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The Pulse

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British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain is often painted as foolish and naïve for his appeasement of Adolf Hitler, but the circumstances surrounding his foreign policy are essential both for understanding why Chamberlain chose to concede the Sudetenland to Germany and why it was such a large strategic and diplomatic mistake. This paper examines the context of Chamberlain's appeasement, detailing why countries might choose conciliatory diplomatic solutions, and analyzing how Chamberlain's personal beliefs and determination to avoid a repeat of World War I paved the way for another horrible global conflict.

Neville Chamberlain: Why He Appeased, and Why It Was a Failure

Jonathan Chew

Introduction

“My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time. . . . Go home and get a nice quiet sleep.”¹ When Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain made this declaration on September 20, 1938, he likely imagined that it would go down in history as a testament to the success of his policy of appeasement towards Germany. A major world leader negotiating a treaty which would prevent another catastrophic world war. What could be a better legacy than that? Little did Chamberlain know that within the next two years, Britain would be forced to declare war on Germany, he would be replaced by a prime minister who unapologetically opposed Hitler's regime, and his attempts to make peace would be discredited as foolish and naïve. In a recent survey, Chamberlain ranked next to last of all twentieth-century British prime ministers,

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which is unsurprising, given that he left office with Britain's very existence in jeopardy.² Even the word "appeasement" has become a pejorative term used to describe any foreign policy solution perceived as too weak or ineffective. Understanding the grievances of a rival nation can be important for resolving differences peacefully, and Chamberlain undeniably had incomplete knowledge of Nazi Germany's true intentions as he worked to achieve his diplomatic priorities. However, his willingness to accept increasingly detrimental demands by Adolf Hitler as well as his total mischaracterization of his adversaries' intentions weakened Britain's strategic position prior to a conflict with Germany which was likely inevitable from the beginning.

What Appeasement Meant to Neville Chamberlain

Many attempts at diplomacy have been made throughout history, but the word "appeasement" has not always carried the stigma of pacifying a tyrant like Hitler. It was not until after Neville Chamberlain that appeasement shifted from being a good, or at least politically neutral, term to one with definite negative connotations. Hans Morgenthau, a prominent twentieth-century political scientist, defined appeasement as:

[A] foreign policy that attempts to meet the threat of imperialism with methods appropriate to a policy of the status quo...It errs in transferring a policy of compromise from a political environment favourable to the preservation of the status quo, to an environment exposed to an imperialistic attack, where it does not belong. One might say that appeasement is a corrupted policy of compromise, made erroneous by mistaking a policy of imperialism for a policy of the status quo.³

After the fact, this critical definition of appeasement adequately summarizes the response to Germany's pre-World War II aggression. But for Neville Chamberlain, appeasement was simply the first sentence of Morgenthau's description: policies aimed at pacifying a would-be enemy and preventing war.

There are two widely accepted reasons why a country might opt for a foreign policy of appeasement, and both influenced Chamberlain's thinking as he took office in 1937. First, internal pressure may force a country's leader to appease.⁴ If the clear majority of a country's citizens favor peace over war, or if powerful interest groups lobby a leader to avoid conflict, a country may make diplomatic concessions rather than risk the economic and political costs of war. Second, nations are more likely to appease a foreign rival when they face several external threats, since it can be advantageous to placate one foe in order to focus resources on defeating another.⁵ As Morgenthau emphasizes, however, from a national perspective, appeasement is a risky foreign policy to maintain. Conceding territory or money to a threatening foreign power weakens one's own tactical situation significantly. Not only may appeasement strengthen an adversary's military or economy, but it may also embolden the enemy country to make bigger demands in the future. Appeasement should be viewed as a last resort, a diplomatic tactic only to be pursued when no mutually beneficial agreement can be found and when war seems unthinkable.

Although appeasement is rarely the best strategic choice, in times of crisis leaders like Neville Chamberlain may have great personal incentive to pursue diplomatic solutions, even if they are relatively unfavorable.⁶ In his book *The Prince*, Machiavelli warned that politically inept princes (leaders) who misjudge their neighbors' military capabilities risk losing their power.⁷ The inability to take a resurgent foe seriously enough or the unexpected rise of a foreign leader hurts a prince's credibility at home and paves the way for a domestic challenger to ascend to the throne. When their countries are exposed to significant external threats, leaders have little geopolitical room for maneuver and may often find that their surroundings dictate their actions.⁸ There is great motivation, therefore, for a prince to move proactively to respond to challengers, so they do not have to face the political consequences of an unexpected attack or economic depression.

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It is worth noting that appeasement is not the only way a leader might seek to prevent hazardous international conditions from adversely affecting their public image. Another way to respond proactively to international threats is balancing, a defensive tactic that aims to disincentivize other countries from carrying out acts of aggression rather than negotiating directly.⁹ Internal balancing occurs when a leader attempts to build up his country's military capabilities, while external balancing involves forming treaties and non-aggression pacts with other friendly nations. While balancing can allow a country to effectively contain a resurgent rival, it can be highly expensive, and it may be difficult for a leader to secure the necessary resources for a vigorous balancing campaign. For example, if military expansion requires raising taxes or implementing a mandatory draft, it is often a very unpopular idea and a leader may not be able to pursue his strategy.

Appeasement, by contrast, has the attraction of being inexpensive, since it may not involve taking any action at all. Passive appeasement, as it is called, occurs when a country implicitly allows an adversary to violate the terms of a treaty or to make a military advance by not conducting any concrete action against the aggressor.¹⁰ An example of passive appeasement was Britain's response to the Italian and German involvement in the Spanish Civil War; rather than send assistance to the legitimate Spanish government or denounce General Franco, Britain (under the leadership of Chamberlain) adopted a policy of neutrality.

Active appeasement, on the other hand, is when a country actively listens to its adversary's grievances and attempts to negotiate a solution to the other country's concerns.¹¹ Active appeasement typically results from a sympathy for the dissatisfied nation, and it is this form of appeasement for which Chamberlain's administration is best known. Chamberlain not only empathized with the German people after the harsh treaty of Versailles, but he also genuinely believed that peace could be maintained in Europe if and only if great effort was exerted. In his book *In Search of Peace*, Chamberlain declared,

Our policy is based upon two conceptions. The first is this: That, if you want to secure a peace which can be relied upon to last, you have got to find out what are the causes of war and remove them. You cannot do that by sitting still and waiting for something to turn up. You have got to set about it. You have got to inform yourself what are the difficulties, where are the danger spots, what are the reasons for any likely or possible disturbance of the peace; and, when you have found that out, you must exert yourself to find the remedy.¹²

While Chamberlain did not approve of Hitler's or Mussolini's governments (he objected strenuously to the Nazi police state in particular), he recognized that Britain could not remove the dictators and therefore believed his country should try to live at peace with Italy and Germany in their current states.

The Background to Chamberlain's Foreign Policy

Indeed, when Hitler first came to power, there was reason for concern but not for panic, so Chamberlain's willingness to negotiate was not as easy to discredit then as it is now. In the 1930s, much about Hitler was simply unknown; British leaders found themselves questioning his political views, his foreign policy goals, and his temperament. Although Hitler quickly began to censor his political opponents and restrict freedom of the press, he had not yet carried out his blitzkrieg invasions, implemented his anti-Semitic policies, or created his horrific concentration camps. Like Mussolini, Hitler was perceived as having more bravado than substance, and when he first ascended to power, he did not even show hostility towards Britain. Since the British would not have much reason to oppose German expansion in Eastern Europe, Hitler did not perceive them as necessary enemies, and in the early 1930s, Hitler repeatedly told British journalists about his hope that "the two great Germanic nations" could work together.¹³

Despite Hitler's beguiling rhetoric, however, there were some early warning signs about his true intentions. On October 14, 1933, Germany pulled out of the League of Nations and the World

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Disarmament Conference, moves that the French and British governments failed to condemn.¹⁴ Hitler did not officially announce German rearmament until March of 1935, but his military buildup was not a secret. In the first two years of his regime, Hitler achieved through unilateral action what his predecessors had unsuccessfully attempted to do through negotiating with other European countries. Hitler's military campaign proved to be invaluable for gaining his later demands; with a new and revived German military, the Führer could threaten to use force as a means of releasing Germany from the rest of the Versailles Treaty.

In fairness to Chamberlain, the rising British politician singled Germany out as the “enemy to watch” as early as 1934.¹⁵ However, Chamberlain worried that war with Germany would be highly costly to Britain—that it would likely come at the price of sustaining the expansive British empire, Britain's role as a world power, and his Conservative Party's electoral majority. When he became prime minister, Chamberlain believed that his party's future success depended on how effective his economic policies were, and he therefore demanded that “defence spending [be] confined to priorities, [be] within manageable limits, and....above all [be] rendered acceptable to a highly sensitive public opinion.”¹⁶ Chamberlain's political sense was astute—in the latter half of the 1930s, the Conservatives realized that their best strategy for remaining in power was winning the votes of working class English citizens. These voters typically opposed war and supported diplomatic solutions such as collective security and involvement in the League of Nations. In 1935, 11 million voters, or 38 percent of Britain's adult population, participated in the so-called peace ballot, giving Chamberlain even more grounds for assuming appeasement was a political winner.¹⁷ Chamberlain was an appeaser because his goal was to keep Britain secure without spending large amounts of money; he did not appease Hitler to free up resources for combatting another foreign adversary but rather to neutralize Britain's most dangerous international threat.

Why Chamberlain Appeased

Today, few historians believe Chamberlain's efforts to appease Germany were the results of inexperience or gullibility, but rather recognize Chamberlain's foreign policy as being influenced by his

own presuppositions. Chamberlain generally preferred talking with potential enemies, such as Japan and Germany, to building relations with allies such as the United States, France, and the Soviet Union.¹⁸ In Chamberlain's eyes, the French were politically unstable, the Russians were unreliable, and the Americans were too isolationist to care about European affairs. These were reasonable misgivings; after all, France was under the control of a far left government, Russia had recently undergone a turbulent and violent revolution, and the U.S. government repeatedly chose non-entanglement as a response to international questions, declining even to participate in the League of Nations. That being true, however, these problems were minor in comparison to those of the totalitarian states, which even Chamberlain viewed as "untrustworthy" and "difficult as they could be."¹⁹

Another reason for Chamberlain's policy of appeasement was the structural constraints Britain was under in the 1930s. In March of 1938, the British military chiefs of staff produced a report that concluded Britain could not stop Germany from taking Czechoslovakia, and on September 20, 1938, the British secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defense wrote a note arguing that time was on Britain's side—that if Chamberlain could delay the onset of war, it would give the Royal Air Force time to acquire airplanes to counter the Luftwaffe.²⁰ In addition, Chamberlain was painfully aware that if Britain was forced to declare war, very few countries could be counted on for support. In World War I, Britain's entry into the war brought Canada, New Zealand, and Australia into the conflict as well, but since 1918, the constitutional status of Britain's former colonies had changed, and Britain could no longer rely on them for military backing.²¹

To be fair, some of Chamberlain's reasons for avoiding war were self-inflicted. Britain's rearmament program moved at a snail's pace from 1934 to 1937; the air program, for example, lacked the industrial capacity even to spend all the funds allocated to it.²² The British military also systematically overestimated the strength of the German forces and underestimated its own strength in the lead-up to Germany's annexation of Czechoslovakia.

Chamberlain's concern about Hitler launching a "mad dog" attack is used as another justification for his foreign policy.²³ However, as a general, Hitler was not irrational but pragmatic: he only utilized controlled irrational behavior to frighten his opponents. In addition,

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if Hitler was as unpredictable as Chamberlain claimed, the British prime minister's decision to negotiate was even less logical. Peace was the expressed desire of the British people, but they did not support Chamberlain's policy of "peace at any price." In October of 1938, 78 percent of the British public supported war over continuing to hand over colonies to Germany, but when his foreign policy goals conflicted with popular opinion, Chamberlain simply circumvented the foreign policy office, sending personal ambassadors to carry his message of peace.²⁴ Chamberlain often referred to "private sources" or "all the information I can get" in letters to his sisters where he explained his foreign policy decisions, proving his lack of appreciation for standard foreign policy protocol.²⁵

Chamberlain's refusal to reconsider the benefits of appeasement can be explained partially by his personal worldview. For one, Chamberlain believed that socialism was an evil system, worse than Nazism, that needed to be destroyed, which perhaps clouded his judgment in determining Britain's most pressing threats. At one point Hitler reportedly stated, "The British have the same principles as I do: the first priority is the elimination of Bolshevism."²⁶ Within Britain, Chamberlain vigorously opposed what he perceived as the socialist agenda of the Labour Party, and during his time in office, he made no secret of his hatred for his political adversaries. In response to a criticism that he treated his political opposition as dirt, Chamberlain remarked, "Intellectually, with a few exceptions, they are dirt."²⁷ In many ways, Chamberlain treated foreign policy making like business negotiation; coming from a background as a successful Birmingham businessman, Chamberlain believed the best way to solve disputes was through direct, face-to-face negotiation. Chamberlain took Hitler's words at face value—he sincerely believed the German Führer was acting out of justified anger and was merely trying to secure Germany's rightful claims.

For most of his tenure as prime minister, Chamberlain could not bring himself to believe that the leader of another country would ever choose to contemplate war unless it was for the purpose of self-defense. On November 9, 1937, Chamberlain proclaimed,

[H]uman nature, which is the same all the world over, must reject the nightmare (war) with all its might and cling to the only prospect which can give happiness. And for any Government deliberately to deny to their people what must be their plainest and simplest right would be to betray their trust and to call down upon their heads the condemnation of all mankind.²⁸

This belief was core to Neville Chamberlain's foreign policy. He never abandoned appeasement even as evidence mounted that the targets of his conciliation, Hitler and Mussolini, were not interested in peace at all. Britain, according to Chamberlain, was the peace-maker of Europe, and appeasement was not simply a type of foreign policy—it was Chamberlain's mission.

How Chamberlain Appeased

In the period of time directly before World War II, Czechoslovakia was central to Chamberlain's policy of appeasement.²⁹ Following Hitler's confrontational speech at the Nuremberg party congress on September 12, 1938, and a subsequent appeal from Paris for Britain to find some way to keep Hitler from invading Czechoslovakia and thereby invoking France's alliance, Chamberlain proposed going to Hitler in Germany to talk personally with the Führer. Chamberlain's plan, which was reportedly "so unconventional and daring that it rather took [foreign secretary] Halifax's breath away," was nonetheless approved by the prime minister's cabinet, and Chamberlain proceeded to make three visits to Germany in the next two weeks.³⁰ On September 15, Hitler demanded that the Sudetenland be ceded to Germany in a meeting with Chamberlain, and when Chamberlain attempted to ask Hitler about using improved Anglo-German relations as a prelude to larger European peace, Hitler quickly responded that this must wait until the Sudeten issue was resolved.³¹

Chamberlain, while personally willing to let the Sudetenland be transferred to Germany, could not legally speak for the British government, and therefore proposed returning to London for consultation. Chamberlain's commitment to a Sudeten cession was met

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with considerable reservation by both the members of his cabinet and the French government, but he eventually succeeded in convincing both groups that the only alternative to his plan was war—a war that would, in all likelihood, bring about the same result.³² The fruit of Chamberlain's labors was the Anglo-French plan, which allowed Germany to take control of all areas of Czechoslovakia containing more than 50 percent Germans, but still guaranteed the existence of the new, smaller Czech state. The Czechs were unsurprisingly unwilling to accept this plan, but they had no choice other than compliance after both England and France emphasized that they would be left to face their fate alone if they did not cooperate.

When Chamberlain met with Hitler again on September 22, however, he was stunned to learn his hard-fought concessions were no longer good enough for the Führer. Rather than accept Chamberlain's compromise, Hitler demanded the immediate German occupation of the Sudetenland, which led to 36 hours of heated debate between the two leaders. In the end, Chamberlain only succeeded in convincing Hitler to modify his timetable by a few days, prompting Hitler to grumble that Chamberlain "was the first man to whom he had ever made a concession."³³ Despite Hitler's unwillingness to compromise, Chamberlain still believed war could (and should) be averted by letting Germany have its way. Many members of his cabinet were firmly opposed to further concessions, though, and their opposition to the prime minister's agenda culminated in Chamberlain's own foreign secretary publicly rejecting Hitler's new terms.

To appease his critics, Chamberlain proposed sending a special ambassador to Hitler to recommend the creation of an international body to negotiate the details of a Sudeten territory transfer. Chamberlain also made the public assertion that the Czech question had already been mostly settled, so it was only a matter of arranging the transfer in the most satisfactory way possible. In a broadcast to the British nation on September 27, Chamberlain mused, "How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing. It seems still more impossible that a quarrel which has already been settled in principle should be the subject of war."³⁴ Ultimately, Hitler was invited to a conference at Munich along with representatives of England, Germany, France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia.

