and friendship through music.

One African American jazz musician, Dizzy Gillespie, was chosen to inaugurate the U.S. State Department’s Jazz Tours Program in 1956, even though he carried a Communist Party membership card. However, he did not actively promote Communist ideology or even attend any meetings, which made his inclusion in the program more palatable. During the tour, he discovered his new purpose: serving as an autonomous ambassador for jazz itself (and if that happened to line up with the U.S. State Department’s goals, well, that was just a happy coincidence). In what would become habit for the jazz ambassadors, Gillespie appealed to the people, not just to the elites and the politicians as the State Department desired. He did this by opening up his concerts to the masses and the poor instead of playing for just the elites. He also appeared in local garb, staged theatrics on accident to show commonality with his audience, and made sure to respect religious holidays. He wired President Eisenhower to tell him:

Jazz is our own American folk music that communicates with all peoples regardless of language or social barriers. I urge you to do all in your power to continue exploiting this valuable form of expression of which we are so proud.2

Gillespie realized what the U.S. government was attempting to do with the Jazz Tours. However, he did tell his wife Lorraine: “I sort’ve liked the idea of representing America, but I wasn’t going over to apologize for the racist policies of America...If they ask me any questions, I’m gonna answer them as honestly as I can.”3 Gillespie asserted his own authority and his own will to promote jazz and democracy abroad, ignoring the State Department’s restrictions of what he could say and for whom he could perform.

On the other side of the cultural divide, the Soviets were experiencing a similar cultural crisis in the post-Stalinist youth, who exercised their agency by rejecting the cultural and political norms of the Soviet state. These so-called stilagi (“style hunters”) flaunted their wealth, dressed in clean-cut, crisp suits, embraced Western ideals, focused on the present, smoked, drank, and loved jazz in direct opposition to their parent’s generation. Select stilagi participated in the black market, dealing in cocaine, American jazz records, and cigarettes. Similarly to the early bebop artists in America after the war, many stilagi preferred silence and detachment to a debased language and a debased mass Soviet culture and entertainment industry.4 These Soviet youths imitated the actions of American jazz musicians, who in turn reinforced those kinds of behaviors when they finally arrived in these countries on the Jazz Tours.

Drawing parallels between Socialist Realism and the swing movement in America helps to explain the socio-cultural rebellion within both Cold War superpowers at the time. In brief terms, “Socialist Realism...dictated more traditional designs, heroic statuary, and monumental and neoclassical architectural forms.”5 Specifically, “the proletarianists assaulted science fiction, detective stories, fairy tales, folk music, jazz, urban song, and escape movies” that emerged during the Soviet Union’s New Economic Policy period from 1921 to 1928. The proletarianists referred to this “as the effusion of decadent intellectuals produced for the unhealthy appetites of degenerate businessmen.” The Soviets enacted

2 Ibid., 282-4.
3 Dizzy Gillespie, To Be or Not To Bop: Memoirs of Dizzy Gillespie (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 414.
cultural repression on a larger scale than America did, and the Soviets attacked most forms of cultural expression whereas American musical criticism focused mainly on jazz at the time. Throughout the first few decades of the twentieth century, jazz was believed to be “primitive, jungle music” by much of American society. However, swing music developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, whose characteristics include written-out arrangements of tunes as well as musical quotations of other well-known works, contrasting musical lines and rhythms of the reeds and the brass, and the imposition of structure upon what was somewhat “chaotic.”

The imposition of Socialist Realism upon Soviet society and the imposition of structure upon jazz in America both impeded the expression of agency and individuality. Soviet youth society faced repression of dissenting views and subversive actions. As this surge of repression resurfaced, jazz in the gulag prison system actually flourished. The camp administrators essentially turned the gulags into autonomous fiefs, which helped to preserve the various cultures of the men and women who were imprisoned. Socialist Realism was in essence a method of controlling culture for Stalin, and when imposed, it squeezed culture through a filter to become a bland, grey version of what was acceptable. Similarly, in the United States, beboppers fought back against swing because they felt that it was bland, grey, and “dead.” As such, they categorically refused to play nationalistic music for a country full of hypocrisy in regards to civil rights. These beboppers rebelled against racial segregation and cultural norms between the races, and they demanded to be seen as equals, individuals, and artists.

The American and Soviet rebellions against government and culture appropriated jazz for unique reasons, but they both resisted common trends and were determined to carve their own path independent of what others thought. Soviet citizens weren’t fighting for racial equality as much as they were fighting for their own freedom and style of expression against their parents’ and other societal values. America, arguably the nation with the most freedom at this time, still segregated its citizens along racial lines while hypocritically promoting equality abroad. Many musicians (jazz and otherwise), when they traveled abroad, found this illusion shattered. They discovered they were treated with more equality while abroad and when the people of the nations they visited asked questions, they answered truthfully about conditions in the United States. Oftentimes visiting jazz ambassadors composed songs (based on local, national, and/or traditional melodies) or learned them from local musicians, incorporating them into a global musical family. This resulted in musicians endearing themselves to the people. One example of musicians endearing themselves to their foreign audience is the Brubeck family. The Brubecks consisted of Dave, his wife Iola, and their sons Darius and Michael. They were on a tour of Europe in 1958 when they were told by the State Department that they could not continue their tour into Poland. They eventually found assistance in getting to Poland, and as they performed throughout the country, jazz enthusiasts followed them from city to city because they loved the music tremendously, and were fascinated with Dave and Iola’s kids.

Another way that the Brubecks endeared themselves to the local musicians was by having secretive but friendly meetings and jam sessions. As Iola told a jazz critic after the tour:

Jazz in Poland was underground until after the Polish October Revolution of 1956 and the emergence of the Gomulka government as quasi-independent. Prior to that...Polish jazz fans and musicians had to meet illegally in cellars to hear the music they liked.

Dave Brubeck often spoke during his performances, and when he did, he reinforced the reason why the State Department sought to send jazz musicians abroad in the first place: "No dictatorship can tolerate jazz. It is the first sign of a return to freedom." There is a considerable probability that his Polish performances had more positive diplomatic impact than any of his other European performances.

Not all Jazz Ambassadors were as effective in the diplomatic effort. Benny Goodman, given his attitude,
was a strange choice for the Jazz Ambassadors Program. He was a participant for several reasons, however. One is that he demanded to be a part of the program, partially to find out what had happened to his merchandise that he sent over to the Soviet Union. Secondly, he was allowed to go on tour by the Soviets, who restricted travel into the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc. A key component of the Soviet's criticism of American democracy was the segregation and racial inequality within American society, which explains why the Soviets rejected a tour featuring an African American band led by African American Louis Armstrong but accepted an integrated band led by the Caucasian Goodman. Soviet officials did this to preserve the integrity of their propaganda that stated that American society was not as equal as they claimed it to be, because only Caucasians were given positions of leadership in bands and within American society as a whole.

Thirdly, there was a dispute about the style of music that best encompassed jazz. Bebop was the African-American musician’s movement to reappropriate jazz for themselves away from the commercialized white hands of America. The Soviets regarded jazz suspiciously, but were at least tolerant towards swing, with its tight structure and form. Swing appealed to the Soviet top brass because of its vague similarity to classical music, the musical strength of the Soviets. For these reasons, Goodman was allowed to tour the Soviet Union.

Official diplomacy jumped off the platform that Goodman's cultural diplomacy established and played the part of damage control during events like the Cuban Missile Crisis that occurred after Goodman’s tour. Goodman may not have been a great diplomat, but the musicians in his band still connected with the local Soviet musicians, and both could express dissatisfaction with the lack of freedoms they were given. This showcases the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy over official diplomacy. Or to state it differently, “[Goodman] was winning the hearts of the Russians in his own way, not according to the State Department plan.” Despite some of the criticisms aimed at Goodman, he ultimately was a well-chosen representative of jazz because swing was the subgenre that he stuck to stubbornly, and the subgenre that the Soviet officials could tolerate.

The autonomy and individual authority that Soviet jazz musicians could exert from 1962 onwards provide a fascinating look into both the Communist system and Soviet thought on jazz, both official and unofficial. Some jazz forms could be accepted by true Leninists, and such a statement was in fact published in Komsomolskaia Pravda (the Young Communist League’s newspaper). By playing this American musical form but composing their own Soviet classics, officials hoped to lessen the impact of underlying American values and to control jazz as another aspect of culture, because the Soviet government sought to control everything. An offshoot of the Union of Soviet Composers required that up-and-coming jazz ensembles and individuals register with them and be graded on their musicianship, primarily on their classical music skills and sight-reading while improvisation played no part whatsoever. And these auditions for registration were often presided over by corrupt officials. When faced with the classic musician’s dilemma of playing or eating, some Soviets turned to non-musical forms of work. Other Soviet musicians turned to conservative orchestras or established their own groups, clubs, and jam sessions, the latter being a common way to blow off steam after commercial performances. “[Soviet jazz’s] inner development remained autonomous, beyond the control of any public agency.”