At Munich, the leaders of all the countries present (excluding Czechoslovakia) signed an agreement which stated the basic terms of settlement proposed by Germany. Although the only concessions Chamberlain could extract were minor modifications of some of the most offensive conditions, he still viewed the Munich agreement as a victory. Chamberlain had long believed that Sudeten cession was inevitable, so he touted the Munich agreement as an orderly, peaceful way of carrying it out.³⁵ During the conference, Chamberlain also kept in mind his goal of smoothing Anglo-German relations, and one of his final actions before returning to Britain was getting Hitler to sign a short document he personally drafted. Although this document had no concrete proposals, it expressed the determination of England and Germany to continue to eliminate points of difference between the two countries. It was this document that Chamberlain waved around a short time later as he infamously declared his negotiations had achieved “peace for our time.”³⁶

Chamberlain’s approach to the Czechoslovak crisis had not received universal acclaim before Munich, but the prime minister’s idealistic rhetoric upon returning from the conference temporarily caused him to be viewed as a conquering hero.³⁷ Even those who had previously urged Chamberlain to resist Hitler’s demands were silenced by the surge of support of the Munich agreement and for the prime minister. It was not until October 3 that a vigorous debate in the House of Commons caused people to reevaluate whether mollifying Hitler had been such a wise move. Chamberlain’s critics berated the prime minister for betraying the Czechs, effectively destroying the League of Nations, and antagonizing Russia in the pursuit of an unrealistic goal.³⁸ Appeasement, they argued, had been a failed foreign policy, and so accelerated rearmament strategies should be implemented immediately.

Prime Minister Chamberlain, however, was firmly convinced of the opposite, believing that the Czechoslovak problem was out of the way and it would now be possible to make further progress “along the road to sanity.”³⁹ In early November, Chamberlain advocated the implementation of the so-called Easter Pact, an agreement between England and Italy which overlooked Italian control of Ethiopia in the hopes of preventing an alliance between Germany and Italy.

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Chamberlain also attempted to restore better relations between France and Italy, traveling to Paris on November 24 to garner support for “a complete identity of ideas” on a variety of policies.⁴⁰

Chamberlain’s emphasis on appeasing Italy came as British intelligence was receiving concerning information about Germany’s attitude towards diplomacy. According to British foreign secretary Halifax, Germany was not merely uninterested in preserving European peace, but evidently “contemptuous of Britain’s strength, vitality, and consequent importance.”⁴¹ The German Führer made various speeches where he mocked British “governesses” and “umbrella-carrying types,” and the German press was full of scathing attacks on Britain.⁴² Hitler had also expressed public dissatisfaction with the Munich treaty, dissatisfaction that resulted in brutal treatment of his new Czech territory. When Nazi soldiers invaded the remainder of Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939, it was an active affront to Britain and its leaders and a reversal of Hitler’s previous statements that Germans would only take the Reich.

Incredibly, Chamberlain still believed that appeasement was not a lost cause, claiming that Czechoslovakia had fallen due to internal disruption. In an address to the House of Commons on March 15, Chamberlain passionately asserted,

It is natural, therefore, that I should bitterly regret what has now occurred. But do not let us on that account be deflected from our course. Let us remember that the desire of all the peoples of the world still remains concentrated on the hopes of peace and a return to the atmosphere of understanding and good will which has so often been disturbed. The aim of this Government is now, as it has always been, to promote that desire and to substitute the method of discussion for the method of force in the settlement of differences. Though we may have to suffer checks and disappointments, from time to time, the object that we have in mind is of too great significance to the happiness of mankind for us lightly to give it up or set it on one side.⁴³

For the first time, though, Chamberlain's talk of peace was met by outright hostility in Parliament. Even some of Chamberlain's backers viewed Hitler's blatant disregard for the Munich treaty as humiliating to Britain. Amidst pressure from his own party, the press, his cabinet, and Parliament, Chamberlain finally gave a speech acknowledging the threat posed by Germany and declaring his willingness to resist Hitler militarily if necessary. On April 13, Britain extended a guarantee to Poland, which was a notable foreign policy shift; Chamberlain called the guarantee "a portent in British policy so momentous that I think it is safe to say it will have a chapter to itself when the history books come to be written."⁴⁴

Britain's pact with Poland (and soon after, its pacts with Romania and Greece) gave the impression that Chamberlain had abandoned appeasement to form a defense against Germany's and Italy's fascism, but this was not completely the case. Even after the guarantees were signed, Chamberlain not only believed that war was still avoidable but also that his previous diplomatic efforts would yield fruit. According to the English historian A. J. P. Taylor, "There was still a hope of conciliating Hitler under the determination to resist him, just as previously there had been an inclination to resist under the top layer of appeasement."⁴⁵

The Results of Chamberlain's Appeasement

Throughout the summer of 1939, Germany ramped up a threatening military campaign against Poland, and Hitler rebuffed Britain's efforts to negotiate a settlement between Germany and Poland. Unlike with Czechoslovakia, the majority of the British public (and Parliament) was unwilling to give any more ground to Hitler, making war almost inevitable. On September 1, German forces attacked Poland, and two days later, in the face of a threatened strike by a number of ministers and near universal consensus in the House of Commons, Chamberlain's administration declared war on Germany.⁴⁶ In an address to the House of Commons on September 3, Chamberlain regretfully declared, "This country is at war with

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Germany. . . . Everything that I have worked for, everything that I have hoped for, everything that I have believed in during my public life, has crashed into ruins.⁷⁴⁷

For seven months after World War II began, many English people were optimistic that the conflict might fizzle out before causing another European bloodbath, but by May of 1940, it became clear that a protracted conflict was unavoidable. When British forces failed to hinder the German invasion of Norway, Chamberlain's administration became deeply unpopular, and although Chamberlain kept his parliamentary majority despite his military failings, he decided not to remain in office unless he could form an all-party coalition.⁴⁸ After the leaders of the Labour Party unconditionally refused to serve under Chamberlain, the prime minister was forced to resign, conceding control of the British government to First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill on May 9.⁴⁹ Much of the ruling class disliked and distrusted Churchill, but the new prime minister was overwhelmingly popular with the British public. Churchill, a war veteran who had fought in the Anglo Sudan War and in the Second Boer War, was widely perceived as a leader with military expertise who would be ideal as commander-in-chief for a war against Germany.⁵⁰ Churchill's ascension to power was an almost complete rejection of Chamberlain and his policies; Chamberlain himself had refused to grant Churchill a prominent position in his cabinet earlier out of fear it might provoke Hitler.

Churchill was by no means a Chamberlain supporter—before becoming prime minister, he referred to Chamberlain as “the narrowest, most ignorant, most ungenerous of men”—but when Chamberlain passed away on November 9, 1940 (only six months after his resignation), Churchill wrote an undeniably magnanimous tribute to his predecessor.⁵¹ On November 12, Churchill addressed the House of Commons, saying, “It fell to Neville Chamberlain in one of the supreme crises of the world to be contradicted by events, to be disappointed in his hopes, and to be deceived and cheated by a wicked man. But what were these high hopes in which he was disappointed? What were these wishes in which he was frustrated? What was that faith that was abused? They were surely among the most noble and benevolent instincts of the human heart—the love of peace, the toil for peace, the strife for peace, the pursuit of peace, even at great peril, and certainly to the utter disdain of popularity or clamour.”⁵²

Churchill's willingness to speak so highly of Chamberlain was truly noble, but by November of 1940, Churchill could afford to be generous. His defiance of Hitler was admired across the world, his speeches were considered some of the most eloquent ever delivered, and he was widely respected throughout all of Britain.

Today, few would contest that Churchill, not Chamberlain, was the leader Britain needed to achieve victory over the Axis Powers. Even in the darkest points of World War II, Churchill never lost hope, urging his countrymen to persevere through the Nazi takeover of France, the German air raids of 1940 and 1941, and Hitler's seemingly unstoppable blitzkrieg warfare. Through his stirring radio addresses to the nation and his diplomatic pressure on the United States, Churchill did what many other European leaders could not—he prevented his homeland from being overrun by Hitler's forces at any point during the war. It is not surprising that on May 8, 1945 (Victory in Europe Day), when Churchill triumphantly declared, "God bless you all. This is your victory!" that the crowd roared back, "No—it is yours."⁵³

Only two months later, however, Churchill found that his overwhelming popularity (his approval ratings had never fallen below 78 percent) was not enough to prevent him from suffering a massive electoral defeat.⁵⁴ Typically, politicians lose elections because they have failed to achieve their goals, but ironically in Churchill's case he lost because he had succeeded in his. Victory over the Axis Powers had always been Churchill's utmost priority, so when the war ended, he no longer had a clear policy agenda. As a statesman, Churchill found he still could not escape the pall that Chamberlain had cast over the Conservative Party; in the run-up to the election, Labour leaders continually reminded voters that the Conservatives had been responsible for Britain's lack of military preparedness for World War II.⁵⁵ Oddly enough, however, while the Conservative Party was being painted as overly pacifistic, Churchill's critics argued the opposite about him, describing him as a warmonger and spreading rumors that Churchill planned to start a war with Russia. Ultimately, Labour won by a landslide, gaining a 183-seat majority in the House of Commons and replacing Churchill with deputy leader Clement Attlee.⁵⁶

Chamberlain's Legacy

Neville Chamberlain's legacy is certainly not the one he would have chosen, and today both he and his foreign policy of appeasement are used as cudgels against politicians who seek diplomacy. For most people, even the name "Munich" represents political naïveté and blissful ignorance, despite neither of these two criticisms being true about Chamberlain himself. While some historians have been quick to condemn Chamberlain for his inability to prevent the onset of World War II, most are less willing to take such an unequivocal position. When evaluating Chamberlain's decisions, it is important to look through his perspective. Like his entire generation, Chamberlain had witnessed the horrors of World War I and prayed there would never be such a horrific conflict in Europe again. Chamberlain also knew that a second war with Germany could have even worse consequences than the first; with the advent of aerial warfare, it was estimated that over half a million British citizens could die within two weeks of German bombing.⁵⁷ One final important fact to note is that Chamberlain had the support of the British people throughout most of the mid-1930s, since they too were war-weary and loath to become too involved with the affairs of mainland Europe.

While Chamberlain could have been a successful leader in another time and place, his prioritization of diplomacy played into Hitler's hands and weakened Britain's strategic position prior to World War II. Chamberlain may not have desired "peace at any price," but he was willing to concede much more to authoritarian dictators than his countrymen were. War and violence should never be the default option, but pacifism sometimes can be more harmful than taking action. Not every dictator is Hitler and not every diplomatic solution is Munich, but Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Germany is still a cautionary tale.

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³⁶ It is worth noting that Hitler did not place anywhere near as much importance on providing Chamberlain with his signature as Chamberlain placed on receiving it. Upon seeing Chamberlain's triumphant declaration, Hitler reportedly commented, "Well, he seemed like such a nice old gentleman, I thought I would give him my autograph as a souvenir." In private, Hitler did not even try to disguise his contempt and hatred for Chamberlain, threatening, "If ever that silly old man comes interfering here again with his umbrella, I'll kick him downstairs and jump on his stomach in front of the photographers." (Alan Axelrod, *Profiles in Folly: History's Worst Decisions and Why They Went Wrong*. New York: Sterling, 2012, p. 217.)

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- ⁵⁸ 58 Walter Stoneman [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons (Copyright: 1921)
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Despite decades of suppression in educational institutions, American Sign Language remains a pillar of the American Deaf Community. While the United States is an example of a strong individualist culture, many of the cultures and subcultures cherished by its minorities are collectivist in nature, including those of African Americans and Deaf Americans. By examining these two important cultures, it becomes apparent that there is a correlation between oppression and collectivism in minority groups, and that there is likely further correlation between the suppression of a dialect or language and the tenacity with which an identity group defends it. Both of these correlations are at play in the survival and flourishing of American Sign Language.

Tongue Ties: The Role of Oppression-Induced Collectivism in Preserving American Sign Language

Claire Gostomski

Oppressed minority groups tend to form their own cultures within the larger context of the majority culture surrounding them. African Americans and the American Deaf are both minority communities that have experienced historical institutionalized oppression. My contention is that long-term oppression contributes to the emergence of collectivism in the Deaf American and African American identity groups. Furthermore, I posit that the collectivist tendencies of Deaf Americans correspond to protective Deaf attitudes toward American Sign Language. I will begin with an overview of collectivism as a cultural category, including some of its typical identifying characteristics. Then, I will present evidence for the presence of collectivist traits in both the African American and Deaf communities. Next, I will link collectivist features in the African American minor-

ity to the long-term oppression they have endured, and I will show that this relation also exists for the Deaf community. Finally, I will argue that the uniquely Deaf attitude toward language – specifically American Sign Language – is related to the community’s collectivist attributes and stems from long-term group oppression.

Culture forms around community. People with shared experiences, interests, or previously existing social norms come together in the interest of survival. Certain aspects of communities, such as the slang they use or the minutia of fashion, are fluid. This means that they can change without altering the basic tenets of the culture. Other aspects, however, are static. Static aspects are more central to a culture’s values, so things like kinship systems and core beliefs tend to remain the same – or ‘static’ – while the more fluid attributes change and flow around static cultural pillars.¹ The fluid aspects of a culture are therefore influenced by its static aspects. This means that it is possible to categorize the values that undergird a culture by studying how communities form around common behaviors and what values drive those behaviors.

Thomas K. Holcomb, influential deaf author, professor, and leading authority on Deaf culture, writes that there are “Several different ways to categorize and define cultures,” and that “These include... Collectivist Versus Individualistic Cultures.”² (“Deaf” refers to a member of the Deaf Community, while “deaf” denotes the physical state of being unable to hear.) Most cultures can be designated as one of these two ‘umbrella types.’ Individualistic cultures tend to value self-sufficiency and individual accomplishments, while collectivist cultures place more value on family or group membership and tend to focus on the progress or achievement of the group as a whole, to the extent that “Individuals subordinate their personal goals to the goals of the group.”³ Another interesting distinction involves cultural attitudes toward shared knowledge. While an individualistic culture will typically have “Less expectation of shared knowledge” and “interpersonal contact [will have] a lower priority,” collectivist cultures typically have a “High degree of shared knowledge and a common history; interpersonal contact is a high priority.”⁴ Furthermore, “In collectivist cultures (and minority groups) one is expected to devote time and energy to promoting the welfare of the group.”⁵ Interestingly enough, Collectivistic groups are numerically dominant: “More than 70 percent of world cultures can be labeled collectivist, or group ori-

ented.”⁶ In her book, *Reading Between the Signs*, Anna Mindess describes how “American Deaf culture clearly qualifies as a collectivist culture with its emphasis on pooling resources, the duty to share information, the boundary between insiders and outsiders, and loyalty to and strong identification with the group.”⁷

Of the many collectivist traits manifest in Deaf culture, information sharing is perhaps the most visible.⁸ “This has at its root the fact that communication with hearing people usually is difficult, cumbersome, and often limited, even with deaf people’s own family members... access to incidental information is usually extremely difficult for deaf people.”⁹ Understandably, deaf people often grow tired of making extra efforts to attain what is readily available to others by auditory means. Sometimes, deaf people may even feign disinterest as a coping mechanism. “Over the years,” however, “Deaf people have learned to support each other in filling these gaps by sharing information wherever and whenever possible.”¹⁰ One classic example is that of deaf people’s habit of alerting others to their intentions whenever they leave a room, no matter how briefly or how awkward it may seem to a hearing observer. The reason for this lies in the fact that while the hearing person can deduce the absent person’s location by sound – the toilet flushing, for instance – the deaf people present cannot. Therefore, while a hearing person might politely slip out of the room to use the toilet, it is considered polite and not at all taboo for deaf people to briefly interrupt a conversation to announce their intention to do the same. This example can help hearing people understand the basic need behind information sharing in Deaf culture, but it does not make the full extent clear. The ‘Deaf grapevine’ is infamous for carrying sensitive information across the country, sometimes within hours. For this reason, a Deaf person recently given a grim diagnosis and who has spoken to very few people about it nonetheless will not be surprised to find messages of condolence in their inbox from friends far away. By spreading information about members of the community, deaf people look out for each other and stay connected to one another. “Consequently, information sharing has become one of the most enduring values of the Deaf community.”¹¹

Another example of collectivism in Deaf culture is group solidarity at a level which hearing people may feel is too intense. As Anna Mindess explains, “Loyalty to the group is an important characteristic of collectivism. One does not behave in a way that would bring dis-

grace to the family. Nor does one betray or embarrass other members of the group.”¹² The most visible and memorable illustrations of this Deaf cultural trait occur when a public figure trespasses the boundaries of acceptable behavior. Take, for example, deaf actress Marlee Matlin. She played a deaf character in the film *Children of a Lesser God*, received praise for her use of sign language in the film, and later won an Academy Award. When she mounted the stage to receive the Oscar, however, she “rejected the primary marker of a Deaf identity, ASL/Sign, by speaking with her voice.”¹³ Marlee Matlin’s verbal acceptance speech became an infamous incident in her career because by failing to represent ASL when provided with a public platform, she was “shaming and alienating the Deaf Community.”¹⁴ “Some Deaf people began using a name for her indicating her outsider status,” a response which many hearing people felt overly harsh or unjustified.¹⁵ Such intense group togetherness is initially off-putting to most hearing Americans, who are themselves accustomed to culturally individualistic values; but there is power in a unified front, and Marlee Matlin subsequently “[chose] to adopt a more Deaf stance in public.”¹⁶ Cohesion among members of the community is vitally important to culturally threatened minorities like the Deaf, and Deaf determination to look after their own has seen Deaf culture through the most difficult periods in its history. As Thomas K. Holcomb observes, “Deaf culture provides evidence of the bonds that hold the Deaf community together and validate the Deaf experience.”¹⁷

In a similar vein, “Black culture has been used to describe the common bonds that hold the African American community together.”¹⁸ Black culture exhibits collectivist qualities with intriguing similarities to those of Deaf culture. Collectivist information sharing, for instance, is an attribute of Black culture. According to Humphrey and Alcorn, “Although African American culture has been greatly influenced by several hundred years of domination by an extremely individualistic culture, it still retains elements of the collectivist cultures from which it originated.”¹⁹ “Elders,” for instance, “are respected and cared for; the extended family plays an important role in sharing resources, supporting one another and teaching children strategies for survival.”²⁰ As in Deaf and many other cultures, Black culture’s core values are often revealed through art. Toni Morrison, award-winning African American author of acclaimed novels, displays in her renowned book, *Beloved*, many of the attributes of a collectiv-

ist approach to life. The identifying characteristics of strong group solidarity and its manifestation through information sharing— in this case between members of the same race – are encapsulated in a scene from the second half of the novel. Paul D. is a nomadic ex-slave who takes refuge in a community of free blacks on the free side of the Ohio river. Stamp Paid, an integral member of the community, visits another former slave named Ella to inquire where Paul D. is staying. He is appalled that she does not immediately know the answer. It is obvious from Stamp Paid's remarks that he thinks the entire community should be aware of their visitor's location because everyone should have either offered to house Paul D. or else made sure that he had a place to stay. Ella agrees and is ashamed because she recognizes her breach of the community's implicit values.²¹ The setting of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is appropriate for exploring the emergence of collectivism in Black culture because it deals so candidly with the lasting, generational trauma of slavery, and it is this heritage which produces the unique blend of collectivist closeness and proud independence that are hallmarks of Black culture.

The constant presence of oppressive forces in their cultural history has shaped the African American community in many ways. One relevant cultural marker influenced by oppression is patterns of speech. Oppressed minorities tend to exist in some form of isolation, which encourages population-specific speech. While African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is not a language, it does qualify as a dialect, and proficiency in AAVE is a genuine linguistic skill that marks its users as members of a specific identity group. Another such cultural marker is a penchant for oral histories and closely guarded generational wisdom. In a study conducted by researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, "Eight of the twelve mothers stated that teaching their children about African American history and their heritage was an important part of helping children understand what it meant to be African American," and that "Teaching history is intended not only to teach children about their heritage but to prepare them for possible future discrimination."²² When they synthesized their findings, the researchers identified three themes in black families' distinct cultural behavior:

- (a) teaching children about African Americans' history and ancestral "struggle,"

- (b) promoting educational achievement to overcome barriers of racism, and
- (c) promoting autonomy while maintaining close family relationships.²³

If ‘racism’ were replaced with ‘audism’, each of these three themes could easily apply to Deaf culture. (Audism is discrimination or a prejudiced attitude toward the Deaf.) Interestingly, the qualities consistently observed by researchers indicated that the African Americans interviewed took great pride in their heritage and independent achievements while simultaneously exhibiting recognizable marks of collectivism. The researchers postulate that an explanation for the apparently contradictory presence of both components may lie in the history of African Americans in the United States. African Americans began their journey to America as slaves, arguably the most dependent status that a human can have. Even after the abolition of slavery, African Americans have continued to struggle against racism to obtain civil rights...²⁴

Therefore, the fierce independent streak in Black culture is a result of their anomalous situation and does not undermine the evidence of oppression inducing collectivism. Black families are bound together by their cultural heritage and by a shared experience of the world. The oppression endemic in the Black experience plays a powerful role in shaping the community’s values. In a world where the majority are unlikely to support them individually, oppressed minority populations like the Deaf and African Americans develop a culture of collectivism as a defense mechanism.

Accordingly, the cultural formation of the Deaf parallels that of African Americans in its passage through persecution and linguistic separation. Oppression – particularly the suppression of their language – has molded the Deaf community over time. Deaf people have historically been denied access to manual languages that would give them the freedom to communicate and live independently.²⁵ As an oppressed minority, Deaf people formed a cultural identity group comparable to that of ethnic minorities. Unlike skin color, deafness is not an ethnic marker. However, “In cultural terms, Deaf Americans encounter problems similar to ethnic groups who face challenges of forced assimilation and cultural colonization.”²⁶ One parallel to the Black community is the cultural content of Deaf art and the Deaf community’s esteem of such culturally Deaf art. Deaf visual art often in-

corporates hands, ASL signs, or allusions to signs. “The artistic forms of ASL have played an important role in the transmission of culture and history from generation to generation of Deaf people. [Deaf storytelling arts] are often quite distinct in their structure,” and a popular element of Deaf story is “‘paving the way’ experiences (situations in which the Deaf hero of the story paves the way for other Deaf people through his pioneering experience).”²⁷ In this way, generations of Deaf people have passed on the stories of their people’s struggle. Like the Black mothers who gave interviews to the UT researchers, Deaf parents teach their children stories that encourage them to be proud of their Deaf identity and prepare them to have courage when the world grinds them down.

Of course, there are other ways in which oppression has impacted the Deaf community. “For many [deaf] individuals, SPOKEN/WRITTEN language is a burden to be tolerated or a barricade to be broken, rather than an imaginative, creative means toward self-expression.”²⁸ Insistence on exclusively oral education condemned generations of deaf students to unnecessary isolation when they could not achieve the same level of natural ease and connection as hearing classmates. Deaf individuals are, as Baynton observes, “disabled by that denial.”²⁹

In this context, Deaf culture’s reverence toward American Sign Language is completely understandable. The “shared experience of being Deaf forms a bond of equality that cuts across social class... Their shared language, ASL, is a powerful equalizer, and it transcends the variations in the details of their daily lives.”³⁰ Fluency in ASL is a primary marker of Deaf culture (Humphrey).³¹ When Deaf and hearing people interact, the use of ASL flips the entire narrative of Deaf history on its head and rewrites the situation in their favor. Now, instead of the Deaf person straining to make themselves understood, it is “Those who are not culturally Deaf or do not know sign language” who are “in need of accommodation in the form of translators in order to acquire linguistic ability within this uniquely Deaf environment.”³² Through ASL, Deaf Americans gain a freedom of expression that is denied them by the suppression of their language. Because it was so difficult for many of them to find, ASL is cherished by the Deaf: “perhaps no linguistic community cherishes its language and language play as greatly as the Deaf community.”³³

It is possible that the existence of certain traits, such as information sharing and group defensiveness, may not indicate an inherently collectivist culture. Perhaps some of these traditionally collectivist behaviors can be merely replicated by circumstances of oppression. Nevertheless, when these traits are recognized in an identity group, it is helpful to call them collectivist traits for the sake of identification. Deaf collectivism seems to align with the responses of other ethnic minorities, such as that of African Americans, to attempts to stamp out their culture. When the group of people draws together as a collective, they and their culture are much harder to exterminate. The pressure of long-term oppression shaped both the Deaf and the Black communities in America into collectivist-flavored cultures. In the case of the Deaf community, oppression also produced a passionate love of their sign language. Linguistic majorities do not experience the sort of linguistic oppression experienced by the Deaf, and therefore they do not need to fight for the ability to understand and to be understood. For Deaf people, however, this is the essence of their fight. It is possible that if Deaf people had not banded together as a collective, ASL would not have survived to become such a prominent part of Deaf culture. If current generations of Deaf have anything to sign about it, ASL – and Deaf culture – are here to stay.

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- ³ Anna Mindess, 39.
- ⁴ Humphrey & Alcorn, 41.
- ⁵ Mindess, 42.
- ⁶ Ibid., 38.
- ⁷ Ibid., 39.
- ⁸ Holcomb, 104.
- ⁹ Ibid., 104.
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- ¹² Mindess, 41.
- ¹³ Theresa Smith, 29.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Holcomb, 16.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Humphrey & Alcorn, 66.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 67.
- ²¹ Toni Morrison, 86.
- ²² Marie-Anne Suizzo, Courtney Robinson, & Erin Pahlke, 297-298.
- ²³ Ibid., 287.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 309.
- ²⁵ Humphrey & Alcorn
- ²⁶ Katelyn Best, 66-67.
- ²⁷ C. Lucas & C. Valli, 190.
- ²⁸ Heidi Rose. 1996, 427.
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In the United States, we have outpatient units in hospitals known as Observation Units. These units are ultimately intended to give hospitals greater time to more accurately diagnose patients admitted through the Emergency Department (ED), both freeing up ED beds and avoiding unnecessary admissions. However, the changes in the way Medicare reimburses hospitals for observation versus inpatient status has created a growing number of observation cases that yield a lower reimbursement rate for many hospital systems. By assessing the length of stay and net income from Medicare patients as well as interviews with various healthcare providers, our research indicates that Observation Units are not being run optimally as a result of misplaced status. Improving physician education and Utilization Review will increase the revenue received by the hospital.

Proper Status Assignment for Medicare Observation Patients

Caleb Graham

Abstract

In the United States, we have outpatient units in hospitals known as Observation Units. These units are ultimately intended to give hospitals greater time to more accurately diagnose patients admitted through the Emergency Department (ED), both freeing up ED beds and avoiding unnecessary admissions. However, the changes in the way Medicare reimburses hospitals for observation versus inpatient status has created a growing number of observation cases that yield a lower reimbursement rate for many hospital systems. By assessing the length of stay and net income from Medicare patients as well as interviews with various healthcare providers, our research indicates that Observation Units are not being run optimally as a result of misplaced status. Improving physician education and Utilization Review will increase the revenue received by the hospital.

Introduction

One of the biggest issues facing the field of medicine is one that is not commonly discussed: patient status as it relates to reimbursement. Most people might assume that a patient treated inside the hospital would have inpatient status while a patient treated outside of the hospital would have outpatient status. However, this would be a gross simplification that does not apply to many areas of the health-care industry, including Observation Units. While the simple change of a few letters in a patient's status might seem inconsequential, the effects of these changes result in huge financial repercussions on both hospitals and patients alike. It is the goal of this paper to provide greater clarity on observation units as they relate to patient status and hospital reimbursement and to devise a solution on how to optimally run these units. In order to do so, I reviewed previous literature that details the creation and history of observation units in the United States and conducted a study at one of the largest hospital centers in North Texas. The results of these findings are presented in this paper.

Background on Literature

First and foremost, we must define the Observation Unit. Observation Units were originally designed to help alleviate the burden on the Emergency Department. If a patient could not be safely discharged or the physician was unsure that admission was necessary, the patient could be sent to observation for further consultation. Observation Units were not intended to be utilized as a holding area for a patient waiting to be transferred to an inpatient department within the hospital; rather, they were meant to allow physicians more time to make more informed decisions. Most patients today who enter Observation Units are those with generalized conditions that could be due to a variety of causes, such as chest pain, which require a more comprehensive evaluation that generally takes more than a few hours.¹ In short, they are patients who have unclear diagnoses with potentially multiple underlying conditions and thus require placement in these facilities.

Observation Units were created with many perceived benefits in mind. For example, it was found in some studies that the use of an Observation Unit allows the physician to more carefully diagnose the

patient.² This theoretically leads to lower admission rates and a corresponding reduction in the unnecessary use of resources (including transportation, nursing, and ancillary services) in the hospital. Since healthy and mildly ill patients are discharged, the bulk of the hospital resources can be dedicated to the severely ill patients who truly need to be admitted. Additionally, numerous journal articles praise Observation Units for decreasing the length of stay by more than a day and lowering costs by two thousand dollars per patient.³

There are obvious advantages to Observation Units that benefit hospitals and patients alike, but there are still many flaws in the current system. First, giving physicians additional time to diagnose patients creates a delay in patient treatment that might be crucial for some patients.⁴ Secondly, observation versus inpatient status makes a critical difference in Medicare reimbursement – even when the care provided is identical. If a patient is listed as observation, the case is treated as outpatient, resulting in no payment from Medicare Part A, and Medicare Part B pays only for the physician and outpatient services provided by the hospital.⁵ However, if a patient is listed as inpatient, Medicare Part A will cover the inpatient stay in addition to the payments made by Part B.⁶ Many privatized forms of insurance have also started to adopt this practice.⁷ Medicare Part A and private insurance's policies of not paying for outpatient care means that a third party, the patient, must cover the cost.⁸ By minimizing the number of patients placed in observation and the time spent there, both patients and hospitals benefit.⁹ Therefore, evaluating both observation efficiency and patient status are critical due to the reimbursement rates and the resulting impact on hospital revenue and the fiscal health of the institution.

It is important to note that Observation Units are a rather new phenomenon in the healthcare industry. Nearly two decades ago only a small fraction of hospitals (11%) contained designated Observation Units, with an equal percentage actively considering the implementation of this concept.¹⁰ By 2011, a new study reported that over one-third of the hospitals in the United States contained designated Observation Units.¹¹ While the number of official Observation Units has continued to rise, so has the number of patients placed in observation and the proportion of patients assigned observation status - going up from 3% in 2006 to 25% by 2013.¹² From these statistics, we can

ascertain the growing prevalence of observation within the United States as well as the increasing importance it plays in the modern healthcare system.

Observation Units initially showed great promise, especially with asthma patients and those experiencing chest pain as it led to more effective diagnoses resulting in a reduction in the length of stay and a corresponding reduction in cost for the hospital.¹³ These units have also been particularly helpful with the care of vulnerable groups such as the elderly who have a disproportionate share of symptoms such as chest pain and dizziness. Since Medicare lowers reimbursement to hospitals for excessive Emergency Department readmissions, observation units were seen as a true benefit. These units would theoretically allow for doctors to have more time to treat patients than they would otherwise in the ER, allowing them to provide better diagnoses and better treatment, reducing the likelihood that they would return to the ER. All in all, observation units have greatly benefitted the healthcare industry.

Though Observation Units are largely beneficial to the healthcare industry, they are not necessarily utilized optimally. For example, one study that evaluated both national data and data from the state of Georgia discovered that there is no consensus in the definition of an Observation Unit, ranging from “protocol-driven care with rooms in an officially designated location” to “discretionary care in any bed available within the hospital”.¹⁴ Those hospitals that had a designated unit with protocols were found to be the most effective in reducing the length of stay and improving the quality of care.¹⁵ However, the fact that the term Observation Units is used so loosely means that there is no true way to uniformly evaluate them. Additionally, despite the fact that some articles claim that using dedicated Observation Units could lead to a reduction of cost as high as 3.1 billion dollars, others have found that this is an overly optimistic assessment.¹⁶ In short, we can already discover the downsides of Observation Units, as they are neither uniformly defined nor optimally operational.

In fact, observation might not be any more beneficial than inpatient care. One study that retrospectively analyzed 7549 patients at one hospital reported that patients with nonspecific chest pain who were placed in observation did not have better outcomes or a lower cost of care when compared to those patients who were admitted to the hospital.¹⁷ In some cases, observation patients might not experi-

ence the same quality of care. One study, which assessed 22,962 cases in forty-one different Observation Units, found that the units lacked consistency in their outcomes for patients with chest pain, suggesting that these patients might have been better served if they had been admitted immediately rather than placed in observation.¹⁸ Ultimately, the benefits originally associated with observation might not be as profound as once thought. In conclusion, while Observation Units were originally designed to alleviate strain on hospitals across the U.S., they have been unclear in their efficiency.

Methods

In order to assess whether observation units were being properly utilized, it was important that I evaluate both empirical and testimonial data. However, finding data for an entire hospital system, let alone the entire country, would be extremely time-consuming. Moreover, given the fact that there are rather loose requirements as to what truly defines an observation unit, it was imperative that I focus on the Observation Units of a single hospital. In this case, I decided to utilize the data that I had received during one of my summer internships. I will, however, be protecting the identity of the hospital out of respect for its privacy.