The constant reversals of official Soviet policy on jazz, the view that jazz was by its nature anarchistic and led the youth to political dissent, and Premier Khrushchev’s humiliation during the Cuban Missile crisis, when combined with the Soviet-Sino split in 1963, paved the road for the Premier’s removal from office in 1964. With Premier Brezhnev’s assumption of control afterwards, the Soviet Union drifted towards an era of stagnation and slow decay. Soviet history had come full circle: “It all began with the bulk of society being composed of a rather primitive...peasantry, facing an action-oriented bureaucratic state, and ended with a complex urban society...facing a stagnating bureaucratic state.” Soviet society had changed drastically from the uneducated peasant masses of the October Revolution and even from the collectivized, Stalinist society at the end of the Second World War to an intellectual, proletariat society. The proletariat formed the majority of the population, and the educated citizens demanded respect for their interests but weren’t granted this wish. In addition, they couldn’t acquire what they desired, even if it was of a high

12 Von Eschen, 92-3, 100-1.
13 Ibid., 94-96. See also Starr, 271.
15 Starr, 262-267. The Komsomol was established to raise the Soviet youth as proper Communists by indoctrinating them and grooming them to act appropriately in all regards of life.
16 Ibid., 273-5.
enough quality to purchase. The earlier stilagi
movement, while definitely separated from official
Soviet policy and ideology, was in a sense passive.
The emerging and more active dissident movement in
the mid-to-late 1960s saw the regime crack down
upon “parasitism,” that is not being productive to
Soviet society and culture. These dissidents actively
criticized and discredited the regime. The regime
often responded to those criticisms and protests with
armed force. The dissidents felt that “[t]he ideal
citizen . . . was not unconditionally obedient but an
active, autonomous participant in political affairs.”

Meanwhile, the mid-to-late 1960s and the 1970s
bore witness to the rise of rock and roll and the
British invasion of America by bands such as the
Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Jazz experienced a
decline in its authority over the music scene, in its
autonomy as an art form, and in the number of tours
dedicated to it whereas rock and roll tours began to
increase.\(^{18}\) The assassinations of Kennedy, Malcolm
X, and Martin Luther King, Jr. destabilized the
country. The decline of jazz in mainstream appeal as
well as the crackdown on African American activism
spoke to a changing culture within America, which
affected its cultural diplomacy and exportation.
Ambassadors that did travel the globe in the 1970s
found societies as tumultuous as their own.

Jazz truly represented America for much of the
 twentieth century. As a musical form originating from
Africa, its enslaved descendants, and the struggle to
etch out an existence in this uncaring world, jazz was
understood by the people. They could relate to it, no
matter what race they were, or what ideology or
religion to which they ascribed. However, the
underlying hypocrisy of the Jazz Ambassadors
Program contributed to its unraveling. How could any
government expect musicians of a repressed minority
to travel abroad to promote democracy and the
equality of man when that was absolutely not the
case at home? Another aspect of the Ambassador
Program’s decline is that of simple economics.
President Eisenhower prophetically warned America
about the rising industrial-military complex, and yet
the escalating nuclear arms race remained an issue
throughout the Cold War. For jazz, the invasion or
resurgence of various musical styles like rock and roll,
pop music, and rhythm and blues caused jazz to lose
economic presence and its prominence as America’s
true musical style. Ideologically, the political
reduction of the Cold War to “the Reds versus the
Blues for all time” affected both superpowers. Even
back in the 1960s, Soviet ambassador to the United
States Anatoly Dobrynin stated: “…the powerful
factor of ideology…was deeply ingrained in the minds
of the Kremlin leaders. It kept affecting our relations
with the United States, at times to the detriment of
our own basic interests.”\(^{19}\)

The musical bonds of friendship that were forged
by the Jazz Ambassadors transcended Cold War
ideological battles, but the program itself was flawed
from the beginning. Foreign policy is usually
controversial, but the traditional diplomatic method of
attempting to solve problems lacks the impact that
cultural diplomacy had during the 1950s, 60s, and
70s. Sadly, the final living Jazz Ambassador from this
time period, Dave Brubeck, died in 2012; he firmly
believed, however, that cultural diplomacy still has a
role to play and that it should be revitalized:

Because, if we don't start understanding each
other, there's not going to be a world. It's
crucial. Martin Luther King said, ‘We must live
together as brothers or die together as fools.’
Now, you can't say it much more directly
than that. We've got to get an
understanding, not just in music, but in
religion, in every form of cultural exchange.
We could do so much more. And maybe we
will - if we're scared enough - do the right
things. Because survival is a strong influence
in all of us... In almost every culture, if you
dig deep enough, you're going to find a
oneness of man. One of the reasons I believe
in jazz that is the oneness of man can come
through the rhythm of your heart. It's the
same anywhere in the world, that heartbeat.
It's the first thing you hear when you're
born—or before you're born—and it's the last
thing you hear.\(^{20}\)

It’s a sobering realization that humanity still has not
learned this lesson that we are all human, first and
foremost, despite the staggering variety of
languages, religions, and cultures. However, the Jazz
Ambassadors proved that we are capable of moving
past the conflicts we suffer if we can only realize that
we are all human and all share an ability to enjoy
expressing ourselves culturally.

\(^{18}\) Marc Myers, *Why Jazz Happened* (Berkeley: University of

\(^{19}\) Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow’s Ambassador to Six

\(^{20}\) “Diana Gioia’s interview with Dave Brubeck” transcript, NEA Jazz
Masters, accessed 28 Nov. 2013, http://arts.gov/honors/jazz/dave-
brubeck
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Soldiers, Sutlers and Cultural Ambassadors: The Transplantation of Culture in the Wyoming Territory from 1865-1890

by Chandler Harris

At the conclusion of the Civil War, the American public once again turned its attention to westward migration. After several years of construction, the transcontinental railroad met up in Promontory Utah in 1869.1 The coming of the railroad brought new work opportunities to the west and facilitated the construction of several new settlements. Settlements such as Laramie and Cheyenne in the Wyoming Territory were created as planned communities to support the railroad. The resulting boom in migration and settlement construction created a growing need for security in the western territories. The end of the Civil War brought with it thousands of trained soldiers to assist in the settlement of the West. The struggle to replace the disbanding Civil War units coincided with the establishment of Forts along the Bozeman trial and the resulting war with Red Cloud. In 1866 hostilities culminated in the Fetterman fight, and the deaths of Captain Fetterman and his entire unit.2

Over the course of the next 25 years sporadic conflict between natives and federal forces continued in varying degrees. The end to the majority of hostilities occurred in late 1890 when the Wounded Knee Massacre left hundreds of native civilians dead. Although Reconstruction was a time of general change in the West, the increasing amounts of federal troops also contributed to the transplantation of culture in these areas.

There has been a large amount of literature dedicated to the settlement of the West, and role of military personnel in the West. Robert M. Utley’s work focuses on the military campaigns of this time period, and the facts of the military history of the Indian Wars.3 Utley argues for a balanced view of soldier’s actions against natives at this time of both the good and the bad. This encompassing take on the military allows Utley to act as an excellent source of background information in the Indian wars. Historian Gilbert A. Stelter discusses this time period in a different fashion. Stelter focuses on the formation of Cheyenne as a city in the first years after the Civil War to act as a case study involving the role of railroads and military forts in town development during this period.4 His argument hinges around the idea that the combination of the Union Pacific Railroad, and Fort D.A. Russell allowed for Cheyenne to expand into an early frontier city. Allison K. Hoagland addresses the layout of military forts in the Wyoming Territory during this time period. Hoagland used the layouts of these forts to suggest a cultural connection between eastern villages and military forts in the west.5 The cultural connection of forts to the east is critical to recognizing overarching patterns of cultural transplantation during this time. Similar to Hoagland, Alan Culpin also addressed social constructions in the military at this time. However, the focus of Culpin’s article is centered on what leisure time activities were enjoyed by soldiers in the Wyoming Territory.6 These activities are important to establishing broader cultural trends within military personnel at this time. Finally, W.N. Davis Jr. focuses on the history of sutlers in Territorial Wyoming forts, with an emphasis on William A. Carter of Fort Bridger.7 Although each of these sources identifies a topic within the military role in westward expansion in Wyoming Territory, none of them address the comprehensive implications of military cultural transplantation.

During the post-Civil War era, the influx of soldiers had a dramatic effect on the western culture of the Wyoming Territory. The soldiers who traveled to the Wyoming Territory at this time did not only build forts that resembled an eastern village styled construction. Nor did they operate within a cultural vacuum within their military posts. Rather, these men and their families transplanted their way of life into the new western setting through a broader sense of culture. The cultural changes included not only architecture, but also belief systems of right and wrong, and different eastern past times. The transplantation of culture through the military was divided into three socioeconomic groups. The first group comprises enlisted soldiers and their families. These men represent the lower classes of American society, and show the culture of the vast majority of soldiers. Secondly, sutlers answered the call to

3 Ibid., 1-3.
provided economic support to the rapidly growing military population within the territory. Sutlers, later post traders, were men who were given monopoly trading rights with the fort's military inhabitants, and local populations. Post traders represent the role of middle class business owners in the settlement and cultural development of Wyoming. Finally, the experiences of officers show the cultural contributions of the upper class in the settlement of Wyoming. The difference in roles that each of these groups played allows for a more complete view of western cultural change at this time. Although the three groups represent three separate classes, commoner/lower class, economic/middle class, and upper/aristocratic class, their narratives blend into a shared cultural experience. Each perspective is different, but the common theme throughout highlights the transplantation of eastern ideas to the West.

In the pre-Civil War Wyoming Territory, several characteristics highlight the general trend of cultural assimilation of settlers to native traditions, rather than transplantation of their own customs. William A. Carter was a sutler/post trader at Fort Bridger who recorded accounts of the early fort. The original Fort was simply one L-shaped building with no windows, no doors and a basic stock room.\(^8\) This small structure was missing one critical element that became intertwined with western forts later, the stockade. Carter wrote, "Bridger didn't need a stockade around his house. This seems plausible, for why should Jim Bridger who had an Indian squaw and was a brother to every tribe of Indians in the country build a stockade to hide himself."\(^9\) The importance of this description is in the fact that Jim Bridger had integrated himself in with the local tribes so well that he did not need protection. Image 1 provides an 1850 depiction of what this fort looked like under Bridger.\(^10\) Carter also described a neighboring trade post owned by Big Bill. This post was built with a stockade and placed in a strategic position to protect against any possible Native American attacks. However, Carter stated, "He made friends even with the Indians for he would run races with the going bucks and engage in wrestling matches with them."\(^11\) Although Big Bill felt the need to prepare against hostile Indian attacks, he still became friendly with them through cultural integration. The integration that was exemplified by these two examples would begin to decline following the Civil War.