Hospital Perspective

The hospital in question asked me to assess their observation units, since they were concerned that there might be a problem in the running of these facilities. For the sake of privacy and anonymity, the hospital will be called Hospital X. Currently, Hospital X has a very streamlined system with regards to a patient's placement within the observation unit. When looking at a patient coming into the Emergency Department (ED), the patient is first treated in one of the available emergency treatment rooms, where they will be viewed by triage nurses, scribes and, most importantly, the ED Physician (an Emergency Medicine Doctor). After the patient has had history taken and a formal consultation with the physician, the ED doctor will make one of two decisions. He or she will either send the patient to one of the clinical decision units or contact one of the attending internal medicine doctors for further evaluation. If the patient is referred to an internist, the attending physician will assess whether the patient

should be sent to the Observation Unit or admitted into the hospital. Regardless of the decision, the patient's status is then regularly reviewed by the team of nurses known as Utilization Review Nurses or URNs. These nurses continually evaluate the patient's situation and make recommendations when they feel a change might be warranted by utilizing InterQual. InterQual is an electronic system of evidence-based clinical intelligence that assesses the appropriate criteria for the medical review process which includes the proper assignment of patient status. This appears to be a rather fluid and effective way of assessing a patient's status.

However, several issues have developed within the last couple of years regarding Observation Units at Hospital X. Within the last year alone, observation utilization has increased by twenty percent. In addition, there is a disconnect in how Utilization Review is conducted. Medical directors and CMOs are sent emails on patients when no action or update is needed. This plethora of emails creates a situation where the important emails suggesting a change in status are not properly elevated or differentiated and can easily be overlooked. Furthermore, when looking closely at each case, many individuals who initially qualified for inpatient status were not flagged by the UR nurses until 48 hours or more after they were placed in observation. The question then becomes twofold: First, why did the physician not immediately admit the patient, and second, why did the UR nurses not catch this sooner? Consequently, it is extremely important that Hospital X not only comprehends the negative impact that overutilization of Observation Units has had on the hospital, but also discovers patient status pathways that are more efficient.

Empirical data

Through empirical data, it can be objectively assessed whether observation is being run effectively with regards to patient status assignment. In the absence of patient outcomes, the best metrics for this are length of stay and profit margins of the hospital. Since length of stay should theoretically last for a maximum of 24 hours, it was vital for me to determine whether or not Observation Units at this particular hospital properly adhered to these criteria. Therefore, data was gathered using AllScripts for the length of stay from both the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU) and regular Observation Units from the past two years. Length of stay was then determined separately for

Clinical Decision Units (those located in the emergency department) and traditional Observation Units (those found in the hospital) and then determined together. The purpose of this was to see 1) if length of stay increased or decreased over time and 2) if the average length of stay exceeded a length of longer than 24 hours.

Length of stay, however, is not the only aspect upon which observation should be measured. The relationship between cost of care and reimbursement received must also be evaluated. Analyzing the profit and loss associated with the Observation Unit enables the hospital to better assess if the unit is properly utilized. Consequently, Hospital X tracked all observation cases within the hospital over the course of six months, noting the patient's diagnosis and the department responsible for the recommendation. The net profit/loss was then calculated for each individual department and organized month by month. By assessing these factors, I hope to not only weigh the negative cost associated with Hospital X's observation facilities but also determine whether any problem associated with the use of observation is specific to a disease or department, or if it is system-wide issue.

Testimonial evidence

In order to properly evaluate the efficiency of observation, it was important that I consider the objective, numerical data associated with length of stay and cost of care. However, it was also imperative for my study that I detail the qualitative experiences of those workers who worked directly within the observation unit process. These include but are not limited to ER doctors, Case Managers, Hospitalists, Medical Directors, and Utilization Review Nurses. Thirty-minute interviews were conducted with a member of each of these groups in which they were asked what role they played in observation, if observation was being run effectively, and what were some of the obstacles to observation. Their responses were then summarized and reported in the results section of the paper.

Results

After two months of organizing the data, there were several interesting findings that imply observation units were running sub-optimally based on length of stay, cost of care, and general consensus among employees.

Length of Stay

Table 1.1 provides a length of stay assessment for all patients placed in observation during the fiscal year of 2018 for Hospital X. While there are slight variations in the percentages from month to month, the data demonstrates a consistent trend. Each month more than fifty-five percent of Medicare patients placed in observation exceed the 24-hour maximum threshold with some months reaching nearly seventy percent. In an effort to further analyze the findings, the data for the Clinical Decision Unit (the Observation Unit specifically for the ED) were removed to determine if this is a departmental challenge or a hospital-wide problem. The results of **Table 1.2** indicated that, while the numbers including the CDU’s were slightly better, there does appear to be a systemic issue regarding improper use of

Medicare Observation Length of Stay for Hospital X						
FY18	DC Less Than 24 Hrs		DC Past 24 Hrs		Total	Avg LOS in Hrs
	Cases	Pct	Cases	Pct		
July	60	38.46%	96	61.54%	156	28.69
August	70	44.59%	87	55.41%	157	28.01
September	43	30.28%	99	69.72%	142	31.47
October	52	33.99%	101	66.01%	153	29.53
November	61	38.85%	96	61.15%	157	28.88
December	38	30.16%	88	69.84%	126	31.02
January	43	30.71%	97	69.29%	140	31.08
February	51	36.17%	90	63.83%	141	30.64
March	45	35.16%	83	64.84%	128	30.30
April	66	40.99%	95	59.01%	161	29.08
May	53	31.74%	114	68.26%	167	31.89
Jun	69	39.20%	107	60.80%	176	28.16

Table 1.1 Medicare observation cases by length of stay for the fiscal

Hospital X 23 Hr OBS excluding CDU - Medicare						
FY18	DC Less Than 24 Hrs		DC Past 24 Hours		Total	Avg LOS in Hrs
	Cases	Pct	Cases	Pct		
July	16	20.00%	64	80.00%	80	34.79
August	27	32.14%	57	67.86%	84	32.23
September	19	24.05%	60	75.95%	79	36.61
October	15	21.43%	55	78.57%	70	35.77
November	19	23.17%	63	76.83%	82	33.51
December	11	16.42%	56	83.58%	67	35.39
January	19	25.68%	55	74.32%	74	35.00
February	29	34.52%	55	65.48%	84	32.66
March	16	24.62%	49	75.38%	65	34.25
April	19	25.68%	55	74.32%	74	34.89
May	16	18.39%	71	81.61%	87	37.17
Jun	20	24.10%	63	75.90%	83	33.42
Grand Total	226	24.33%	703	75.67%	929	34.61

Table 1.2 reveals Medicare Length of Stay without including the Clinical Decision Units.

Cost of Care

Medicare patients placed in observation rather than inpatient yield a lower reimbursement rate for the hospital. Therefore, it is important to look at the costs associated with observation stays that exceed 48 hours, since these cases could potentially have been listed as inpatient given the Two-Midnight Rule adopted by Medicare.¹⁹ Figure 1 indicates a loss of income associated with each month that is proportional to the number of cases exceeding 48 hours in observation. Overall, there were over four hundred cases and 1.6 million dollars lost from said cases, revealing the challenges that these patients pose for Hospital X.

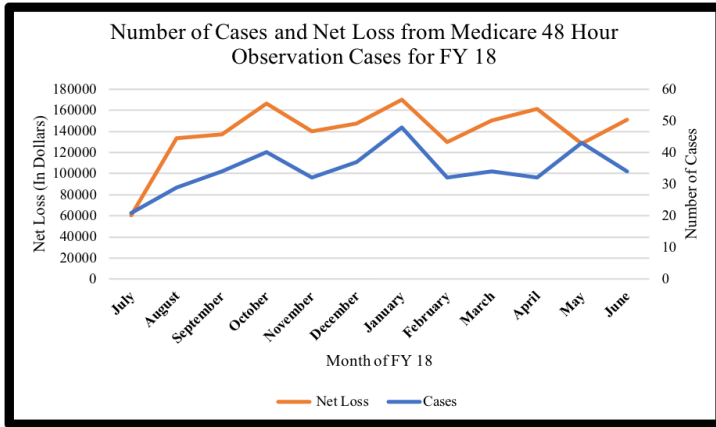


Figure 1 Medicare reimbursement for observation stays greater than 48 hours.

Interviews

Five interviews were conducted to obtain feedback on the concerns associated with the overutilization of the Observation Unit. Most of the participants agreed that there are problems, but the issue they viewed as most critical seemed to vary depending on their positions. As seen in Table 1.3, both the ED physician and the internist attributed the problem to inaccurate initial patient placement, citing the number of incidences where patients were placed in observation when they clearly should have been admitted. Through the input of the physicians, it was confirmed that a lack of understanding of the criteria by physician groups was an issue. The Utilization Review Nurses, on the other hand, faulted the AllScripts system, which fails to provide them with important functions such as a streamline communication capability that EPIC provides. The case manager also ascribed the improper utilization to Medicare and the private insurance reimbursement policy that penalizes improper patient admittance, thereby increasing dependence on observation out of fear.

While many different problems were mentioned regarding the overutilization of observation, there did seem to be consensus on one issue. Four out of the five healthcare workers felt there was a lack of transparency between Utilization Review Nurses and the rest of the medical staff. Whether it be a lack of communication about changes to

a patient’s status or the change not occurring within the first 48-hour period, the Case Manager (CM), medical director, internist, and emergency department physician all believed that the UR team was not functioning as it should be.

Responses from Hospital X Employees Regarding Observation Efficiency

	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
What is your role in observation?	Internal Medicine Doctor	Emergency Medicine Doctor	Medical Director	Case Manager	Utilization Review Nurse
Is status assignment for observation and inpatient being run effectively?	No	No	No	No	No
In your opinion, what are the obstacles to efficiency in observation status?	-Fear of ramifications of giving patient wrong status -Lack of resources to help assess proper status -Lack of UR involvement	-Misconceptions about patient status changes -Lack of knowledge about observation -UR department not communicating with them	-physicians not understanding in-patient criteria -UR department giving raw data instead of metrics	-New payment methods by Medicare and other private insurance companies -UR department not changing patient status until after 24 or even 48 hours	-Allscripts lack of support.

Table 1.3 Responses of the Hospital X employees who were interviewed about their roles in observation and the barriers they have faced when status of Medicare patients was being assigned.

Discussion

The empirical data regarding reimbursement and length of stay both yielded negative findings. Given that the majority of Medicare observation cases exceeded the 24-hour maximum, it can be inferred that most of these cases should have been admitted. This information paired with the loss of income from observation cases exceeding 48 hours and the negative responses of those workers who actively participate in observation, it can be concluded that status assignment for Medicare patients in observation is not operating at an optimal level.

Looking through the current literature, however, Hospital X is not the only clinical facility to find inefficiencies in its use of observation status for Medicare patients. One hospital reported that many of

its observation patients remained there for 24 hours (and often past 48 hours). This showed a similar pattern to Hospital X as General or Internal Medicine constituted the majority of these cases.²⁰ Another case study has found that Medicare observation was being increasingly utilized following Medicare's change to the Two-Midnight Policy, which now requires a patient to stay at the hospital for two midnights in order to qualify for inpatient status.²¹ This is in keeping with the general trends of the data, as the number of cases exceeding 48 hours and the net cost of the Medicare patients increased from 2017 to 2018 at this hospital alone. A third study showed that converting those Medicare cases that were two midnights or longer from outpatient to inpatient resulted in an average increased reimbursement of \$2639 per case, and that over a third of these cases qualified for inpatient status.²²

So why is this rise in observation occurring? Based on the interviews, it can be deduced that there is an issue with both the physicians' understanding of observation criteria and the Utilization Review staff's ability to monitor patients and communicate with the clinician. Furthermore, it is also startling to learn that there is little to no use of technology when determining or assessing patient placement. It is important to note, however, that both the Utilization Review Nurses and the physicians recognize that there are issues and are open to improvements that lead to the proper utilization of the Observation Unit.

Physicians' understanding of observation criteria is the first step towards proper utilization of the unit, as they are the first healthcare professional to make the assessment. The fact that approximately two-thirds of all patients placed there exceeded the maximum stay indicates that physicians may have misconceptions. After interviewing the physician in the Emergency Department, it was discovered that, beyond the Two-Midnight Rule for inpatient admittance, physicians have some erroneous assumptions regarding placement protocols. For example, they believe that if a patient is improperly admitted there is no process for changing the status and the hospital will receive no compensation at all. As a result, unless they are absolutely certain that a patient will be at Hospital X for two midnights, ER doctors are more comfortable placing patients immediately into observation.

The second group of professionals with the opportunity to improve appropriate use of observation are the Utilization Review Nurses. They are responsible for monitoring observation patients'

status and notifying physicians when a change is warranted, as they are the InterQual experts. According to the Utilization Review Nurse who was interviewed, URNs work offsite and typically assess a patient's condition against the InterQual criteria once a day. The UR nurse then contacts the physician by email either confirming the patient's current status or making a recommendation that the patient be admitted. However, the high number of cases lasting longer than 48 hours clearly indicate that either the current monitoring process is insufficient or that the communication system is ineffective. Relying on an email may be the critical link in the system, given the time-sensitive situation, and warrants an investigation. More effective means of notifying physicians when admitting a patient is justified may be needed.

Another factor that may contribute to the erroneous use of the Observation Unit is that the technology currently being utilized by the UR nurses does not support all the functions necessary, and physicians have no technical support to help determine status. InterQual is a manual filled with hundreds of pages, defining the criteria that distinguish a patient who qualifies for observation from one that should be admitted. Given the sheer volume of information, it seems unreasonable to expect ED physicians to keep track of all the criteria while trying to effectively treat the vast array of maladies they see in a given day. ED physicians have many other duties that require their attention and the ability to decipher who meets InterQual should not prevent them from fulfilling their role. Essentially, there is a breakdown in the system and the direct consequence of this failure is the loss of millions of dollars in hospital revenue due to lower reimbursement rates for patients assigned observation status. It is also evident, based on their responses, that all healthcare providers involved with observation understand that new measures must be implemented if they are to improve the process and increase the financial viability of the hospital.

However, it must be stated that there are limitations to the study conducted. First, it would have been beneficial to understand where the Medicare observation length of stay cases varied. By only looking at those cases that were less than 24 hours and those that were greater than 24 hours, there was no way to assess the general distribution of length of stay. Furthermore, not all of the cases that exceeded 48 hours qualified for a change to inpatient status. This is vital to truly

clarify the number of Medicare cases given the wrong status and accurately assess the loss of income incurred by the hospital. Although these metrics are already being tracked, these additional evaluations will enable Hospital X to better comprehend where it stands regarding patient assignment in observation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The incorrect placement and retention of patients in the Observation Unit can be greatly reduced by better educating physicians on proper guidelines, creating a more comprehensive review and communication process, and implementing the use of technology for both the physicians and the URNs. There are certainly traditional steps that can be taken to help physicians more effectively evaluate a patient's candidacy for the Observation Unit, and there are basic changes that can be utilized by the URNs to better identify patients who have erroneously been placed there. However, the use of technology must be explored, as it could be an effective and objective tool when analyzing a patient's placement.

Maximizing Proper Initial Status

The first step towards limiting the number of people incorrectly placed into observation resides with the physicians, who need a clear understanding regarding the dividing line that differentiates when an individual should be placed in observation versus inpatient. While some innovative ideas will be discussed in a section below, observation education and training during monthly meetings may have a significant impact. Physicians could review some of the fundamental concepts through short PowerPoint presentations or ten-minute lectures. For example, physicians could be reminded that if they can make the case for inpatient status, then the patient should be designated as such. They could also be encouraged to admit a patient if that person has already failed outpatient care. They could discuss the idea that a patient with multiple conditions that individually do not meet InterQual criteria would qualify for admission given the complexity of their condition. In addition, by providing greater detail in the areas discussed above and reviewing case studies to enhance physician knowledge, this hospital, among others, can further educate physi-

cians regarding the impact they can have on improving this growing problem. However, this solution only covers the initial step of giving the correct status.

The Review of the Patient Status

Utilization review nurses play the primary role in evaluating patient status once the patient has been placed in observation, as they are the InterQual experts. Given the current number of cases that exceed 48 hours in the Observation Unit, some modifications in the review process are recommended. The first change that should be considered is increasing the review process from once a day to every twelve hours. This change would not result in an increase in personnel, as it is viable to check each observation patient's status twice a day. This would increase the likelihood that an erroneous designation is caught, and the patient reclassified prior to midnight. General status emails and request for change in status emails should be clearly differentiated in the subject section of the email so that physicians can see at a glance if action is needed. While general status emails are essential because they assure physicians that the patient has been reviewed, the sheer volume of emails make it easy for an important one to be overlooked. A uniform communication system should also be created to enhance the communication between the URNs and the physicians. Currently, the URNs contact the physician by either email or phone depending on the doctor's preference. This is problematic, as there is no guarantee that a busy physician will read the email prior to the midnight deadline. Phone calls are also difficult as it may be challenging to reach a doctor when the ED is extremely busy. Ideally, the most effective way to handle this would be to have the URNs onsite so they can track down the physician and ensure the change in status. It would also provide a potential teaching opportunity. As the URN explains why the patient's status should be changed, physicians can gain a better understanding regarding what distinguishes inpatient from outpatient criteria. However, a more realistic goal would be to have one of the URNs on site at all times. This way, if a physician did not understand why another URN requested a change in patient status, he could still go to the URN on site to learn why the patient was moved. Furthermore, this URN could also attend Tier 3 meet-

ings for the hospital and present the metrics related to patient status changes. Through implementing these suggestions, the URN team can improve their efficiency as they monitor patient status.

Technological Implementation

Technology could also be a very effective means by which to manage the nearly five hundred pages of criteria found in the InterQual manual. Physicians are the first healthcare providers to determine status, yet their primary concern is providing effective treatment for the patient, not memorizing observation criteria. They are also moving from room to room, so the development of an app that could be downloaded on a mobile device may be an effective option. This app would walk them through a series of questions using the InterQual criteria, thus enabling them to make better recommendations and help alleviate their concerns regarding erroneously admitting a patient. URNs also have many other duties that require their attention, and the ability to decipher who meets InterQual's definition and who does not could be greatly enhanced by the use of technology. A computer program that utilizes InterQual criteria could be downloaded on the URN's computers, allowing them quicker and more effective evaluations. This program could also serve as a management tool, as it could document the day and time an evaluation took place. While no app or program will completely eliminate the need for sound human judgement, given the volume of information involved in observation status criteria, the use of technology seems prudent. This technology could be acquired by exploring the market for commercially available software, hiring a software company to develop it, using Hospital X's IT department, or hiring software engineering/computer science interns to develop it. Before this is pursued, however, an investigation should be conducted to determine if approval is needed from the FDA or another regulatory body.

Future Perspective

While there are many metrics available for length of stay and the margins of the hospital with regards to Medicare observation patients, there are other metrics which are not being appropriately tracked or shared. Utilization Review Nurses are responsible for tracking and analyzing metrics in the Observation Unit on a regular basis. Currently, they share only raw data with physicians, which by

itself provides little guidance and ultimately yields little benefit to the hospital. A more effective use of the data would be to communicate the metrics in a manner that indicates to physicians the number and types of status changes that have occurred in a given month, whether it be outpatient to inpatient or inpatient to outpatient (also known as a code 44). While the data for these metrics do exist, they are not analyzed as often as other metrics, such as length of stay, even though they convey equally important information. If there are a high number of outpatient to inpatient status changes and a high number of code 44s in a given month, it can be inferred that UR nurses are appropriately reviewing patient status. It would also indicate that physicians are not properly categorizing patients, as they do not understand what determines inpatient versus observation status. Likewise, a low number of outpatient to inpatient status changes but a comparatively high number of code 44s would suggest that physicians favor inpatient over observation, which is financially beneficial for the hospital. Since this raw data does exist, I recommend that this data be converted monthly into reports that can be used to further optimize proper utilization of the Observation Unit. By improving upon these metrics, Hospital X can assess Medicare patient status and observation stays where this project failed to do so.

Appendix

Length of Stay for Observation Patients						
FY18	DC Less Than 24 Hrs		DC at 24 Hrs or Greater			
DC Month	Cases	Pct	Cases	Pct	Total	Avg LOS in Hrs
July	214	34.08%	414	65.92%	628	30.83
August	265	38.69%	420	61.31%	685	30.34
September	213	32.27%	447	67.73%	660	33.34
October	234	33.48%	465	66.52%	699	32.19
November	244	37.25%	411	62.75%	655	31.00
December	215	32.87%	439	67.13%	654	33.11
January	197	30.73%	444	69.27%	641	33.54
February	204	32.43%	425	67.57%	629	32.42
March	237	34.20%	456	65.80%	693	32.21
April	277	38.90%	435	61.10%	712	30.55
May	292	37.39%	489	62.61%	781	31.17
Grand Total	2592	34.85%	4845	65.15%	7437	31.86

Table A shows the overall observation pattern for patients, not just Medicare patients.

Through **Table A**, one can clearly see length of stay for all patients at Hospital X who were placed in observation. With 65% of cases exceeding the theoretical maximum and the average length of stay being over 7 hours longer, observation at Hospital operating at an optimal capacity. However, this does include the CDUs of the Emergency Department.

Hospital X Observation Excluding Clinical Decision Units						
FY18	DC Less Than 24 Hrs		DC at 24 Hrs or Greater			
DC Month	Cases	Pct	Cases	Pct	Total	Avg LOS in Hrs
July	87	23.58%	282	76.42%	369	35.47
August	107	26.95%	290	73.05%	397	35.57
September	92	22.12%	324	77.88%	416	38.31
October	107	24.32%	333	75.68%	440	36.74
November	101	24.82%	306	75.18%	407	35.83
December	105	25.00%	315	75.00%	420	37.16
January	103	25.06%	308	74.94%	411	37.49
February	104	26.00%	296	74.00%	400	36.02
March	90	22.73%	306	77.27%	396	37.52
April	111	27.61%	291	72.39%	402	35.38
May	115	26.87%	313	73.13%	428	35.19
Grand Total	1122	25.01%	3364	74.99%	4486	36.44

Table B illustrates the breakdown of observation length of stay excluding the clinical decision units (CDUs).

When looking at **Table B**, the reader is better able to understand how observation units in the hospital differ from those in the Emergency Department (CDUs). A popular misconception would be that CDUs would have longer length of stays as many of these cases are considered critical cases. However, this belief is untrue according to the tables above. When CDUs were removed from the data, it showed that the percentage of cases that exceeded 24 hours actually increased. From this and the fact that average length of stay is also longer for normal observation units, CDUs are running more efficiently than their counterpart. Regardless of this fact, both forms of observation are not proceeding as optimally as they should be.

These findings are not abnormal. According to one systematic literature review done in the UK, problems in observation units and clinical decision units are not exclusive to the United States. The study found that there were many improvements needed to be made to the CDU in the ED and the regular observation units in the hospital in order to streamline care.²³ Another study discovered that length of stay improved with regards to ED visits as a result of CDUs taking these patients but also resulted in an increase length of stay in the CDUs.²⁴ Based on this information, the reader can gather that results of observation length of stay, while unsurprising, illustrate the need for improvement in these facilities.

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NOTES

- ¹ Salvador-Kelly and Kwon, “Emergency Department Observation Units.”
- ² Asudani, “Pros and Cons.”
- ³ Andrews, “Benefits to Patients Come at a Price.”
- ⁴ Asudani, “Pros and Cons.”
- ⁵ Salvador-Kelly and Kwon. “Emergency Department Observation Units”
- ⁶ Konrad, “Medicare Billing: Hospital ‘Observation’ Can Cost You.”
- ⁷ Davis, “Pay More If You’re Hospitalized.”
- ⁸ Jaffe, “Costly For Medicare Patients.”
- ⁹ Konrad, “Medicare Billing: Hospital ‘Observation Unit’.”
- ¹⁰ Ross, “Units Offer Savings.”
- ¹¹ Wiler and Ginde, “440: National Study of Emergency.”
- ¹² Sheehy, “‘Observation Status’ for Hospitalized Patients.”
- ¹³ Trommald, “[Observational Units--Same Good Service to Lower Costs?].”
- ¹⁴ Ross. “Units Offer Savings, Shorter Stays, and Reduced Admissions.”
- ¹⁵ Ross. “Units Offer Savings, Shorter Stays, and Reduced Admissions.”
- ¹⁶ Baugh, “Making Greater Use Of Dedicated Hospital Observation.”
- ¹⁷ Abbass, “One-Year Outcomes Associated With Using Observation.”
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- ¹⁹ Godwin, “What Is the Two-Midnight Rule?”
- ²⁰ Sheehy, “‘Observation Status’ for Hospitalized Patients.”
- ²¹ Lind, “Increasing Trends.”
- ²² Sheehy, “‘Observation Status’ for Hospitalized Patients.”
- ²³ Lind, “Increasing Trends.”
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The translation of a text into another language involves far more than finding equivalent words in the target language and putting them in proper word order. Rather, woven into the fabric of a language are unique and individualized metaphors that often represent underlying conceptualizations about abstract notions, such as feelings, thoughts, and sense of identity. The present study takes a deeper look at conceptual body metaphors, specifically the heart and the head, and their associations in ancient Greek and Chinese in order to provide an understanding of the abstract functions underlying associated with each internal organ.

Conceptual Body Metaphors in Greek and Chinese: the Heart and Head

Sarah Henn

I. Introduction

In their seminal work, *Metaphors We Live By*, sociolinguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson point out that “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action.”¹ Metaphors go beyond simply figures of speech, but Lakoff and Johnson maintain that they also indicate how we fundamentally think about and act upon certain abstract concepts. For example, English employs battle terminology to describe arguments. One takes a “side,” “attacks” the “opponent,” and “surrenders” when the other person “wins.” These metaphors reflect and even influence the way English speakers think about arguments, a reality that can affect the way people act when in an argument with someone. However, metaphors such as this are not universal, but language-specific. If metaphors indicate the way a person actually thinks about that concept,

then it is possible that two groups of people speaking two different languages may not only talk about the same concept differently, but may think and act upon them differently as well.

This can prove to be problematic for the Bible translator. Laden with the great weight of the message of the Bible, the faithful translator strives to convey the message of the text to a new group of people, a population that shares neither a language nor a culture with the source text's audience. Since metaphors are not simply word devices in a language that can be deciphered by a new audience, but are rather indicators of underlying conceptual systems engrained in a culture, the task extends far beyond finding the comparable idiom in the target language. The question arises as to whether it is even possible for the full meaning of the conceptual metaphor to be reflected in a language whose speakers operate under different conceptual systems.

These difficulties are of great concern for the Bible translator as he or she strives to navigate translating the many metaphors in the Bible, of which internal body metaphors play a significant role. Farzad Sharifian, René Dirven, Ning Yu, and Susanne Niemeier emphasize the integral role of internal body metaphors in language, saying that by using internal body metaphors, "we not only try to explain our bodies themselves, but also other, not immediately body-related aspects of our selves, by referring to our bodies."² In other words, internal body metaphors play a role in helping us not only verbalize, but conceptualize such human functions as emotion and thought. The source of these body metaphors stems partially from physiological experience, but not fully. In fact, Sharifian et al. stress that "physiological motivation does not seem to play a major role in conceptualizations of internal body organs, otherwise there would be many more similarities across different languages and cultures."³ Thus, despite some similarities across languages and cultures, significant variation remains across languages with respect to internal body metaphors, a fact that complicates the translation process. In this essay, I analyze how the ancient Greek and Mandarin Chinese languages differ in the metaphors they use to talk about the heart and the head. First, I define cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism as they relate to ancient Greek and modern Chinese. Then, I explain the abstract functions underlyingly attributed to both the head and the heart, as influenced by cultural traditions and linguistic metaphors. Finally, I compare these findings and discuss how they might apply to translation.

II. Cardiocentrism vs. Cerebrocentrism

Cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism represent two approaches to the question of what is the ruling entity, or center, of a man. According to Chinese linguist Ning Yu, both the traditions of cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism began in ancient Greece.⁴ He defines the question as a matter of which organ is thought to be the center of psychology and anthropology, cardiocentrists attesting it to be the heart and cerebrocentrists the head.⁵ While other cultures, such as the Egyptians, Hebrews, and even the ancient Chinese, believed without dispute that the heart was the center of the man, Greek philosophers were the first to question this belief that was long taken for granted.⁶ Their debates on the matter separated thinkers into two camps.

These underlying conceptualizations of the center of man find their ways into language, making it paramount for a translator to have an awareness of the differences between cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism. Since the use of a body metaphor in a phrase could allude to not merely a body part, but an entire way of conceptualizing human existence, much is at stake in translation of these body metaphors. They reflect more than idiomatic turns of phrase, but philosophical and medical traditions at work in a culture. As such, using the frameworks of cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism as a guide, I will dissect ancient Greek and Mandarin Chinese body metaphors.

III. Ancient Greek Body Metaphors

The Greek word for “heart” in the New Testament is *καρδία* (*kardia*). German theologian Johannes Bhem states that, although Greece was the first place the long-held assumption of cardiocentrism was ever questioned, nevertheless the Greek standard was that “the heart is the centre of the inner life of man and the source or seat of all the forces and functions of the soul and spirit as attested in many different ways in the NT.”⁷⁷ Bhem’s findings reveal that *kardia* has four primary functions in the New Testament. It houses “feelings and emotions, desires and passions”; it is the “seat of understanding, the source of thought and reflections”; and it is the “seat of the will, the source of resolves.”⁷⁸ Lastly, and possibly most important to Christian

tradition, *kardia* is “the one centre in man...in which the religious life is rooted, which determines moral conduct.”⁹ Thus, in ancient Greek, the heart is used metaphorically as the seat of emotion, rationality, and will in the New Testament. Not only that, but it is the locus of the spiritual part of a human.

Theologian Robert D. Branson touches on cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism as held by New Testament authors, holding that Paul demonstrates this cardiocentric understanding of the body in his epistles. Branson claims that Paul understands the seat of rationality and thus center of the human being to be located in *kardia*, and Branson cites several passages as evidence.¹⁰ Paul talks of a people who became “futile in their thinking and their senseless heart (*kardia*) was darkened.”¹¹ He also foretells of the revelation of the “purposes of the hearts (*kardia*).”¹² He writes that a “veil lies over their heart (*kardia*).”¹³ Furthermore, he encourages believers that “each one must do as he has determined in his heart (*kardia*).”¹⁴ Each example demonstrates Paul’s clear use of *kardia* as the center of cognition and understanding. This is not simply a Pauline way of speaking or a rhetorical device used for artistic effect; this is a way of communicating the concept of the center of humans that his readers would have well understood because the metaphors are built into the Greek language and Greek speakers’ conceptual systems. This is the best way for Paul to communicate ideas about understanding and thinking to his audience. According to these examples, Paul clearly reflects the Greek cardiocentric viewpoint, thinking and writing about *kardia* as the seat of rationality.

In addition to linguistic evidence from Paul’s letters that *kardia* was perceived as the center of human cognition in ancient Greek, other New Testament authors relay Jesus’ words, featuring metaphors of the heart as the seat of mental activity. First, Branson cites Matthew 15:18-19 where Jesus says, in Branson’s translation, “But the things which come out of the mouth come from the heart (*kardia*), and defile a man. For out of the heart (*kardia*) come evil thoughts (such as) murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”¹⁵ In Mark 11:23, he says that anyone who “does not doubt in his heart (*kardia*), but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.”¹⁶ Lastly, Branson cites Luke 5:22, when Jesus asks the Pharisees, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts (*kardia*)?”¹⁷ As Branson points out, Jesus’s statements clearly “reflect

OT usage which views the heart as the place where mental functions take place.”¹⁸ Evidently, readers can understand Jesus as speaking from a cardiocentrist view of humans, talking to his audience about thinking and believing as occurring in the heart.

Dutch religion scholar Teun Tieleman emphasizes the heart as the center of man’s spiritual experience in making sense of Paul’s meanings behind his usages of *kardia*.¹⁹ He says the following:

The heart is presented as in need of enlightenment and closed (“hardened”) to God (Rom. 1:21 [supra], 2:5, 16:18, 1 Cor. 2:9, 3:15, 4:6). It is connected with sorrow (Rom. 9:2, 2 Cor. 2:4) as well as with sinful desires (Rom. 1:24). However, its good functioning is also indicated. It is marked by longing for goodness and for God (Rom. 10:1; cf. 5:5, 10:6); it receives the Spirit within itself (2 Cor. 1:22; cf. 3:3, Gal. 4:6; cf. Eph. 3:17). It shows obedience (Rom. 6:17) but also determination (1 Cor. 7:37). It is described as the seat of faith (Rom. 10:8, 9, 10, 2; cf. Cor. 5:12).²⁰

Tieleman notes that, in following with a Platonic line of thinking, Paul speaks of the heart as the seat of human motivation—both good and bad.²¹ This is intimately connected with his stance that Paul uses *kardia* as the entity that the Holy Spirit seeks to mold and change; if the will must be conformed to the Lord’s will, then the heart is the place for the Holy Spirit to start the work.

In sum, the work of Branson and Tieleman serve to confirm Bhem’s assertions of *kardia* as representing the center of human cognition, emotion, will and motivation, and the spiritual self. By contrast, the Greek conceptualization of the role of the head seems to be something more akin to “source,” as the following scholarship suggests.