In the wake of the Civil War, enlisted men began to bring about the end of cultural assimilation with native peoples within the Wyoming Territory. The experiences of enlisted men differed from those of the officers as much socially as they did in the dutiess they performed. These were the men who lived in the roughest areas of the forts and had the least amount of luxury afforded to them. Historian Alan Culpin writes, "It is the ordinary soldier who lays the groundwork, does the dirty details, and caters to the whims of the officer."\(^12\) The enlisted men of the army would not have been allowed the same advantages in living conditions and social functions that officers were allotted. One such enlisted man, James S. McClellan made mention of this difference in his journal. After what McClellan described as the "Cannon Fight" on the Powder River a funeral was held. Five enlisted men were buried at this funeral, but a dead officer was taken back east to his family.\(^13\) The common man view of the enlisted soldiers provides a more grassroots view of the cultural transplantation in the Wyoming Territory. Examples of the transplantation of culture amongst enlisted men come through both personal accounts in the form of journals, and analysis of popular pass-times amongst soldiers during this time.

McClellan obtained the ranks of corporal and sergeant when he wrote his personal journals.\(^14\) The descriptions contained in the journals primarily focus on everyday routine and day to day tasks. However, there are some important hints of cultural transplantation that appear during the course of his entries. For example, during the above mentioned battle on the Powder River, McClellan killed a hostile Indian and approached the body. Rather than follow native culture and scalp the enemy, McClellan chose to allow an allied native scout to take the scalp instead. McClellan wrote, "I could not scalp him as it looked so bad for a white man to commence to

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\(^8\) Description of old Fort Bridger, Box 7, Folder 2, William A. Carter Papers, Collection Number 03535, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

\(^9\) Description of old Fort Bridger, Box 7, Folder 2, William A. Carter Papers, Collection Number 03535, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.


\(^11\) Description of old Fort Bridger, Box 7, Folder 2, William A. Carter Papers, Collection Number 03535, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

\(^12\) Culpin, 93.


\(^14\) Ibid., 21.
mutilate the dead in that way.”\textsuperscript{15} Although McClellan himself refused to scalp the enemy, he later described returning to the kill to find a white scout scalping other enemy casualties.\textsuperscript{16} The difference in behavior described in this account is clearly linked to cultural implications. McClellan refrained from scalping because he believed it was wrong for a white man to participate in native practice. In other words, McClellan transplanted his own ideas about the morality of scalping from his eastern upbringing to the western frontier. McClellan’s beliefs exemplified the new culture of the military, in opposition to the old trappers and the local scouts, such as the man whom McClellan witnessed scalping the slain warrior. McClellan also provided sketches of several plains forts in his tours of duty. One such illustration is of Fort Fred Steele, which is depicted in image 2.\textsuperscript{17} This village structure shown in this illustration was common across many of the forts at this time. Hoagland states, “Without any overtly defensive purpose, these forts evoked an image not of military might, but of a village community.”\textsuperscript{18} These village forts appeared in contrast to eastern stockade forts, and also the single building forts of the early territorial days. McClellan’s sketches provide a view of what he found interesting on the frontier, and perhaps the depiction as a village shows McClellan’s own recognition of the similarities between the fort and a normal eastern township.

Beyond these personal accounts of soldiers, there are also hints of cultural transplantation present in soldiers’ leisure time activities. Image 3 presents a string band poster for Fort Bridge and acts as a primary example of the culturally-influenced activities that these soldiers participated in.\textsuperscript{19} The presence of a string band amongst these soldiers shows a clear link to their own home cultures rather than the adoption of western activities. This movement towards transplanted leisure time entertainment supports the idea of an overall cultural transplantation amongst these men. Beyond concerts there were also several leisure time activities of a more informal nature that support cultural transplantation. Most of these activities focused around the soldier’s time in the forts. Culpin writes, “A variety of amusements were enjoyed which included dancing, theatricals, musical performances, card playing and drinking parties, horse racing, storytelling and reading and writing letters.”\textsuperscript{20} These leisure time activities can be clearly linked to eastern culture, but there are a few items that link to western cultural practices. Card playing drinking and horse racing all have roots in both western and eastern culture. However, the other activities listed clearly are transplanted to the West from their soldier’s origins. Although the soldiers do not explicitly state that they are bringing these practices from their eastern homes, the nature of these activities suggests a cultural transplantation. The soldiers leisure activities provide a rare cultural insight into the lives of enlisted men from this time, and highlight the ideals they brought with them to the West.

While the eastern village-styled forts began to emerge across the Wyoming Territory, a new market for supplying these villages increased massively. Leaving the war-torn economies of the east behind, businessmen were now able to turn their attention to maintenance of freight lines through the western territories. The men who fulfilled the economic needs of the expanding military presence were known as sutlers. Sutlers were given the opportunity to open up a general store that filled the gap between soldier’s needs for personal items and the necessities supplied by the military quartermaster.\textsuperscript{21} Although these men were not actually members of the military companies they provided goods to, they do represent a shift in economic culture from the trapper trade post model to a much more eastern approach. This shift can be tracked through the changing of the title of the positions from “sutler” to “post trader”.\textsuperscript{22} This change signifies that these western businessmen were no longer the simple camp followers that the title sutler implies. Rather, post traders were now businessmen associated with a steady location and a member of a complex military based economy.

One such post trader that exemplifies this trend towards established eastern business practices was James K. Moore. Moore acted as the post trader at Fort Washakie near what would become the Wind River Indian Reservation. Moore’s experiences detail the highly political nature of work that post traders conducted during this time. The first example of politicking in the post trader line of work comes from a letter of recommendation from the U.S. treasurer.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[15] Ibid., 29.
\item[16] Ibid.
\item[17] Ibid., 26. Image 2
\item[18] Hoagland, 222.
\item[20] Culpin, 99.
\item[21] Davis, 38.
\item[22] Davis, 37.
\end{footnotes}
W.M. Selden for James to receive the sutler’s contract at Fort Washakie. Selden’s letter seems to imply that post trader contracts were at least partially issued under the patronage system that was prominent in eastern politics. The massive scale of the post trader business appears in a letter Mr. Moore’s friend Fred just a few years after taking over the post. In this letter Moore insisted that Fred’s order of 10,000 pounds of flour must be a mistake and assumes that he means 100,000 pounds. The large amount of flour required by this order speaks volumes about the scale of the post trader business at this time. Moore then asked that Fred put in a good word with a certain Mr. Baker in order to assist him in receiving more contracts. The need to make connections in order to secure contracts at first seems puzzling, due to the fact that these post traders were given a monopoly over selling to troops in a particular fort. However, an examination of this letter reveals more details about the new economic culture of post-Civil War Wyoming Territory. Moore wrote, “I have generally had the freighting to this and until last year was given the preference over other bidders.” This statement shows that the military began to allow for more competition amongst the post traders, mirroring the eastern styled free market approach. The new focus on competition allowed a post trader to expand their enterprises beyond the soldiers within one fort and assist in territory-wide development.

In addition to the expanding economic influences shown within the records of James Moore’s business operations, his personal requests and collection of photographs also reveal important cultural details. For example, on June 2nd, 1880 Moore sent a request to A.S. Day in Evanston for a servant that can cook wash and iron for him and his family. In another letter from June 19th of the same year to Capt. R.A. Torry, Moore describes how he has recently hired bookkeepers in order to help make payment more punctual. Both of these letters demonstrate aspects of transplanted culture within the new frontier business class. Moore’s correspondences demonstrate that he had grown his small fort based trading post into a major company that warranted eastern book keeping practices. Also, his family has achieved great enough success that they are willing to hire an outside source to perform labors within the house. Both of these letters highlight economic successes within the post trader business that allow the Moore family to bring a greater amount of eastern customs with them to their new western home. Although not an actual member of the military, the link that Moore shared with the military ties his transplantation in with the greater narrative of military cultural change. The photographs in Moore’s papers also demonstrate transplanted culture in this area.

Image 4 shows Fort Washakie in the late 1880’s. In this image the fort is indiscernible from any standard eastern town. The layout of the town is spread out in a manner similar to what a town would be. Also, there are what appear to be shops in the center of the fort with farm buildings lining the extremities of the location. Image 5 was taken inside the fort and shows a portion of the officers’ quarters and the surgeon’s quarters. These buildings expand the eastern similarities beyond the layout of the fort, to the architecture of the fort’s buildings. The quarters featured in this photograph bear distinctly eastern rounded pillar exteriors, windows, and porches. Finally, image 6 shows buildings at some hot springs near the fort. These buildings functioned as bath houses for both the officers and the enlisted men stationed at the fort. The buildings near the hot springs demonstrate that bathing was a strong priority for the soldiers stationed at Fort Washakie. Each of these photos features elements of eastern culture in fort layout, building style, and even social priorities from the bathhouse. Taken together these images and letters provide a visual representation of the transplantation of culture on a more social level amongst post traders. The eastern township designs that were documented photographically by James K. Moore and his personal correspondences both show elements of eastern cultures in the Wyoming Territory. Post traders acted within the catalyst of the

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23 Letter of Recommendation, Box 5, Folder 7, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

24 Letter to Fred, Box 5, Folder 7, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

25 Ibid.

26 Letter to A.S. Day, Box 5, Folder 7, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

27 Letter to Capt. R.A. Torry, Box 5, Folder 7, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

28 Fort Washakie Photo, Box 1, Folder 2, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

29 Officers’ Quarters Photo, Box 1, Folder 1, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

30 Hot Springs Bath House Photo, Box 1, Folder 1, James K. Moore Family Papers, Collection Number 00051, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
military presence in the Wyoming Territory. Forts acted as ready markets for these traders, and provided a substantial jumpstart to commerce within the Wyoming Territory.