The Greek word for head used in the New Testament is κεφαλή (*kephale*). Tieleman discusses the understanding of *kephale* and Paul’s usage of it metaphorically in his writings to the early church.²² In seeking to understand how Paul’s audience at the time might have

understood his references to Jesus Christ as the head (*kephale*) of the church (Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22, 4:16, 5:23) and husband as the head of the wife (1Cor 11:3, Eph. 5:23), Tieleman points out that, at the time, “the cardiocentric view of the human organism still enjoyed wide support - so much, in fact, that one may well ask whether any reference to the head in the sense of ruling part was too ambiguous to be effective, if not downright incomprehensible.”²³ This provides a potentially new light with which to view metaphors such as those in Colossians for Christ’s relationship to the church and man’s relationship to woman. In light of the generally accepted consensus that the Greeks were cardiocentric in their conceptualizations of the ruling entity of the body, metaphors of one person being the *kephale* of another, as Paul states in Colossians, must express a different type of relationship. This is a vastly different notion for Western English speakers who often automatically interpret Paul’s meaning as Christ being the ruling entity of the church or man the ruling entity of woman.

Tieleman provides an alternative interpretation of Paul’s meaning for *kephale* here, one consistent with Paul’s conjectured cardiocentric viewpoint. He suggests that Paul might intend for his audience to read the head as a “source” rather than “the centre of command or authority.”²⁴ This notion is supported by religion scholar and professor Troy W. Martin, who holds strongly the opinion that, consistent with the Greek cardiocentric worldview, *kephale* does not mean “ruler” in the way *kardia* does.²⁵ He writes:

For Paul, the heart rather than the head is the center of intelligence, reason, thinking, and decision-making. If Paul wanted to construct a metaphor consistent with his physiology to specify man as the ruler of the woman, he would need to identify man as the heart of a woman. By identifying man as the head of woman, Paul does not specify man as the leader, controller, or ruler of woman.

On the contrary, *kephale* must mean something closer to “source” or “origin” in order for Paul to remain consistent throughout his works.

While Tieleman agrees with Martin that “source” might be a more likely conceptualization of *kephale*, he recognizes and addresses the tension this causes in interpreting 1 Corinthians 11.²⁷ He holds that the idea that Paul was *strictly* a cardiocentrist—speaking of the heart as the seat of volition, will, and intellect and leaving the function of a type of “source” for the head—is incompatible with 1 Corinthians 11.²⁸

To rectify this tension, Tieleman proposes that Paul might not adhere to only one point of view and that as medical advances developed to reveal more about the physiological functions of body organs, Paul demonstrated a blend of cardiocentrism and cerebrocentrism.²⁹ Tieleman suggests that Paul “may use scientifically supported (but still sufficiently familiar) facts in the case of one organ (the head) and loose or popular parlance backed by folk psychology and Old Testament usage in the case of the other (the heart).”³⁰ Regardless, in terms of linguistic body metaphors and the ancient Greeks’ conceptualizations of *kardia* and *kephale*, the former is generally accepted as denoting the “ruling entity” of the man and the latter a “source” or “origin.”

IV. Chinese Body Metaphors

While the Chinese metaphorical usages of 心 (*xin*) “heart” and 头 (*tou*) “head” follow similar tracks as those featured in ancient Greek, their specific philosophical and medical influences on the linguistic expressions are significant. In particular, the Chinese body metaphors featuring *xin* are inseparable from the influences of the philosophical and medical traditions surrounding them in the language.

Following the philosophical tradition, the heart is attributed “supreme mental power,” resulting in “a popular conceptual metaphor THE HEART IS THE RULER OF THE BODY.”³¹ This includes the heart as being the locus of “both affective and cognitive activities.”³² In fact, the encompassing meaning of *xin* leads to a common English translation of the word as “heart-mind.”³³ Chinese philosophy researcher Chad Hansen explains that this “reflects the blending of belief and desire (thought and feeling, ideas and emotions) into a single complex dispositional potential.”³⁴ Chinese philosophy is evi-

dence of xin encompassing both the English understandings of heart and mind. *The Guanzi*, a seventh century philosophical text, asserts of a baby:

生而目视，耳听，心虑。

“After the birth, the eyes will see, the ears will hear, and the heart will think.”³⁵

Here, the heart acts as the thinking agent of the body, even as young as infancy. Additionally, Chinese philosophical tradition attributes to the heart an authority over the rest of the body. The Confucian philosopher Xunzi contemplates:

心者，形之君也，而神明之主也，出令而无所受令。

“The heart is the ruler of the body and master of the spiritual light, who issues commands but does not receive commands.”³⁶

The *Wenzi*, a classic Daoist text, states:

心者形之主也，神者心之宝也。

“The heart is the master of the body, and the spirits are the treasures of the heart.”³⁷

Xunzi observes:

心居中虚以治五官，夫是之谓天君。

“The heart dwells in the central cavity and governs the five of ficials/organs, and hence it is called the heavenly ruler.”³⁸

These three philosophies display the prevalent Chinese understanding of the heart as having authority over the body and the entire being. Because the heart is where thinking occurs, where the “spiritual light,” or the “totality of mental aspects of a person,” is controlled and cultivated, it is also the ruler and the governor.³⁹ Thus, in the philosophical musings on the heart and its function, the heart “takes the central position of the body both in the physical and metaphorical sense.”⁴⁰

The Chinese medical tradition, too, has influenced the Chinese conceptualization of the heart, attributing specific emotions to the five *zang* organs in accordance with *Zang-Fu*, or “Viscera” Theory. According to the tradition, “the emotion related to the liver is anger, to the heart is joy, to the spleen is overthinking, to the lung is sorrow, and to the kidney is fear.”⁴¹ When a negative emotion is felt, it indicates that something is amiss with its respective organ.⁴² However, the heart also functions as the ruler of the other *zang*. Chinese ancient medicine expert Qi Wang says that “wounds inflicted by emotions, although they each belong to one of the five *zang*, if their causes are traced, all come from the heart.”⁴³ Any unbalance of emotion, even if it is usually attributed to the liver, spleen, lung, or kidney, is directly related back to the heart. Thus, the Chinese medical tradition treats the heart as the cause of all emotional function and dysfunction.

Both the philosophical and medical schools of thought influence the current linguistic sense of the conceptual body metaphor of the heart. In the present day, special attention to common figures of speech including the heart can provide a clearer idea of how the heart is conceptualized today, even as it has been influenced by past traditions. Linguistically, common metaphors using *xin* “heart” fall into four categories that linguist Yu notes in his article: 1) the “heart as a container,” 2) the “heart as a container mapped onto other containers,” 3) the “heart as the centre of thoughts and ideas,” and 4) the “heart as the locus of the true self.”⁴⁴ The following Chinese sentences each demonstrate an example of one of these uses of “heart” in Chinese today.

First, Yu notes that the heart can metaphorically be a container for thoughts and emotions. One example reads:

这是发自内心的喜悦。

“This is the joy that has arisen from the depth of the heart (lit. the deep heart).”⁴⁵

Yu says that here, *xin* as a metaphorical “container” of the emotion joy implies that the emotion is real and poignant, being that it has sprung from the “deep heart.”⁴⁶ The heart is where true, authentic emotion originates. Chinese metaphors including *xin* represent the heart as a container for emotions, a physical space where emotions exist and move around.

Second, the “heart as a container” metaphor can also be “mapped onto other containers,” such as a field or land, as exemplified in the examples below.⁴⁷ The first reads:

我把环保种子播撒在他的心田里。

“I sowed the environment-protection seeds in his heart (lit. heart-field).”⁴⁸

This example contains more than one metaphor. Yu says that “the heart is conceptualized as ‘a plot of field’ with its own boundaries.”⁴⁹ In this plot of field, thoughts and ideas act as “seeds” to be placed in the field of the heart and grown.⁵⁰ Not only is the heart metaphorically a plot of field and the thoughts and ideas spoken of as seeds, but the thoughts and ideas are contained in the heart in the same way the seeds are contained in the field. One gleans not simply an image of the heart as a container from the metaphor, but also an idea of it being the grower, cultivator, or developer of ideas and thoughts. Another example of this usage:

我以为只要自己心地清白，就可以避免肇害于人。

“I thought as long as I maintained a clear and clean heart (lit. my heart-land remains clear and pure), I could avoid doing harm to others.”⁵¹

Yu expands on this, saying that this conceptualization “reflects the traditional view in ancient Chinese philosophy that the heart is the locus of moral sense and moral character.”⁵² In this case, the metaphor of the heart as a stretch of land is paired with the metaphors of “light and purity.”⁵³ In this way, the container-heart is mapped onto idea of a stretch of land and is treated as the source or location of purity and goodness. As demonstrated by these examples, *xin* is a container that can be mapped onto other containers and where thoughts and ideas exist.

Third, Yu provides examples of the heart as the “centre of thoughts and ideas”, just like the mind might be for English speakers.⁵⁴ This is exemplified in the following example:

可是这件事他也只能放在心里想，不敢说出来。

“However, he can only put this matter in his heart to think about, but dare not speak it out.”⁵⁵

In addition to treating the heart as a type of container, this metaphor posits the heart as the thinking mechanism, the thinking entity. Thoughts are put into the heart, where they are sorted and processed. Rather than being purely a container, the heart is an active processor of thought and thinking.

The examples thus far demonstrate modern-day uses of the heart as the locus of various activities and states, including emotions such as joy, anger, or hatred and intellectual activity such as thinking, focusing, or paying attention. Yu’s fourth and last observation on *xin* metaphors recognizes the heart as the “locus of one’s true self.”⁵⁶ To prove this, he provides several examples, two of which read:

粗心的驾驶员对于公众是一种危险。

“A careless (lit. thick-hearted) driver is a danger to the public.”⁵⁷

她做什么事都很细心。

“She is meticulous (lit. thin-hearted) in whatever she does.”⁵⁸

Yu states that both of these examples “refer to people’s disposition, temperament or character in terms of physical traits of their heart,” namely, in their thickness.⁵⁹ This metaphor does not place a specific function or action in the heart; rather, the person himself and his or her very nature are metaphorically tied to the heart. Whatever metaphorical physical characteristics that a person’s heart has are projected onto the entire person, representing his or her character. If the heart has the characteristic, the person does too.

The above four current linguistic metaphors featuring *xin* demonstrate the heart as a container for emotions, an organ of thinking, and the locus of a man. These observations are remarkably similar to those discovered in ancient Greek, and the developments contributing to the Chinese conceptualization of the head follow a similar pattern as that of Greek as well.

The Chinese metaphors for 头 (*tou*) “head” have emerged primarily as the Western influence on the Chinese language and culture has become more prominent, even though Chinese medical awareness of the mental functions of the brain began in the Ming

(1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.⁶⁰ According to Yu (2003), the concepts associated with the mind and the heart are very similar as a result of the competing influences of modern medical advances and ancient tradition.⁶¹ He says that the Chinese 头脑 (*tou-nao*), meaning literally head-brain, is often viewed as the place “where one’s thoughts and ideas are stored and one’s thinking takes place.”⁶² He provides the following examples as support:

我们要有冷静的头脑。

“We should have a cool head (or, be sober-minded).”

我们应该把头脑里的错误思想清楚出去。

“We should rid our minds of erroneous ideas.”

僵化思想束缚着一些认得头脑。

“An ossified way of thinking shackles some people’s minds [lit.: stiffened ideas are binding some people’s minds].”⁶³

As evident, each example demonstrates the “head-brain” as the place where thoughts exist or are stored. On the other hand, the 心 (*xin*) “heart” is evidently the “‘thinking organ’ and the locus of the mind.”⁶⁴ Yu seems to make a distinction between the “head-brain” being linguistically a storage unit for thoughts and the “heart” being the place where the function of thinking actually takes place. No matter the subtleties, Yu makes it clear that, while in Western thinking “there is a binary contrast between the heart and the mind,” “this distinction between the heart and the mind does not exist in traditional Chinese culture.”⁶⁵ Although modern Chinese people might not overtly think of the mind and the heart as both serving functions in the storage and processing of thoughts, their language and metaphorical expressions reflect these traditions of mind and heart. These conceptualizations are woven into the language. Yu addresses this clear tension between the traditional way of conceptualizing thought in the *xin* “heart” and the modern, physiologically accurate conceptualization of thought as occurring in the *tou* “head” artfully:

A synchronic linguistic study shows that the Chinese conceptualization of the heart as the central faculty of cognition, as found in ancient Chinese philosophy and traditional Chinese medicine, is still widely manifested in the Chinese language today, despite the fact that the cognitive functions of the brain are fully recognized in scientific knowledge. The question is: Is the linguistic evidence merely a matter of language, or does it to some degree reflect the cultural conceptualization of the Chinese-speaking people?⁶⁶

Yu's comments address the outside influences on linguistic conceptual metaphor, influences that, especially when related to body metaphors, can be as dynamic as the shifting medical field. All these factors, including tradition and emerging science, ought to be considered when studying the present-day understanding of conceptual body metaphors in modern-day Chinese. As a result, questions arise that, while unable to be answered in the present discussion, are relevant to any attempt at translation of Chinese body metaphors. These questions include: Do conceptual systems based on linguistic uses of body metaphors change as the understanding of human physiology improves? If so, how can the translator know which associations with body metaphors will be triggered in a Chinese speaker's mind? These questions are important to consider when studying and working with Chinese conceptual body metaphors in order to render the most accurate translations of foreign texts into the Chinese language.

V. Conclusion

The ancient Greek and modern Chinese body metaphors are strikingly similar in the associations they denote. Both conceive of the heart as the seat of emotion and the seat of reason. Both represent the heart as the locus of the self, the ruling entity of the man. However, they differ somewhat in the associations assigned to the head. Ancient Greek attributes to the head the idea of a "source," a place from which

something else might originate. By contrast, modern medicine has influenced Chinese metaphors for the head, attributing to it some level of cognition as its actual function has been discovered.

While the differences between the body metaphors of the two languages were not as different as expected, there is still room for observation. This discussion was presented in English, a language characterized by a binary separation of the conceptualizations of the head and the heart. While the two languages under discussion might not have shown much variance in their conceptualizations of internal body metaphors, Western English speakers can certainly imagine some of the potential differences that can emerge when translating conceptual metaphors so engrained in the language and culture of a people group that their existences go almost unnoticed. Despite the broad similarities between the two languages discussed here, even the minute variances discussed above are worth attending to in order to ensure that the target audience understands the full impact of the source text. The almost unnoticeable nature of conceptual metaphors makes them vitally important to heed due to their automatic stimuli of associations, and Greek and Chinese are no exceptions.

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- 1 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 458.
- 2 Sharifian et al., *Culture, Body, and Language*, 14.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 4 Yu, “Chinese Metaphors of Thinking.”
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 Behm, *Theological Dictionary*.
- 8 Branson, “Science, the Bible,” 231.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Rom. 1:21 ESV
- 12 1 Cor. 4:5
- 13 2 Cor. 3:15
- 14 2 Cor. 9:7
- 15 Branson, “Science, the Bible,” 231.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 Branson, “Science, the Bible,” 232.
- 19 Tieleman, “Head and Heart,” 95.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 95-96.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 96.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 Martin, “Performing the Head,” 79.
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 Tieleman, “Head and Heart,” 95.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 Yu, “The Chinese Heart,” 131.
- 32 Shun, *Mencius and Early*.
- 33 Hansen, *A Daoist Theory*.
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Yu, “The Chinese Heart,” 133.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 135.
- 37 *Ibid.*

- 38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Wang, *Zhongyi*, 45.
42 Yu, "The Chinese Heart," 139.
43 Wang, *Zhongyi*.
44 Yu, "The Chinese Heart," 140-147.
45 Ibid., 140.
46 Ibid., 141.
47 Ibid., 142.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., 143.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 142.
52 Ibid., 143.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
56 Yu, "The Chinese Heart," 147.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Yu, "Chinese Metaphors of Thinking," 139.
61 Ibid., 158.
62 Ibid., 159.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Lin, *Certainty*.
66 Yu, "The Chinese Heart," 159.

Since the 1979 economic reforms implemented by Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese economy has grown exponentially, with market forces taking precedence even as the government itself remains devotedly Communist. But even as the economy grew, market forces percolated in the healthcare system, resulting in higher costs and disparities that left unequal access to healthcare services in their wake and encouraged the commodification of the healthcare system. These disparities have put the health of millions of Chinese at risk, and new political approaches are needed to address the issues wrought by over-marketed healthcare.

Contemporary Chinese Healthcare: Systemic Issues In The Era Of Economic Reform

Grayson Jackson

2019 marks the seventieth anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Since the meteoric rise of the CCP in 1949, the Chinese social, political, and economic landscape has been rapidly altered and advanced closer to the vanguard of the world's most developed nations. Healthcare, in particular, has changed dramatically. Beginning with the administration of Deng Xiaoping from 1978 to 1992, the healthcare system—formerly based on Maoist principles—moved gradually to a system influenced by market forces, devolving government control, and centering healthcare around the profit motive. However, the free market has thus far proven to be inadequate in managing an equitable healthcare system that is both cost-effective and patient-centered. Therefore, in an effort to further illuminate this issue, this paper will analyze how economics and related policies, particularly Deng Xiaoping's signature reforms, have influenced China's healthcare system.