Different from both the economically-focused sutlers and the common enlisted soldiers, officers provide the greatest view into the changing Territorial Wyoming culture during this time period. When the village style forts were being designed and built it was the officers who were in charge of the construction. Hoagland writes, "The village nature of western army posts reflected the proclivities of the commanding officers, since no specific directives guided a fort's construction."31 Due to the lack of directions for fort building, officers were able to input their own design ideals in the construction of forts. Officers also lived in different circumstances that allowed them to transplant a greater amount of culture to the western posts. Besides being in command of the other men, officers were also more likely to be married than enlisted men, and they made a substantially larger salary than the average soldier.32 An example of the disparity between enlisted men and officers comes from the hunting experiences of General Custer during an expedition in 1867. Custer was nearly killed by a bull buffalo after chasing a group of antelope. Hunting was not unique to officers, but the fact Custer brought his personal bugler and pack of private hunting dogs distinguishes him from enlisted soldiers.33 The possession of greater wealth amongst officers allowed them to indulge in more luxury items, even in remote frontier posts.

Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron and his family provide an excellent example of the transplantation of culture amongst officers through their emphasis on education, and descriptions of their favorite leisure time activities. Thaddeus and his wife maintain Eda strict standard of education for their children, even while they were living in the forts. When their son Hazen attempted to hide outside in order to avoid a school lesson his mother wrote to Thad that she gave him "a good whipping."34 However, the Caprons not only educated their son, but also their daughter Elo. In another letter, Cynthia described Hazen's studies as geography and arithmetic, while the younger Elo was learning letters.35 Hazen's education continued even beyond simple lessons with his mother according to a later letter between Thaddeus and Cynthia. In this letter Cynthia describes how she told Hazen to pay $1 for lessons to prepare for possibly attending an eastern university.36 The emphasis on education is almost certainly transplanted from the Capron family's origins in New York. This emphasis on education existed amongst other officers and their families throughout the Wyoming Territory. Culpin writes, "The first school in Wyoming was conducted at Fort Laramie in 1852 by the Reverend Richard Vaux, post chaplain, for the children of the officers."37 These examples point towards a growing culture of education based around the officers of the military in Wyoming Territory at this time. This emphasis on education is critical in the social development of Wyoming away from a frontier state to a state with a class of professionals and educated citizens.

Thaddeus and Cynthia's correspondences also reveal several social attributes that point towards cultural transplantation. In celebration of the fourth of July in 1876, Cynthia described a picnic that was taken by the families in the fort, "Mrs. Burt asked me and said there were so few and I knew them all. It was not like a picnic event in the city."38 Her description is significant because it directly states that the picnicking practice was something they transplanted from eastern cities. These dinner activities were common across officer’s families in several different forts. It was common practice for officers and their families to participate in several different Christmas parties/dinners within the fort's community.39 In another letter to Thaddeus, Cynthia described that the women were creating a commemorative scrapbook for the men and officers under Custer’s command.40 The actions these women took all points to their desire to maintain old eastern customs in their new homes in the west. Hoagland writes, "Army women clung to their roles as

31 Hoagland, 223.
32 Culpin, 91.
33 Ibid., 105.
34 July 17, 1876 Letter, Box 2, Folder 18, Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron Family Papers, Collection Number 0694, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
35 July 17, 1876 Letter, Box 2, Folder 18, Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron Family Papers, Collection Number 0694, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
36 Jan 30, 1884 Letter, Box 2, Folder 18, Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron Family Papers, Collection Number 0694, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
37 Culpin, 103.
38 July 3, 1876 Letter, Box 2, Folder 18, Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron Family Papers, Collection Number 0694, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
39 Culpin, 102.
40 July 19, 1876 Letter, Box 2, Folder 18, Thaddeus Hurlbut Capron Family Papers, Collection Number 0694, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
guardians of the home and purveyors of culture. All these accounts highlight the efforts of officers’ wives to domesticate their quarters, and provide cultured entertainment.\footnote{1} This description of officers’ wives contributes to the underlying theme of the greater cultural influence exerted by military officers at this time. Image 7 provides a visual example of these trends.\footnote{2} In this late 1800’s photograph the officers and their wives line up for a picture before playing a game of croquet. This seemingly eastern scene takes place in Fort Bridger with the military buildings prominent in the background. This image supports the writings of Thaddeus and his family, along with other historians, that the officers proved to be the driving force behind cultural transplantation in military forts.

Although the trends found in this research point to a transplantation of eastern culture as opposed to adoption of native/western culture amongst the military other questions still remain. For example, what was the extent to which western cultural practices were brought back to eastern areas by soldiers who returned home after their tour of duty in the west? After the idea of the frontier began to die there developed a romanticized version of the old west that is apparent in later films and books. This question discusses whether or not soldiers aided in this development of the modern view of the old west, and to what extent was there cultural back and forth between the frontier and the east. Also, what about soldiers allowed them to transplant their culture on a larger scale than previous pioneers? The soldiers who began to flood the territory after the Civil War brought a new wave of eastern culture than previous soldiers had not. This question focuses around whether the larger numbers of soldiers brought about change, or if the Civil War fundamentally changed western soldiers. Overall, this research calls into question the nature of the frontier, and the experiences of the settlers who lived there. The trend seems to show a movement towards bringing culture with the settlers to their new homes, rather than a traditional view that they developed a unique western culture. Although there were certainly both transplantations and new cultures developed, the exact relationship between the two should be examined. However, the questions raised by these topics lie outside the scope of this essay to address.

The experiences of these three groups are all unique, but closely connected to one another in the theme of their cultural experiences. From beginnings of trade posts owned by culturally assimilated trappers and traders to eastern villages allowing for the transplantation of culture. The key force behind this change of cultural ideals can be clearly linked to the military through the experiences of the previous listed groups. Enlisted soldiers did not have the same large scale influence as rich economic post trader or upper class officers, however they allowed for the mass transplantation of culture through perceived “white” actions. Also men such as Robert Dunlap Clarke and James S. McClellan provide journals with descriptions of day-to-day affairs. Sutlers and post traders were not actual members of the military, but they did mark the economic cultural transformation that was undergone in the west following the Civil War. These men began to bring eastern finance and consumer culture to the west under the facilitation of the military. Finally, the officers in the military at this time provided the driving force for cultural transplantation at this time. These men not only designed eastern village styled forts, they also brought families who would help maintain their eastern customs. The officers’ leadership positions allowed them to facilitate the implementation of familiar cultural practices in the western forts. Each of these group’s contributions helped establish a transplanted culture in the west, but the impact of this cultural movement is not so simple. Although cultural change may never be as widely known as the military history presented by Utley, it is equally significant. With every picnic and Christmas party the myth of the old west as a separate cultural entity vanished. The mixed trapper native culture exemplified by the experiences of Fort Bridger was replaced by the driving force of cultural transformation. One must only compare the images of pre-Civil War Fort Bridger to later fort designs to understand the extent of the cultural movement. The cultural changes of these men and of the Wyoming Territory as a whole marked the end to an old system, and the start to something completely different.

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\footnote{1} Hoagland, 230.  
\footnote{2} An Afternoon of Croquet. Ladies, Gentlemen, and Children on the Lawn at Fort Bridger, Wyo. Terr., ca.1873. Officers' Quarters at Left, Hospital and Men's Barracks to the Right in Background, National Archives Identifier 530927, http://research.archives.gov/description/530927
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Dancing Again: History, Memory, and Activism at Wounded Knee

by Owen Volzke

On February 27, 1973, discontent Oglala Lakota protestors occupied the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, completing a process previously begun on December 29, 1890. Confronting the United States government with little more than a few guns and meager supplies, the Oglalas occupying Wounded Knee instead looked to their past as a means for supporting their present cause. More than just another political movement in an era of upheaval and change, occupiers of Wounded Knee drew on an established history of abuse by the United States government dating back one hundred years plus, in conjunction with an oral tradition stretching back to the creation of the Lakota tribe, to provide support and legitimacy for their struggle. Parallels between those massacred at Wounded Knee in 1890 and the historical and memorial motivations of those occupying the same location in 1973 bound the two events together in a perennial bond. Much like the Ghost Dancers of 1890, the Oglala protestors of 1973 sought a change in their current circumstance, and to accomplish this change they looked to the historical and the memorial to provide viable avenues of change and redress, avenues born in the immediate aftermath of the 1890 massacre, and now resurgent once again.

Historian David Lowenthal speaks of the ultimately futile nature in attempting to recreate the past in its entirety. Stating, "It is impossible to recover or recount more than a tiny fraction of what has taken place, and no historical account ever corresponds precisely with any actual past." While the past remains irrecoverable, the historical methodology allows historians to paint sections of a larger historical portrait that, while infinitely unfinished, nonetheless allows for a better understanding of what has preceded the present. While political histories of the Wounded Knee occupation have emphasized the role of the American Indian Movement, or the era in which the occupation occurred, such histories are only portions of their larger historical picture. To focus on the political alone overlooks deeper root causes capable of texturing historians understanding of the event. Throughout the occupation, physical and symbolic moments arise that demonstrate the position of power history and memory occupied amongst the Oglalas. Approaching the siege at Wounded Knee from a perspective less concerned with the political machinations of AIM, or the larger influence of the Civil Rights movement, this history instead aims to understand the deeper motivating factors beyond those that occupied Wounded Knee, to the extent of risking their very lives. Ultimately, the Oglala Lakota at Wounded Knee drew on aspects of traditional Lakota spirituality as well as an established history of the United States abuse of relations with the Oglala as a means of justifying the occupation at Wounded Knee. The Lakota structured their occupation in such a way as to draw on Lakota spirituality to not only legitimize their struggle, but also to assert a new sovereign identity based on interpretations of Lakota history and memorial tradition.

Summarizing the chronology of the Wounded Knee occupation, George Pierre Castile condenses the entire conflict into the following:

A group of about two hundred, led by AM, occupied and fortified the hamlet. They were quickly ringed by federal marshals and FBI agents. Negotiations were called for, demands kept shifting, and several agreements were aborted. Desultory gunfire was exchanged, but no frontal confrontation ever occurred. In May an agreement was finally reached: the occupation would end and those under indictment would submit to arrest. In return, the government would look into charges made against the Pine Ridge tribal government, and white House officials would meet with "traditional chiefs" to discuss the 1868 Sioux treaty. The occupation ended on May 8, and the treaty discussion took place on May 17.

Although demonstrating the relative simplicity of the chronological events surrounding the Wounded Knee occupation, Castile's assumption that AIM acted as the leader of the protestors demonstrates a misinterpretation of some sources. Overall, though, the Wounded Knee occupation did not devolve into convolution. Oglala protestors occupied the town of

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3 Ibid., 129.
Wounded Knee and held out for 73 days against the federal government.

However, the event takes on greater significance when analyzed through the perspective of Oglala Lakota protestors inside Wounded Knee. Complexity, rather, lies in the identity created inside Wounded Knee, an identity distinctly Lakota in origin and designed as a rallying point for both Oglala Lakotas tired of their current situation, as well as other Native American activists. This creation of a new identity, its manifestations, and its expressions, offers insight into the significance of Wounded Knee transcendent of a strict chronology, and vested rather in increasingly amorphous concepts and interpretations.

While the Lakota protestors situated the legitimization of their conflict within historical and memorial concepts, their reason for doing so reflected more the economic reality that existed on the Pine Ridge reservation during the early 1970s. Alcoholism, difficult employment situations, and an overall dearth of federal funding helped create a severe economic shortage. Just over 36% of the income earned by all Pine Ridge residents for the 1973 fiscal year came from government assistance programs.4 Compounding this reliance on government aid, alcoholism ran rampant, with over 85% of Pine Ridge arrests involving the use of alcohol. However, the Indian Health Service Unit charged with providing medical aid did not have appropriate resources to care for alcoholics. Instead, alcoholics traveled to a state program in Wyoming, although Jayme Longbrake, administrative officer at the service hospital, testified at the Wounded Knee Hearings in June 1973 that the Wyoming program did not help rehabilitate alcoholics in his professional opinion.5 While government support did flow into the reservation, its exact usage remained largely unknown. Charlie Red Cloud, grandson of the Lakota chief Red Cloud, testified, "There is a lot of money that comes into the reservation in the name of the people, but nobody knows where the money goes and the people are poorer than ever."6 The situation on Pine Ridge remained bleak to say the least. High reliance on the government for meager assistance, a lack of quality of health programs to deal with alcoholism, and the misappropriation of what little money did come into Pine Ridge created a situation far removed from the past might of the Lakota nation. To rectify their current predicament, the Oglala Lakota on the Pine Ridge reservation only had to look back to their history and memory to see a time exactly opposite of their contemporary life.

For Oglala Lakota protestors, the usage of history and memory in the assertion of a new identity reflected hardly novel beliefs. In Lakota culture, oral tradition conveyed all of Lakota history from one generation to the next.7 Melding the historical and memorial into a single auditory construct offered not only a recollection of the past, but also promoted the creation of a collective identity capable of easily spreading through Lakota communities. Ties dating back to a common origin and common kinship bound all Lakota's together under a shared cultural banner.8 Responsibility for passing on this shared culture fell to elderly storytellers, considered sacred thanks to their prestigious societal standing and role.9 As elders, these sacred storytellers represented a physical connection between the past and the present through their old age. Establishing a cycle whereby older generations passed on stories to the newer generations, historical and memorial concepts, though ever shifting, guaranteed a common bond amongst all people of the Lakota nation. The significant role of history and memory, compiled together through oral tradition, as a means of creating a collective identity, directly translated into the way protestors at Wounded Knee structured their own identity to draw on these past values and connections.

With oral tradition providing the crux upon which Lakota identity rested, the loss of such a custom prior to 1973 caused a significant cultural crisis. Leonard Crow Dog, a medicine man throughout the Wounded Knee occupation, describes how many of the Oglala Lakota around him knew nothing of traditional ceremonies of beliefs. Of their predicament, he says, "They were Indians, but they had lived all their lives in the white man's big cities or they came from tribes where the missionaries had destroyed their old religion."10 With oral tradition forming the basic means of communicating a collective identity, the

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5 Ibid., 62-63.
6 Ibid., 127
lack of such tradition among Lakota growing up in an increasingly assimilationist era caused a serious lack of traditional native identity. The notion that to be a true Lakota one had to be a full blood Lakota reflected this disdain towards natives conforming to white culture. Perceived as willing subordinates to whites' subversive intentions, half-blooded Lakotas physically embodied the consequences of starving from traditional belief and practice, and only reinforced the need for a new identity based in Lakota ritual. An absence of old Lakota tradition thus prompted the need for a new identity returning to these forgotten or disdained roots.

Into this environment devoid of Lakota tradition stepped the American Indian Movement (AIM) to attempt to revive lost ritual for use in the creation of a contemporary identity. Originally founded in Minneapolis in 1968 to monitor against police harassment of Native Americans, the American Indian Movement gradually evolved into an organization actively seeking the reclamation of native identity within an urbanized setting. What AIM accomplished in activism, however, they lacked in viable connections to Native American culture and spirituality radiating outward from reservations. Following the murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder, an Oglala Lakota, and the subsequent release of his murderers without bail, members from the Pine Ridge reservation sought out AIM in the hopes of achieving a fair and full investigation into the case. However, the relationship developing between those on the Pine Ridge reservation and AIM proved to be mutually reinforcing. Whereas AIM offered a spark of activism, they lacked guidance by the tribal elders needed to legitimize their struggle. In the words of Mary Crow Dog, the joining of traditional Oglalas and AIM "was like flint striking flint, lighting a spark which grew into a flame at which we could warm ourselves after a long, long winter." Promising a new hope, and a new identity, the joining of Oglala traditionalists and AIM melded together the strengths that each group had previously held separately, but now held in unison.

The greatest political product resulting from the conjunction of AIM and Oglala traditionalists lay in the symbolic voice it returned to elders. Following the investigation into Raymond Yellow Thunder's death, elders living on the Pine Ridge reservation saw a rebirth in Native Americans uncompromising in their stance against white oppression, whether it be in the form of abusive ranchers, or an apathetic government. As elders began to speak out against injustices committed against the Oglala Lakota, a feeling of rebirth and revitalization spread. Severt Young Bear, a district chairman from the town of Porcupine inside Pine Ridge, spoke of how the voice given to elders brought about a feeling of imminent change, and demonstrated the revitalization of traditional Lakota culture. Providing the push necessary to urge traditional Lakotas to stand up to not only the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) but also a corrupt tribal administration with an assimilationist bent, Lakota traditionalists found their voice once again and now sought to use it in bettering their nation.

For many traditional Oglalas’, tribal chairman Dick Wilson epitomized everything immoral with assimilationist policies and the loss of traditional native identity. However, accusations of nepotism leveled against Wilson did not denote a significant change in Oglala politics. In fact, the impeachment of Dick Wilson, which played a key role in the eventual occupation of Wounded Knee, carried on an established habit of accusing new tribal chairmen of corruption and wrongdoing. What set the attempted impeachment of Wilson apart from the established trend, however, lay in his mixed-blood roots. Prejudice against Wilson because of his heritage found legitimacy in the belief among traditional Oglalas that, against white pressure to assimilate, only the traditional Oglalas had successfully held out. Within Lakota culture, the role of leader or chief lay in the ability to prove oneself as the most able leader, fully committed to the betterment of the tribe. The role of a mixed-blood chairman, with the associated perception of willingly cooperating with the government and white ranchers, did not indicate the best candidate for tribal leadership. Tenets of traditional governance, which had allowed the Lakota nation to rise to prominence in the first place, reiterated the power of Lakota history and tradition.

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13 Ibid.
15 Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*, 76.
16 Robert Anderson et al., eds., *Voices from Wounded Knee 1973 in the Words of the Participants* (Rooseveltown: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), 13.
17 Ibid., 14.
18 Castille, *To Show Heart*, 131.
as a legitimizing force behind the protests of Oglala activists in 1972 and 1973. Setting up a strict dichotomy between the assimilationist sentiment of Wilson and their own values rooted in Lakota tradition, Oglala activists on Pine Ridge saw the ousting of Wilson as necessary to both improving their immediate physical circumstances, as well as returning to a value system reflective of historic Lakota prominence.