Inside Look: A Major Crisis

A person's health is simultaneously fragile, deeply personal, and critical to a productive life, which is why health outcomes are not only relevant to individuals, but to the state itself. Unfortunately, designing an impeccable healthcare system is fraught with challenges, as has been shown in the United States—and China is no exception. With a population of over one billion, China's resources are stretched thin, and the Chinese government has encountered difficulty in expanding affordability, access, and availability of healthcare equitably. This crisis, in which healthcare is vastly underperforming relative to population needs, is cause for concern.

Due to the massive demand for healthcare services, patients must stand for hours in long waiting lines.¹ Hundreds of people wait outside to visit a specialist, and “most people are relegated to overcrowded hospitals” that are severely underequipped to handle the high volume of patients in the absence of adequate primary care.² Rural residents, who are geographically distant from urban medical centers, face even fewer choices and typically visit village clinics to receive treatment.³ These conditions paint a picture of a healthcare system that is alarmingly unequipped to meet the needs of Chinese citizens. In addition, this overcrowding poses a significant dilemma, as patients requiring urgent or emergency services face the same delay. The lives of many Chinese are literally put at risk because the demand exceeds the supply.

The system responsible for tremendous hospital queues places inordinate pressure on the healthcare providers who tend to patients, as well. Low wages among primary care providers (PCPs), in particular, have turned away top talent from general practice and kindled a lack of respect for their roles among their patients.⁴ Physicians are tempted by the allure of higher incomes allotted to specialist positions that “would guarantee them an ‘iron rice bowl’” of socioeconomic security.⁵ Social status and income unsurprisingly appear to be the primary motivators behind this professional imbalance between general care and specialty care, which in turn may result in higher healthcare spending. Patients seeking the best results also follow the reputations of their doctors, leading to a greater demand for specialty care and thus longer lines and a higher risk of physician burnout. Furthermore, because they prefer specialists, patients are overburdening hospitals by skipping primary care that was formerly covered

by traveling countryside providers, or barefoot doctors.^{6,7,8} In fact, it is not required to register with a general practitioner and patients can visit outpatient specialists without a referral.⁹ Without sufficient gatekeeping by PCPs, the Chinese healthcare system will continue to be stymied by the overuse of specialists and hospitals, which in turn drives costs upward. These observations paint a picture of a financially unsustainable healthcare system, one which is unable to fulfill the expectations of timely and equitable outcomes for all. But how did China's healthcare system end up in this predicament, and in what ways have economic considerations shaped the trajectory of healthcare in China?

Influence of Capitalism

Many changes to China's healthcare system, the impacts of which are still appreciable today, began in earnest under the economic reforms of former paramount leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Deng Xiaoping (1978–1992). Deng, whose allegiance to communism was not as adamant as his predecessor's, introduced elements of capitalism into the Chinese economy in order to boost the country's economic performance and cooperative standing with the world. While well-intentioned in many regards, these reforms had the unfortunate side effect of specialization, which in the realm of healthcare devalued primary care and ballooned costs.

In response to China's economic sluggishness under PRC founder Mao Zedong's leadership, Deng moved to magnify the influence of market forces on the economy.¹⁰ Deng centered the Chinese economy around the principle of "socialism with Chinese characteristics," which could arguably be considered a diluted variant of capitalism.¹¹ Upon Deng's invitation, liberal market forces entered the Chinese economy and all its facets, thus affecting the healthcare industry. Medicine shifted from Beijing's control to private hands and the purview of regional localities.¹² But in seemingly paradoxical contradiction to the intended revitalization of China's economy, the increased modernization and privatization of healthcare services raised costs and made access to healthcare unequal, valuing what Diep calls "healthcare quality over healthcare equality."¹³ In an effort to reform

the economy and amplify China's wealth, Deng's policy unintentionally created additional disparities strikingly similar to those observed between U.S. income strata.

Under the leadership of Chairman Mao, China's economy, government, and society were all centered around the egalitarian principles of communism. At the time, nearly all Chinese citizens "enjoyed government-subsidized, cradle-to-grave healthcare," with coverage that parallels the socialized healthcare systems of modern-day Western Europe.¹⁴ While inefficient, people received the care they needed and national subsidies mitigated the costs borne by patients. But in 1979, Deng Xiaoping exchanged Mao's egalitarian values for a market-oriented economy that could compete with the rest of the world.¹⁵ These reforms essentially eliminated "universal access to free basic health care," thus leaving some patients—particularly poorer ones—to fall through the cracks.¹⁶ That is to say, the "social safety net" of government benefits guaranteed by Mao gave way to "ruthless capitalism," which operates according to the profit motive at the expense of the most socioeconomically vulnerable.¹⁷

With the state having divested a significant portion of its economic control, hospitals and other services have gained "considerable financial independence."¹⁸ Resultantly, these organizations have charged higher prices to stay solvent and compensate for lost subsidies and revenues. But compounding higher healthcare prices is the problem of insurance coverage. By 1997, only 50 percent of urban Chinese and 10 percent of their rural counterparts were insured due to the collapse of many state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that previously provided employment-based coverage, leaving a troubling 400 million without health insurance.^{19,20} Without coverage, healthcare services were rendered increasingly unaffordable, and healthcare expenses were likely to absorb a tremendous proportion of family income. This consequence was likely pronounced in rural areas, where farmers and laborers produced far lower income than their urban counterparts. Even today, among those with insurance, out-of-pocket costs are skyrocketing such that overall, most patients are accountable for approximately "52 percent of their medical expenses."^{21,22} Absent the egalitarian welfare provided by Mao, Deng's popular economic reforms damaged the ability of China's healthcare system to administer to all patients in need at an affordable cost. Those who could pay could receive, with diminishing returns for those with lower incomes.

Ultimately, while the economic reforms of the late twentieth century increased China's gross domestic product and average income, they did have an indelible impact on the system itself. Healthcare became a commodity and could only be accessed by those with the financial means to acquire it. This led to stark inequalities that mirrored rising social stratification.

Hospitals

Not only were healthcare services privatized, but so too were the sites of healthcare delivery: hospitals. Deng's reforms turned hospitals from truly public entities into privatized corporations—businesses that sought to maximize profits and returns on investment. As a result, hospital costs swelled, putting many patients with lower incomes at risk. Hospitals became dominated by profit, which eclipsed the aim of equitably improving patients' health.

Public hospitals in China “manage 90% of consultations for . . . outpatient care, and 90% of hospital inpatient admissions.”²³ Patients seek out hospitals for a variety of services, both general care and specialty care. Hospitals have also flourished rapidly in China, expanding from just under 10,000 in 1980 to over 18,000 in 2005.²⁴ This metric is a positive one, as a greater number of hospitals are needed to reach a national population—the largest in the world—that is simultaneously growing and getting older as life expectancy has risen. However, as was examined previously, quasi-capitalist economic policies have left hospitals and clinics financially responsible for themselves.²⁵ Medical institutions are incentivized to increase patient fees in order to remain in business, leaving patients with steep medical bills.

Specifically, hospitals have “resort[ed] to overcharging or overprescribing drugs” to meet their bottom line.²⁶ Because they can levy a fifteen percent markup on the sales of pharmaceuticals, hospitals are financially incentivized to prescribe more, expensive drugs.²⁷ This is especially problematic in light of the asymmetry of information between patients and their providers; patients know relatively little about drug costs and dosages, so hospitals are in a position to take advantage of their wherewithal to charge patients in excess. In response to rising drug costs, the Chinese government has financed a program to reduce the markup of prescription drug prices to zero,

in which thousands of hospitals have elected to participate.²⁸ If successful, policies like the zero-markup campaign may actually reduce spending and patients' payments.

Hospital costs have also risen due to the increasing reliance and preference for advanced medical technologies. Such technologies as computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) have had an overwhelmingly positive influence on the ability of physicians to diagnose patients accurately, and have "increased the efficiency and quality of medical practice."²⁹ But because they are expensive to import and costly to operate, these technologies have fueled the increase in healthcare costs and prices for patients.³⁰ Considering this dilemma intuitively, patients are attracted to facilities with the latest medical technologies, which have become the selling point of modern hospitals. In order to remain competitive among other institutions, hospitals must continually adopt these devices to expand their share of the proverbial patient market. Expensive as medical equipment is, hospitals consequently bear a greater financial burden. Thus, while designed to increase efficiency and lower diagnostic costs, these swiftly advancing technologies actually run counter to their cost-saving intentions.

Deng's economic reforms also disproportionately impacted hospitals and patients in rural areas. Prior to the economic reforms, China's healthcare system was categorized into three levels, with hospitals—classified into one of three tiers—delivering levels of care and advanced equipment commensurate with their location and patient population size.³¹ Tier-1 institutions corresponded to free, local clinics, whereas Tier-2 and Tier-3 institutions dealt with increasingly serious conditions and possessed the necessary technologies and providers to treat those conditions.³² The hospital structure was organized hierarchically such that all patients could access the institutions with necessary capabilities. However, when Deng's reforms encouraged the privatization of businesses and a market-oriented economy, "Tier-1 public establishments began to collapse, . . . leaving rural areas without public healthcare treatment, and higher-tier public hospitals became more autonomous."³³ Following the capitalist mantra, hospitals became puritanical agents of commerce, leaving rural residents to bear the brunt of additional disparity. What is increasingly evident from the corporate behavior of hospitals and rising costs of medical care is that the economic reform toward a market-oriented

economy has transformed healthcare into a commodity. Moreover, the decreasing affordability of hospital care for citizens of low socioeconomic status is likely to result in substantial inequalities of health-care access.

Access

While access has been mentioned briefly prior, it is critical to break down the market economy's effects on healthcare access by analyzing the insurance scheme as well as the disparities in access between subpopulations. Insured rates are usually an adequate measure of a nation's overall healthcare access because insurance pools risk and mitigates the cost of medical care borne by the consumer; the greater the insured rate, the greater the access. But while coverage is trending toward universal at present, it is not comprehensive. Inequalities in access also persist because policies have yet to address the needs of specific populations, like migrant workers.

China fortunately enjoys a high rate of public health insurance coverage today. Since 2011, this number has been over 95 percent.³⁴ In 2014, over 283 million people were covered by urban employment-based insurance, similar to the employment-based model that is predominant in the United States.³⁵ Millions more are also covered by the "urban resident basic insurance and new cooperative medical scheme," which are government financed and insure urban and rural residents, respectively.³⁶ In addition to public insurance, private insurance is also available. This private insurance, referred to as "commercial health insurance," is meant to be supplementary.³⁷ One caveat should be noted, however: while the insured rate is certainly an important metric, coverage itself does not indicate the comprehensiveness of insurance plans nor the percentage of out-of-pocket costs. For example, "long-term care insurance is virtually nonexistent," indicating a lack of coverage for certain services, and "a significant number of patients pay 100 percent out-of-pocket, because they receive out-of-network services."³⁸ Some scholars assert that even among the insured, the level of coverage is minimal.³⁹ Therefore, coverage rates can be misleading with regard to actual affordability. But while insurance rates are currently incredibly high for such a population of over one billion people, insurance rates in China were much lower in preceding years.

After the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping and after state-owned enterprises shifted to private hands, companies found it challenging to finance their employees' social insurance without government subsidies.⁴⁰ Stepping in to alleviate the issue, the government provided social insurance with lower coverage than when insurance was financed by Mao's party-state.⁴¹ As a result, insurance for urban employees fell short of complete, comprehensive coverage. And in rural areas, residents who were not employed by companies with health benefits were left solely with private insurance, which was too expensive for many rural families to afford.⁴² Because the government failed to intervene, "the result was a degradation and sometimes complete disappearance of the healthcare-insurance system in rural areas."⁴³ As was discussed earlier, poor rural families have an arguably greater need for insurance. Yet, rural areas received disproportionately fewer insurance benefits. Insurance coverage in the years following Deng's economic reforms was unequal, and this inequality persisted well into the beginning of the 2000s. In light of recent, near-universal insurance expansion in China, it appears that some of these historical insurance gaps have been allayed, but it would be a mistake to think that the challenge of insurance and high healthcare costs has been completely resolved.

With particular regard to healthcare access, China's market revolution and economic transformation have engendered many disparities, primarily along socioeconomic lines. One prominent example concerns the millions of migrant workers who are relocating from rural to urban areas in search of gainful employment. China's strides toward a market economy put migrant workers in a trepidatious state when they "led to the collapse of both the public healthcare network and universal access to basic healthcare."⁴⁴ Because they are far from their relatives and the support system needed to persevere through illness, migrant workers may face barriers to recovery and suffer from social isolation.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the hukou system of hometown registration prevents some migrant workers from accessing healthcare services in cities, and they must travel back to their hometown to receive care.⁴⁶ Migrant workers clearly face barriers to healthcare access that other Chinese citizens do not experience. Additional policies targeted to address migrant workers specifically or produce a safety net may reduce this disparity, but in the absence of such a safety net at present, many migrant workers are hung out to dry.

Twenty-First Century Policies

Now that the effects of twentieth-century economic reform on China's healthcare system have been evaluated, it is important to examine the policies and reforms that have been implemented by China recently as a manner of addressing the imperfections of Deng's reforms. These policies have met moderate success and have redefined the narrative of healthcare as one of social responsibility rather than market governance. But despite good intentions, such policies have not resolved all the systemic issues and inequalities within the healthcare system, particularly the high costs that alienate low-income individuals.

After an outbreak of SARS, or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, in 2003, the Chinese government revisited their plans for economic development and initiated a wave of healthcare reforms centered around social development.⁴⁷ Rather than leaving healthcare to be governed by market forces, the party-state, under the leadership of Hu Jintao, called for increased government responsibility and a rebranding of healthcare as a public good.⁴⁸ While private market forces are still in play, this policy marked a shift in attitude away from commodified healthcare.

In particular, China's government sought to extend healthcare access and affordability such that more Chinese citizens would receive needed services. These new reforms increased nationwide insurance coverage and laid the groundwork for a primary care system with basic free services that could maintain population health and stem the demand for specialists.⁴⁹ In addition, the government restrained the growth of exorbitant hospital fees by instituting a "catalog of essential medicines and an auction-based structure for their procurement," thereby eliminating pharmaceuticals as a revenue generator for providers.⁵⁰ Finally, the government sought to partially reverse the over-privatization and "over-marketization" of public hospitals by valuing performance, rather than the number of physician orders encouraged by the fee-for-service model.⁵¹ By pursuing these reforms, China hoped to not only increase access and affordability for the national population, but also increase the quality of the health services delivered, from the most basic treatments to advanced procedures.

Results from these new reforms were mixed. As was discussed earlier, insurance coverage was extended to 95 percent, and China invested more in government-provided insurance programs, bringing hospital reimbursement rates to 70 percent.⁵² However, despite this increase in overall coverage, it has proven difficult to fully insure migrant workers, who may acquire non-reimbursable services out of their insurance network due to their itinerance.⁵³ Much along the lines of the U.S. system, insurance can only cover services acquired by location-specific, designated providers. Primary care was greatly expanded, with 60 billion RMB invested in 33,000 clinics predominantly in the rural west.⁵⁴ And within hospitals, while medications have been removed as a source of hospital revenue, costs have actually increased.⁵⁵ Hospitals are now looking for income in other places to fill the gap left by pharmaceuticals, causing patients to pay more for services without further government interference.

Conclusion

While China's economic welfare and commercial success have flourished markedly since the era of Chairman Mao, many issues with the healthcare system arose as the result of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, and some still persist in the present. The Chinese government has recently engaged in efforts to address the healthcare costs and access, but further political and economic solutions are needed to maintain improvements. An honest and faithful assessment of the economy is necessary to appraise the ways in which economic changes have been, and continue to be, consequential for China's healthcare. In order to address persistent disparities and reduce costs in an effort to create a more equitable healthcare system, the CCP must implement novel policies that encourage equality and reduce the urge of healthcare providers to behave like corporate enterprises at the expense of patients' wellbeing and treatment outcomes.

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¹ Wee, “China’s Health Care Crisis: Lines Before Dawn, Violence and ‘No Trust.’”

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Starr, *Understanding China: A Guide to China’s Economy, History, and Political Culture*, 252.

⁸ Ho and Tsai, “The Chairman and the Coronavirus: Globalization and China’s Healthcare System,” 28.

⁹ Fang, “The Chinese Health Care System.”

¹⁰ Starr, *Understanding China: A Guide to China’s Economy, History, and Political Culture*, 110.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹² Diep, “China’s Healthcare Quandary: How Partial Privatization Values Quality over Equality,” 28.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁴ Ho and Tsai, “The Chairman and the Coronavirus: Globalization and China’s Healthcare System,” 28.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁶ Hesketh and Xing Zhu, “Health in China: The Healthcare Market,” 1616.

¹⁷ Ho and Tsai, “The Chairman and the Coronavirus: Globalization and China’s Healthcare System,” 29.