To accomplish their goal of removing Wilson and returning to traditional Lakota values, Oglalas came together, through the aid of AIM, to form the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO). Listing over 600 adult members around the time of the Wounded Knee occupation, OSCRO formed as an organization intent on impeaching Dick Wilson, and reclaiming aspects of sovereignty and self-determination. Moving beyond the misuse of funds under the Wilson administration, OSCRO came to symbolize a reassertion of traditional tribal identity. Grounded in a desire for Lakota self-rule, the physical composition of OSCRO's leaders demonstrated a commitment to Lakota belief existent only in memory by 1973. Supported by a majority of traditional chiefs and medicine men, the legitimization of OSCRO as an organization fighting for a new Lakota identity, based on distinctly traditional ideals, reflected historic ties between religious belief and political action. Demonstrative of an ideal common in Lakota custom, political action gained resonance if it tapped into spiritual belief. Support from those members of Oglala society representative of past political and spiritual practices therefore, translated into OSCRO's ability to present itself as the legitimate heir to the Lakota nation.

The days immediately prior to, and at the very start of the Wounded Knee occupation witnessed the birth of a new Oglala Lakota nation conceived in concepts of memory and history. The impeachment process of Dick Wilson, that had begun in October of 1972 and ended on February 23, 1973 with Wilson retaining his position, led many Lakotas opposed to Wilson's rule to meet at Calico Hall, north of Pine Ridge village, to mull over available options for OSCRO. The meeting on the night of February 27 however, proved quite different from past meetings. Over 300 people crammed the hall, with only Denis Banks and Russell Means representing AIM at the historic meeting. Beyond simply protesting against Wilson’s rule, those in the hall, throughout the night, asserted their desire for a new identity, freed from recent injustice and vested in Lakota tradition. Chief Fools Crow, a traditional Oglala chief, decided the course of action when he told listeners, in Lakota, "Go to Wounded Knee. There you will be protected." Conscious of the connotation associated with the 1890 massacre, Fools Crow and others like him saw Wounded Knee as the optimal location for situating a protest so grounded in Lakota tradition and history. Restating the common conviction among Oglala protestors that the spirits of Wounded Knee would provide guidance and protection to occupiers clearly demonstrated the degree to which spiritual belief influenced Oglala activists. The occupation offered a locale where the Oglala's drew on historical and memorial concepts to assert a new identity, capable as both a force for unification and legitimization.

The great Lakota medicine man, Black Elk, long passed before the occupation of Wounded Knee, recalled a time in his youth when he had thought of the current Lakota condition by saying:

I thought about my vision and that my people should have a place in this earth where they would be happy every day and that their nation might live, but they had gone one on the wrong road and they had gone into poverty but they would be brought back into the hoop.

Returning to the hoop reflected Lakota belief in the eternal cycle of all things, and Black Elk’s interpretation reflected a belief in not only the cyclical nature and progression of time, but also the possibility of the Lakota returning to the hoop, and in doing so returning to their past status as a great and powerful Native American nation. By physically returning to Wounded Knee on the night of February 27, Oglala activists sought to return to this sacred hoop, and start the cycle anew. In 1890, Chief Big Foot and his band had been travelling in the opposite direction, heading to Pine Ridge to surrender to federal authorities. Now, Oglala protestors completed
the cycle by physically returning to Wounded Knee, traveling in the opposite direction, creating a hoop 83 years in the making. In the words of Leonard Crow Dog, "Here we come going the other way. We're those Indian people, we're them, we're back, and we can't go any further. Wounded Knee is a place where we can't go any further." The symbolic return to Wounded Knee now complete, the Oglala activists occupied the town and within the provided space, constructed a distinct identity reflecting their interpretation of the past and a synthesis of their historical and memorial perspectives.

Necessity dictates understanding the reasons behind why the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 represented such a pivotal moment in Lakota history, and furthermore, how such an event came to exemplify Oglala Lakotas spiritual justification for the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973. Shaped by both external and internal interpretations of the event, Lakota protestors viewed the Wounded Knee massacre as the ultimate symbol of white oppression against Native Americans in general, and the Lakota in particular. One Wounded Knee occupant by the name of Rachel Hollow Horn justified her reason for staying in the town by calling the Wounded Knee massacre an unhealed wound. The notion that 83 years later the Wounded Knee massacre still served as a source of pain reflects both the significance of the event, and the ability of the Lakota to pass down such anguish from generation to generation. Reiterating Lakota interpretation of the event, Wounded Knee represented more than just another massacre in a string of massacred chronicling the defeat of Native Americans throughout the United States. Rather, Wounded Knee represented the moment at which white desire to civilize and correspondingly strip Native Americans of their identity came to a culmination in a brutal massacre symbolic of both a physical and spiritual loss.

Reflecting themes present in the influential Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee, understanding the Wounded Knee massacre centered on its status as a symbol of systematic oppression of Lakota culture at the hands of whites. Interpretation of the Wounded Knee massacre led Oglala protestors to view the site as a spiritual space, filled with the ghosts of their ancestors mowed down in the exact same location, and symbolic of the United States oppression of Lakota culture through brutal force. In the words of Leonard Crow Dog, "Wounded Knee was our most sacred site. To be standing up there would be the greatest thing we could do." Once at Wounded Knee, Leonard Crow Dog went on to state, "I heard the voices of the long-dead ghost dancers crying out to us...They had been waiting for us for a long time. They had known we were coming." To Crow Dog, and others like him, the ancestors killed at Wounded Knee knew of the current protestors' eventual return, and the ancestors exhibited their support by encompassing the space around Wounded Knee with their spiritual presence. To Oglala protestors, the Wounded Knee occupation embodied the near eradication of the Lakota culture by the United States. However, despite the U.S governments' best efforts, the spirits of those massacred at Wounded Knee in 1973 survived as ghosts, biding their time until their Lakota heirs returned and reclaimed the sacred site in the name of Lakota tradition and history.

Whereas the occupation of Wounded Knee predicated the spiritual legitimization of the protestors struggle on the memory of the Wounded Knee massacre, the establishment of the Independent Oglala Nation (ION) on March 11, 1973 based its sovereignty off the history of relations between the United States and the Lakota nation. For Oglala protestors inside Wounded Knee, as well as supporters abroad, the declaration of an independent nation confirmed their desire to separate from white culture and create an identity rooted in their own past rituals and history. Grace Black Elk, and similar protestors, believed that the Great Spirit had provided the traditional form of tribal government, and by returning to these roots, they returned to their rightful relationship with their spiritual creator. To Russell Means the declaration of an Independent Oglala Nation offered the only viable possibility in ensuring the survival of the Lakota people, both in the present and for future generations alike. Thus, the declaration of the Independent Oglala Nation combined themes common in Lakota culture, particularly the aforementioned synthesis of both memorial and
historical belief, as a means for qualifying the existence of the Oglala Lakota. That the justification for an independent nation pointed to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 reveals the complex processes involved in not only the creation of a new Lakota identity, but also Oglala protestors interpretation of past events and the significance assigned to such events.

The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 occupied an important position within Lakota memory and history, because it represented the last instance in which the United States and the Lakota dealt with each other as separate but equal nations. Within the memory of Lakota protestors, the Treaty of 1868 offered meaning pertinent to their current situation, and thus their interpretation of the document reflected more their contemporary relationship to the United States government, and less the reality of the treaty. In actuality, the Treaty of 1868 established the Great Sioux Reservation, designed solely for Lakota habitation and away from United States influence. However, Lakota protestors at Wounded Knee fixated on the degree of self-determination afforded by the treaty, and less on the large reservation created in return. In addition, the Treaty of 1868 established the United States and the Lakota as equal rivals, contending for the Great Plains, and this notion of equality in status but separate in nationality had key implications in its subsequent utilization by protestors in 1973. To occupants of Wounded Knee, the Treaty of 1868 provided a legal framework in which to situate their struggle, but their interpretation of the treaty reflected more their own desire for sovereignty, and less their understanding of what the treaty actually dictated.

The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, in the minds of Oglala protestors inside Wounded Knee, epitomized Lakota self-determination and the Lakota nation’s past status as a great Native American power, capable of political relations with the United States on relatively equal ground. The 1868 Treaty represented more than just the delineation of a distinctly Lakota space, it symbolized the sacred basis of legal Lakota sovereignty. Seeking to establish a separate identity, the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty legitimizd Oglala protestors’ current struggle against the United States government. Ellen Moves Camp, one of the key female protestors inside Wounded Knee stated, “This place [Wounded Knee] has always been a nation, it was always recognized as a nation, and you go back into the 1868 Treaty, it’s all there.” To Moves Camp and other Lakota protestors, the declaration of an independent Oglala nation separate from the United States did not break any laws, but rather fulfilled historic agreements. Interpreting the 1868 Treaty as legitimatizing their claims to sovereignty, as well as symbolizing lost equality with the United States, Lakota's throughout Pine Ridge revived long dormant nationalist sentiment.

Throughout the Wounded Knee occupation the construction of a distinct identity, rooted in the past and directed towards the future, occurred not only in symbols capable of conveying culturally relevant meanings to Lakota supporters, but also in the interpretation of occurrences around the town of Wounded Knee itself, with a particular case in point being that of ghosts. Reverend John Adams, of the National Council of Churches, recalled a conversation he had with one of the government officials outside of Wounded Knee. According to Adams:

> The tension on everyone was fantastic. This man told me about how one night he kept hearing cries and screams and he thought he saw Indians approaching his bunker. He shot at them but they kept coming. They finally disappeared. The Indians said, 'Those are the victims of Wounded Knee- they're all around here.'

The supposed interaction of both government forces and Oglala protestors with ghosts at Wounded Knee came to signify the sanctity of the Oglala cause, and paradoxically, the illegality of the United States government involvement. Lakota tradition holds that hearing a ghost signals bad luck in the near future. Thus, the fact that government officials heard ghosts outside of Wounded Knee signified their illegal trespass against the Oglala, both those physically occupying the town and Wounded Knee, as well as

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37 Castille, To Show Heart, 135.
38 The Causes and Aftermath of the Wounded Knee Takeover, 338-43.
41 Ibid., 200.
42 Anderson, Voices from Wounded Knee, 57.
44 Anderson, Voices from Wounded Knee, 188.
45 Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 104.
those who had died at the hands of government officials in 1890. However, as Leonard Crow Dog mentioned before, the Lakota at Wounded Knee often felt the presence of ghosts as well. While Lakota tradition holds that bad luck accompanies hearing ghosts, tradition also views as ghosts as forebears of potential events to come. While government officials encountering of ghosts demonstrated their illegal action against the spiritual rights of the Lakota, the Lakotas interaction with the spirits foretold a return to the great hoop. By feeling the presence of their ancestors around them, the interpretation among the Lakota protesters held that the spiritual given legitimacy of their cause found support in long lost ancestors. The interpretation of events such as ghostly encounters only further reinforces the role Lakota tradition played in demonstrating the legitimacy of their current occupation, while simultaneously discrediting the United States government involvement in an issue outside of their control, if predicated upon the legality of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868.

One of the multitudes of ways in which Oglalas’ expressed their newfound, yet evolving identity, beyond their interpretation of ancestral spirit encounters, existed in the popularity of sweat lodges among the protestors. Unlike the Sundance or the Ghost Dance, the United States never viewed the sweat lodge as symbolically defiant to their assimilationist stance on Native American culture. Within Lakota culture, the sweat lodge purifies the body, and in return, the body receives strength. Mary Crow Dog and other protestors inside Wounded Knee recall the popularity of the sweat lodge, particularly as a means for providing strength to warriors undertaking the actual fighting against U.S. government forces. Wallace Black Elk, one of the medicine men present during the Wounded Knee occupation, captured the significance of the sweat lodge, by prophesying of an upcoming purification in which only Native Americans survive, while whites' preoccupation with wealth, particularly gold, brings about their owndownfall. Whether or not Black Elk actually believed in a physical doomsday, the prominent societal role Black Elk occupied, in conjunction with his beliefs on the importance of purification, reinforce the significant cultural standing given to the sweat lodge. Rooted in Lakota tradition, the interpretation of the sweat lodge's meaning as offering an avenue towards achieving purity sanctioned by the Great Spirit reinforced the spiritual legitimacy of those occupying Wounded Knee.

Facilitated by the strength and purity given to protestors from the sweat lodge, many Oglalas saw the occupation as enabling a return of the long extinct Lakota warrior. During the meetings at Calico Hall, Gladys Bissonette pleaded with those around her, saying, "For many years we have not fought any kind of war, we have not fought any kind of battle, and we have forgotten how to fight." Rallying men to fight for the ION called upon memorial notions of long lost warriors, and they values they so embodied. By returning to Wounded Knee, protestors consciously chose to create an identity that reflected their interpretation of Lakota warriors, and to utilize this identity as one of the many ways in which Oglalas at Wounded Knee presented their struggle as grounded in the past. Stan Holder, head of the Wounded Knee security and a Vietnam veteran, stated: "Indian warrior societies were born out of the community life that the Indian existed in. When the nation he belonged to needed defense the warrior societies vowed to do this fighting. That's basically the same way that our army is set up." Remembering historic warrior societies, and their role as defenders of the Lakota nation, signified the important role contemporary warriors defined for themselves as men ensuring not only the physical survival of Wounded Knee occupants, but also the survival of traditional Lakota culture. Reclaiming the warrior status of old indicated the Oglala protestors' conscious linkage between their current situation inside Wounded Knee and the great warrior societies of a past Lakota nation, tied together through a mutual commitment to traditional Lakota belief.

The association between Lakota warriors of the past and the men of Wounded Knee evoked specific gender connotations that translated into the construction of gender identity for woman protestors as well. During the occupation, Mary Crow Dog recalled how lack of publicity for woman failed to correlate with their actual role within Wounded Knee. In reality, the role woman played reflected historic Lakota notions of separate yet equal roles for males and females. The role of the women both at Wounded Knee, and within broader Lakota tradition,
fell to being industrious.\textsuperscript{54} Whereas the social role of men dictated that they protect the nation and safeguard its survival through hunting and warfare, woman played the equally important yet less visible role of ensuring all the inner workings of Lakota society functioned as smoothly as possible. A woman present at Wounded Knee by the name of Kathy recalled how woman cooked, cleaned, and worked as medics.\textsuperscript{55} In doing so, women like Kathy fulfilled gender specific roles that, while not as visible as the male warriors, nonetheless ensured the continued existence of the Wounded Knee community. Returning to traditional Lakota gender roles gave the actions of women inside Wounded Knee amplified importance, because by consciously taking on roles similar to those that Lakota woman had fulfilled throughout their history, the women of Wounded Knee asserted their desire to return to a society where past tradition delineated social roles and expectations.

Enveloping all protestors, no symbol better validates the critical role history and memory played in the creation of a new Oglala identity during the Wounded Knee occupation, than the revival of the Ghost Dance. Russell Means captured the significance in reviving the Ghost Dance by stating:

\begin{quote}
The white man says that the 1890 massacre was the end of the wars with the Indian, that it was the end of the Indian, the end of the Ghost Dance. Yet here we are at war, we're still Indians, and we're Ghost Dancing again. And the spirits of Big Foot and his people are all around us.\textsuperscript{56}
\end{quote}

Reiterating the broken hoop metaphor, the renewal of the Ghost Dance signified to Oglala protestors that, despite attempts by the United States government to oppress and replace their ancient culture, the Oglala survived and now reclaimed the Ghost Dance from its suppressed position within the annals of American history. The Ghost Dance gave hope to those inside Wounded Knee, and the source of this hope sprung from the memorial significance and spiritual sacredness connecting the Ghost Dance of 1890 to the Ghost Dance of 1973.\textsuperscript{57} Understanding how Oglala Lakota’s at Wounded Knee interpreted the Ghost Dance and the meanings imbued to the Ghost Dance since its suppression in 1890 further demonstrate how the creation of a traditionally rooted Lakota identity for protestors found resonance in memorial and historical interpretations.

Shortly after the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890, Lakota elders recorded their views on traditional Lakota belief and ritual. One man by the name of Short Bull stated of the Ghost Dance, "This was our religion. I taught peace for all mankind."\textsuperscript{58} Short Bull goes on to state that whites waged war against the Lakota to prevent them from practicing their religion, even one rooted in peace such as the Ghost Dance. To Lakota Ghost Dancers in 1973 however, the Ghost Dance took on a meaning more relevant to the goals of their own time. To Leonard Crow Dog and others, the message espoused by the Ghost Dance, promising the survival of Native Americans and the eventual triumph of their culture, further legitimized Wounded Knee occupiers' similar struggle to create a superior and separate identity from that of white Americans. Although the peaceful nature of the Ghost Dance may have been an aspect of those partaking in the ritual, more likely the Ghost Dance symbolized the physical reclamation of their past, particularly with regards towards Native American religion. Leonard Crow Dog stated, "When they killed our people here so long ago, it was said that the nation’s hoop was broken. We’ll make the sacred hoop whole again."\textsuperscript{59} By recreating the Ghost Dance once again, it symbolized, to Crow Dog and others, that despite the United States government's best attempts to break their spiritual hoop, and thus finalize their political and religious victory over Native Americans, the United States ultimately failed. Espousing a spiritual belief and ritual previously suppressed but never extinguished, Oglala protestors at Wounded Knee, by participating in a revived Ghost Dance, demonstrated the survival of Lakota culture from the past into the present day.

Negotiations between the United States and the Independent Oglala Nation continued this broader theme of Lakota memory interwoven with the historic relationship between the Lakota and the United States. During the Wounded Knee trials, following the occupation, Gladys Bissonette testified, "The Indians are guided by the Great Spirit and our sacred pipe,"\textsuperscript{60} and while the Lakotas taking part in negotiations with the United States could not manifest the Great Spirit, they brought the next closest option: the sacred pipe. George Sword, a Lakota chief interviewed in 1896, spoke of how the smoke from a sacred pipe

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\textsuperscript{54} Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 114.
\textsuperscript{55} Anderson, Voices from Wounded Knee, 201.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 89.
\textsuperscript{57} Sayer, Ghost Dancing the Law, 20.
\textsuperscript{58} Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 141.
\textsuperscript{59} Crow Dog, Crow Dog, 126.
\textsuperscript{60} Sayer, Ghost Dancing and Ritual, 82.
\end{quote}
communicated with the Great Spirit, and that by smoking the pipe one established not only a friendly repertoire with the Great Spirit, but also asked for guidance.\textsuperscript{61} More importantly though, by smoking the pipe one promised to tell the truth, because the pipe acted as a sacred object directly linked to the all-encompassing Great Spirit.\textsuperscript{62} These themes of traditional sacredness and truth directly translated into the manner in which Oglalas' at Wounded Knee organized their negotiation with the United States and framed their own goals. Reliance on the spiritual as a guiding force behind their political decisions again reflected the significant role Lakota tradition played in how Oglala protestors shaped not only their new identity, but also their interaction with outside forces, particularly the United States government.

Initial negotiations between the United States and the ION took place over the first few days in April. As the negotiations wrapped up all involved smoked the sacred pipe, where Gladys Bissonette, praying in Lakota, said, "We smoke the sacred pipe here with our white brothers, and we hope this will bring peace. Because in the past there were a lot of violations of the sacred treaties and honors. This is real. We are not playing here.\textsuperscript{63}" Emphasizing the sacredness of the event and the understanding that smoking the peace pipe held both parties accountable to the Great Spirit, through their mutual commitment to honesty and good actions, Gladys linked the spirituality of the sacred pipe to the history of Lakota relations with the United States. By calling out the United States for their history of broken promises, the peace pipe at Wounded Knee now symbolized a renewed connection between this history of deceit and the hope for new honesty on the part of the United States. In this way, the Oglala Lakota at Wounded Knee extended the influence tradition held during the occupation to the very manner in which they negotiated with the United States. By returning to past methods of negotiation, and promoting a long-established interpretation of the sacred pipe, the Oglala Lakota at Wounded Knee positioned themselves as heirs to Lakota tradition and culture, and thus rightful in their current protest against the United States.

Whereas the sacred peace pipe symbolized a connection to the Great Spirit for the Oglala Lakota at Wounded Knee, the surrounding physical landscape signified their eternal connection to Mother Earth. Wallace Black Elk encapsulated the significance of the land by stating, "We're going back to the beginning of time. It is better to go back and honor our Grandfather, honor our sacred Mother Earth."\textsuperscript{64} The spiritual connection to the very earth upon which protestors situated their struggle took on spiritual properties designed to reinforce Lakota connection to the land, a universal bond incapable of breaking under U.S. governmental pressure. Lakota spiritual belief holds that the Lakota originated from beneath the Black Hills, and that ancestors of the Lakota still live beneath the area to this very day.\textsuperscript{65} Lakota protestors believed that they had a physical and spiritual connection to the land dating back to their very origin as a people. It serves as no coincidence that Lakota tradition involving the Sun Dance, the most sacred of all Lakota traditions, involved painting people and sacred objects red, a reiteration of their belief in the ability of the surrounding physical environment, such as the red earth beneath them, to provide life.\textsuperscript{66} The significance of the land at Wounded Knee came to represent more than just the physical arena in which their struggle played out; the land came to symbolize their very existence, dating back to the origin of the Lakota people, a physical tie to the land that remained forever unbroken.

Woody Kipp, one of the protestors inside Wounded Knee during the siege, summarized the importance of the fight by saying, "It was a rebellion by those who had been on this land for millennia, eighteen to sixty thousand years. And we say this: You may be in physical control of the land, white man, but spiritually we are still landlords."\textsuperscript{67} The protestors at Wounded Knee reflected Kipp's belief that while the United States held, in their opinion, dubious legal claim to the land on which the occupation occurred, the Lakota had forged a spiritual bond with the land legitimized through thousands of years living in North America. Land took on greater symbolism than merely the physical space utilized by the protestors. Two Vietnam veterans at Wounded Knee best captured the spiritual connection the occupiers felt they had established with the land, and the power of this connection to bring about positive change. Bob spoke of the internal change that occurred by returning to the land as equivalent to a moral and mental cleansing. Tiger spoke of the spirit that lived in the land, a value incapable of

\textsuperscript{61} Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 82.
\textsuperscript{62} DeMaille, The Sixth Grandfather, 145.
\textsuperscript{63} Anderson, Voices from Wounded Knee, 147.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 110.
\textsuperscript{65} Young, Quest for Harmony, 189.
\textsuperscript{66} Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 187-90.
\textsuperscript{67} Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, eds., American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997): 208.
purchase or by those who do not value the Native American connection with the land. In this sense then the land around Wounded Knee provided an aspect of spiritual support, sustaining those inside the town to push for an improvement in conditions for the Oglala. With a rich history tied to the land, in conjunction with an oral tradition that established the land as the birth of the Oglala, land symbolized the very soul of the Oglala people. Beyond a political protest, the land around Wounded Knee manifested Lakota spirituality and Lakota tradition, thus reinforcing those protestors seeking a return to the tradition of the past so rooted in the landscape.

Not satisfied with creating an identity for themselves, the Oglala protestors at Wounded Knee emphasized and reinforced their larger desire to separate from the dominant white culture of the United States. Vine Deloria Jr. captured the desire of not only the Lakota, but nearly all Native Americans, by stating, "What we need is a cultural leave-us-alone agreement, in spirit and in fact." Towards this end, Lakota protestors again looked to their history of relations with the United States to qualify white identity, and the ideological chasm separating white belief from those of Native Americans. Conceptualization of the white man's values directly contradicted those of the Lakota. Black Elk talks of the interrelationship between the Lakota, land animals, animals of the air, and the prosperity that stemmed from this bond. However, with the arrival of the white man, Black Elk speaks on the eradication of the Lakota's past relationship with the animals, and the further extinction of Native American spirituality. The white man thus manifested notions of greed and corruption for their own selfish sake. Traditional Lakota chiefs during the 1890s and early 1900s spoke of the happiness and prosperity that had existed amongst the Lakota prior to the arrival of the white man. With their arrival however, whites, in the view of the Lakota chiefs, went about destroying the physical land that provided sustenance, and went further by attempting to suppress Native American spirituality for the promulgation of their own Christian ideals. In Lakota memory then, the white man embodied notions of evil, greed, and destruction. The added inability of whites to comprehend Native American spirituality further evidenced their concern with material wealth over all else.

Emphasis by the Oglala's on the constructing a white identity predicated on material desire and apathy, particular towards nature, continued at Wounded Knee. Mary Crow Dog summarized her understanding of whites by saying "There was little that was sacred to them. They had no strong beliefs of their own, except a faith in naked power, numbers and paragraphs." Whereas protestors at Wounded Knee reinforced their communal bonds through reviving traditional Lakota spiritual ceremonies, white government forces, in the eyes of the Oglala protestors, demonstrated a sole commitment to suppressing the protestors and little else. Unrestrained individualism manifested through material wealth existed in direct contradiction to the Native American protestors inside Wounded Knee so focused on caring for one another. Within Wounded Knee, Stan Holder stated of the surrounding American forces:

They just want to wage wars on a mass scale and keep identity totally out of it... And they're not only killing or wounding human beings but they're wounding the animal life. They just have no personal feeling at all. They can't see the human aspect in this fight.

The white system, embodied by U.S. government forces, symbolized everything Lakota protestors fought against in their struggle. A preoccupation with death, little regard towards nature, and the inability to allow Native American sovereignty in any form characterized Oglala Lakotas' understanding of white government forces. Reiterating the gap between the Oglala and the white government, characterizations of the government continued trends rooted in a deep memorial hatred for the white system that had taken away Lakota land and rights during the 1800s, and now sought to squash this resurgent Oglala identity. For all the utilization of history and memory as a legitimizing force for their conflict, and reclamation of the past greatness manifested by the Lakota nation, the Wounded Knee occupation came to a rather inglorious end. The death of Buddy Lamont, a Vietnam veteran and beloved Oglala, spelled the end of the protest. At Buddy's funeral, his mother recalled the last words he said to her before his

68 Anderson, Voices from Wounded Knee, 201-2.
69 Ibid., 196.
72 Walker, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 138-41.
death:

I [Agnes Lamont] asked him to go home. 'I need you at home,' I said. 'Well, mom, maybe you need me, but,' he said, 'I'm here for a good cause.' He said, 'Watch now, we're going to win. We're going to come to the top. And you're going to be happy. All the people will be happy. So in the end we will win-you remember that,' he said... And that's the last time I saw him.\textsuperscript{77}

Buddy Lamont died believing that the struggle at Wounded Knee would bring about real change for the Oglala people. However, the question remains, what change did the Wounded Knee occupation bring about? For the three years following the Wounded Knee occupation Dick Wilson unleashed a reign of terror targeted towards adversaries, many of whom either partook in or supported the occupation. Seventy of Wilson's opponents died in a multitude of inexplicable ways and the murder rate on the Pine Ridge reservation exceeded the national average by 17 times.\textsuperscript{78} In a very real sense then the Wounded Knee occupation, and by extension Buddy's death, had accomplished little of real value. The blood, toil, and sacrifice of those both inside and outside Wounded Knee in an effort to revive past tradition and reassert self-determination appeared to have fallen victim to Wilson's brutal reign.

The significance of the Wounded Knee occupation however, transcends the brutal conditions that existed on the Pine Ridge reservation immediately afterwards. Capping the end of a multiple year struggle by Native American activists, the Wounded Knee occupation, in conjunction with other Native American activism, renewed a sense of pride in Native American culture, and caused a reevaluation of what qualified American identity.\textsuperscript{79} The Wounded Knee struggle, while unsuccessful in its short-term goals, ultimately helped inspire thousands of Native Americans to reassert a new native identity rooted in history and memory. In the same sense in which the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee massacre symbolized the systematic attempt by the U.S. government to eradicate Native American culture,\textsuperscript{80} so too did the Wounded Knee occupation symbolize the final rebirth of a new native identity cloaked in memory and legitimized in history. Asserting principles of self-determination, with particular regards to the revival of traditional Lakota belief and ceremony, the protestors at Wounded Knee challenged the very dominance of white values, and in doing so demonstrated the inherent might of all Native Americans, not just the Lakota.\textsuperscript{81} Throughout the occupation, notions of memory and interpretations of history guided the protestors in both their physical actions, and the meaning they assigned to the physical and immaterial objects surrounding them. Demonstrating the power of utilizing historical interpretation and memorial revival as an avenue to challenge even the mightiest of nations, the Oglala protestors asserted a new Native American culture and identity. Completing a hoop that had begun 83 years ago in the very same location, the Oglala protestors demonstrated not only their ability to dance again, but also their ability to revive universal pride in Native American culture, history, and tradition, so long suppressed, but now liberated once more.

Bibliography


\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 232.

\textsuperscript{78} Reinhardt, \textit{Ruling Pine Ridge}, 205.

\textsuperscript{79} Smith, \textit{Like a Hurricane}, 278.


\textsuperscript{81} Sayer, \textit{Ghost Dancing the Law}, 219-20.