¹⁸ Hesketh and Xing Zhu, “Health in China: The Healthcare Market,” 1616.

¹⁹ Ho and Tsai, “The Chairman and the Coronavirus: Globalization and China’s Healthcare System,” 29.

²⁰ Bondois and Jayaram, “Reform of the Health System: Contradictions in an Ambitious and Participatory Project,” 132.

²¹ Hesketh and Xing Zhu, “Health in China: The Healthcare Market,” 1616.

²² Bondois and Jayaram, “Reform of the Health System: Contradictions in an Ambitious and Participatory Project,” 132.

²³ Milcent and Buchanan, “Evolution of the Health System: Inefficiency, Violence, and Digital Healthcare,” 39.

- ²⁴ Diep, “China’s Healthcare Quandary: How Partial Privatization Values Quality over Equality,” 28.
- ²⁵ Bondois and Jayaram, “Reform of the Health System: Contradictions in an Ambitious and Participatory Project,” 132.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.
- ²⁷ Fang, “The Chinese Health Care System.”
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ Diep, “China’s Healthcare Quandary: How Partial Privatization Values Quality over Equality,” 28.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.
- ³¹ Milcent and Buchanan, “Evolution of the Health System: Inefficiency, Violence, and Digital Healthcare,” 41.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 41.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 41.
- ³⁴ Fang, “The Chinese Health Care System.”
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Milcent, “Healthcare for Migrants in Urban China: A New Frontier,” 35.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 33.
- ⁴² Liu, Zhang, Lu, Kwon, and Quan, “Rural and Urban Disparity in Health Services Utilization in China,” 767.
- ⁴³ Milcent, “Healthcare for Migrants in Urban China: A New Frontier,” 34.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ⁴⁷ Li, Chen, and Powers, “Chinese Healthcare Reform: A Shift toward Social Development,” 630-632.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 632-633.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 633-634.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 634.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 634.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 635.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 635.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 636.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 636.

The Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport is highly important to the economy of North Texas, but the rivalry between Dallas and Fort Worth once made its construction seem like “an impossible dream.” Shortly before the United States entered World War II, initial talks between the two cities collapsed. On the other hand, local leaders starting in the 1960’s have cooperated to support DFW, increasing regional unity. After the airport’s 1974 completion, airlines have posed a variety of issues for the airport. Given DFW’s record of perseverance, however, the airport will continue to remain a leader in global commercial aviation.

Local Unity and Airline Conflict in North Texas Through the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, 1925-2019

Connor Porter

At the time of its opening on January 13, 1974, the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport (DFW) was the largest in the world. The Texas-sized 17,000-acre site featured a state-of-the-art monorail system that connected four terminals capable of handling a combined 100,000 daily passengers. As he spoke at the airport’s dedication on September 1973, however, board chair Erik Jonsson lamented that constructing the complex seemed like an “impossible dream” at times.¹ Indeed, Dallas and Fort Worth had always been intense rivals, and their efforts in commercial aviation were no exception. Each sought to dominate the other’s air traffic throughout a fifty-year feud featuring political squabbling, lawsuits, and federal intervention. Once both cities realized that a shared airport would prove beneficial, it took the leadership of Texans and non-Texans alike to ensure its success, foreshadowing the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of the metropolis in general and the airport in particular. Indeed, the once intense rivalry subsided with the airport’s construction, but disputes between the airport and airlines soon arose and continue to persist in

the present. It seems that Dallas and Fort Worth have put local politics aside, and it is now commercial airlines that pose the greatest threat to the success of DFW.

The conflicts between Dallas and Fort Worth that initially prevented the construction of a unified airport can be traced back to the cities' founding. Fort Worth was established in 1849 as a military outpost on the Trinity River to defend surrounding settlements from Comanche raids. After its founding, Fort Worth became a popular stop along the Chisholm Trail, leading to its nickname of "Cowtown." Established in 1856, Dallas was one of the first cities in Texas to embrace the Northern model of the Industrial Revolution, acting as a home for new textile factories supplied by cotton grown in the state's southeast.² Even though the economies of the two cities were fundamentally different, their geography was a shared problem that would become more pervasive in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The location of Dallas and Fort Worth put the cities at a great disadvantage in terms of sustained growth. Lacking proximity to either a major coastline or a population center, the cities initially had to depend on railroads for survival.³ Seeking nationwide markets for Fort Worth cattle and Dallas cotton, the two cities engaged in a bitter rivalry to gain superior rail service, with a group of Fort Worth citizens going so far as to hold a railroad executive in Dallas hostage until he agreed to give Fort Worth priority.⁴ Despite the efforts of each city to limit the other, the undeniable commercial power of Dallas ensured both cities had equal rail access by the end of the nineteenth century. The struggle for transportation supremacy, however, re-emerged as commercial aviation began taking the United States by storm.

After World War I, cities began to use military-constructed airstrips, specifically for transporting mail. North Texas was no exception, with Dallas repurposing Love Field and Fort Worth constructing Meacham Field after Barron Field was deemed too far from the city.⁵ In 1925, however, the United States Congress passed the Kelly Act, which allowed commercial carriers to negotiate contracts with municipal airports. Because the Dallas-Fort Worth area was the largest population center in Texas at the time, the two rival cities were highly motivated to receive these lucrative contracts. In addition, the speed of air travel compared to railroads would drastically reduce the

geographic isolation that the region suffered. Furthermore, the central location of North Texas in the contiguous United States would make it a stopping point for cross-country flights, just as Fort Worth once did for cattle drives on the Chisholm Trail.

With the Kelly Act passed, the battle for commercial aviation contracts in North Texas ensued. Instead of battling for superior railroad access, Dallas and Fort Worth competed to transport more passengers and air freight. By 1936 Dallas had contracts with ten airlines, while Fort Worth had only two.⁶ The proximity of Love and Meacham Fields often acted as a nuisance to airlines, however. Because some carriers, such as American Airlines, had contracts with both airports, a plane traveling from New York City would stop at Love, fly thirty-five miles to Meacham, and then proceed to Los Angeles, which became increasingly unnecessary as planes capable of longer flying times came into use.⁷

As the need for a unified airport became apparent, Dallas and Fort Worth agreed to collaborate. In 1940, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), an agency of the United States government tasked with regulating commercial aviation, concurred with appeals from both cities to allocate federal funds for the construction of a shared site.⁸ In what would become a painfully common theme during airport negotiations between Dallas and Fort Worth, promising dialogue became unproductive. Fort Worth officials, wary of Dallas's larger population, wanted the airport to be located at a halfway point, while Dallas officials claimed a site closer to their city would make more sense in terms of engineering. When the CAB threatened to collaborate with the centrally located city of Arlington instead, Fort Worth and Dallas delegations finally agreed to talks on October 10, 1941.⁹

Of the representatives from Fort Worth, Amon G. Carter, Sr. was the most prominent. Known popularly as "Mr. Fort Worth," Carter was a self-made millionaire born into poverty in Wise County, a few miles north of the city he would champion for the rest of his life. He saw himself as the personification of the grit and independence of Fort Worth's pioneer past and resented the success of Dallas's urban refinement, especially the wealthy University Parks area. In addition to his successful investments in communications and oil, Carter strove to put Cowtown on the map in terms of air transportation. Starting in 1928, he partly owned the corporation which would become American Airlines, ensuring that Fort Worth would have closer ties

with the airline than Dallas for years to come.¹⁰ Additionally, Carter's newspaper, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, often acted as the mouthpiece for the bias of its owner, once putting exclusive blame on Dallas for killing plans for the shared airport project after both cities refused to construct a connecting road.¹¹ With his goal to convince the CAB to favor Fort Worth, Carter entered the talks reluctant to give up Meacham, which he said he "wouldn't trade...for the [airport] at Newark."¹²

On the other hand, the Dallas delegation went in with a more pragmatic perspective. At its head was Mayor James Woodall Rogers, a well-educated lawyer from Alabama who embodied the urban sophistication of Dallas that Carter so despised. Rogers and his city planner C. J. Crampton wisely realized that since the population in and around Dallas had ballooned to 600,000, neither Dallas nor Fort Worth could afford to adequately accommodate the resulting air traffic separately.¹³ Therefore, Dallas's position was much more open to compromise than Fort Worth's, with the exact location of the airport itself being subordinate to having it built in the first place through a cooperative effort.

When the delegates from Dallas and Fort Worth met at the decidedly non-neutral location of the Fort Worth Club on the appointed date, dialogue was promising but slow in terms of actual progress. Lucius Clay, moderator of the discussion and Assistant Director of the CAB, optimistically scheduled another meeting for the following week. His optimism was rewarded. Carter and Rogers agreed to a multitude of proposals, such as naming the airfield Midway Airport and establishing representational equality on the airport's board of directors.¹⁴ When both city councils concurred, it was almost certain that North Texas would soon be home to one of the nation's top airports.

Debates about the airport's surrounding infrastructure, however, dissolved any hope of either city funding its construction. Fort Worth initially agreed with the CAB's advice to construct Midway in Arlington, one mile closer to Dallas, because the CAB promised Fort Worth that Midway's terminal and administration buildings would be in Fort Worth territory while all other facilities would be in Arlington. Dallas County engineers contested the plan, claiming it was better to locate the building on their side in order to connect the airport to State Highway 183, which had a direct route

to Dallas.¹⁵ They reasoned that their city carried eighty-five percent of the region's air traffic, so most of Midway's incoming passengers would travel to Dallas after landing. Because Rogers viewed the CAB's plan as a "colossal insult," Dallas promptly ended its dialogue with the federal government and Fort Worth in January 1942.¹⁶ Since partial construction of runways had begun on the site, the military partnered with Arlington to use it as a training ground during World War II.¹⁷

After the war, Midway became a thorn in the side of Dallas's aviation ambition. In 1947, Fort Worth officials purchased the disheveled airstrip from Arlington for just one dollar, planning to upgrade it to a world-class airport.¹⁸ Carter and the City of Fort Worth would finance all aspects of its construction, including the connecting roads that were significant stumbling blocks to the pre-war construction of Midway. The goal of Fort Worth leadership was to persuade the CAB that Cowtown possessed the superior airport and eventually force Love Field to close.¹⁹ American Airlines lobbied the CAB on Carter's behalf, resulting in a five point memorandum in 1948 explaining why Midway should be North Texas's sole airport, including claims that both cities would receive a fair share of passengers and the inefficient stops at both airports would end.²⁰ It seemed that Fort Worth had snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

On April 25, 1953, the former Midway airport opened as Greater Fort Worth International Airport, also known as Carter Field, then later as Greater Southwest Airport. Only twelve miles from Love Field, Carter Field featured larger terminals, runways, and hangars, facilities that were hard for even the staunchest Dallas-sympathizing journalists to criticize. The new airport proved to be underperforming, however, due to Dallas's faster growth in population and industry. Because of Love Field's superior revenue, Braniff Airways chose it as the site for a new \$4 million facilities improvement project, promising additional flights upon its completion.²¹ The project dealt a crippling blow to Carter Field's already dwindling passenger numbers, and for the next nine years Fort Worth would desperately ask the CAB to negotiate contracts with airlines on its behalf in order to avoid bankruptcy.

On the other hand, Dallas Love Field did well, too well in fact. Out of desperation, Dallas appealed to the CAB in order to milk every cent of federal funding to upgrade the overcrowded airfield.

Love Field did not have the vast prairies that surrounded Carter Field and always fell behind in the accommodation of increased airline traffic effected by commercial carriers' abandonment of its rival. For example, the early 1960s saw the CAB prohibit the construction of a new runway at Love Field due to "inadequate safety zones" and a group of Dallas citizens petition the city government to reduce what they claimed was excessive noise pollution from airport activities.²² It was evident that long-term expansion was not possible.

In August 1964, the federal government ordered the formation of the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport Committee to address the concerns of the two cities.²³ Its tasks were to rectify the problems between Dallas and Fort Worth that were left unresolved before the failure of Midway and those that had developed since, in addition to drafting concrete plans for North Texas to have one adequate airport. It was clear that the spacious but empty Carter Field, now called Greater Southwest, and the crowded Love Field were unsustainable sites for long-term growth. More significantly, the committee required the two cities to each send three representatives to negotiate for the first time since the meetings at the Fort Worth Club in 1941. This time, however, the price was much higher for walking away. If representatives reached no agreement in 180 days, then both airports would stop receiving money from the CAB.²⁴

For this round of negotiations, the two cities operated under less divisive leadership. Gone were the days of the larger-than-life Fort Worth protectionism of Carter and the resentment of Rogers. Mayor J. Erik Jonsson, a Texas Instruments founder and the child of Swedish parents who immigrated to Brooklyn, New York, now led Dallas.²⁵ An engineer by trade, Jonsson was very much like the product his firm produced, rational and calculating, and would continue to be a key figure in the early years of the airport. His background as a non-Texan also exemplified Dallas's increasingly diverse population and national interests. His first task as mayor was the tremendously difficult project of restoring Dallas's public image after President John F. Kennedy's assassination the previous year. Jonsson's public relations skills, honed by convincing the country to forgive his city, likely assisted in persuading Fort Worth dignitaries to work alongside him. On the other side, J. Lee Johnson III, chairman of the Fort Worth

Chamber of Commerce's Aviation Board, led Fort Worth. Much like Carter, Johnson was a proud native of Fort Worth, believing his city could compete with the larger population and industry of Dallas.

By early 1965, the team of "Jonsson and Johnson" displayed rapid progress in negotiations, agreeing that Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton Engineers and Architects of New York (TAMS) should be the firm tasked with selecting and developing the land for the future airport.²⁶ The board's decision to hire a New York firm was significant for two reasons. First, it highlighted the ambition of the project because New York firms had built the Newark, La Guardia, and Idlewild (later John F. Kennedy) airports, the busiest airfields in the world at the time. Second, contracting a firm based outside of the North Texas area mitigated the possibility of favoritism being shown to either city. No longer could Dallas and Fort Worth hire partisan firms to advance their own interests.

Additionally, the committee recommended the formation of the North Central Texas Regional Airport Authority. The board would be comprised of Dallas and Fort Worth delegates with representation proportional to population. Consequently, Texas legislature mandated that a 1967 referendum be held in Dallas and Tarrant Counties to authorize the authority's formation and the cities' right to apportion bonds for the project. Its results demonstrated that the populations of the two cities had not put aside the disagreements that Jonsson and Johnson had moved past. With its citizens, except wealthy residents living in the University Parks area, unwilling to give up Love Field as the dominant airport in North Texas, Dallas County rejected the referendum 26,385 to 24,125, while Tarrant County voters wholeheartedly supported the new airport's construction 25,160 to 8,747.²⁷

This unfavorable result forced Jonsson to take a controversial course of action. Determined to have the airport built by any means necessary, Jonsson claimed Dallas could still assent to the project because a majority of the Dallas City Council members supported it. Interestingly, Scott and Davis's 1974 monograph about the airport's history glossed over Jonsson's possible violation of popular sovereignty. Payne and Fitzpatrick's 1999 history claimed the action was "the obvious solution" in the eyes of city officials given the \$4 million of federal funding that had already been secured.²⁸ Additionally, Scott and Davis concentrated on the roughly 50,000 cumulative votes in support of the airport across both counties. To strengthen this focus,

they included Jonsson's remark that the vote was "one of the greatest moments in Dallas history" despite Dallas County rejecting the referendum.²⁹ Because Scott and Davis wrote a history of the airport commissioned by Dallas-Fort Worth itself, it is unclear if this error is an accident or a deliberate attempt to fit the referendum into their narrative of the airport representing complete unity between the two cities. Regardless, this matter requires further investigation by researchers.

Once the citizens of Dallas and Tarrant county technically approved the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport Board and city bonds, local leaders determined the board's membership. Political animosity was as palpable as it had been twenty-five years prior. Jonsson and other Dallas officials claimed it was obvious that the more populous city should have majority representation in the board. Fort Worth's mayor, Dewitt McKinley, disagreed because Dallas County voters had, after all, rejected the plan. Fortunately, in April 1968 private negotiations with dignitaries from both city councils concluded that the board would consist of eleven members elected by their respective city councils. Seven board members from Dallas and four from Fort Worth would serve a maximum of two four-year terms without compensation.³⁰ In May, the airport board itself chose Jonsson and Johnson to serve as chairman and vice chairman respectively. Disappointed in his city council's inability to secure more influence over the airport, McKinley harshly criticized the board's structure as "nefarious, iniquitous, and 'unchartertutational.'"³¹ There was nothing he could do.

After the board's structure had been decided, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCG) began working on a report in conjunction with the Philadelphia-based Regional Science Research Institute (RSRI) that would be released in 1969 concerning the airport's proposed economic impact. Interestingly, the surrounding cities themselves and not the airport board generated this report, indicating that local politicians still wanted to be involved with the project after they no longer had direct control over it. Forecasting the economic impact until 1975, which was a year after the airport's opening, local politicians believed that the airport would substantially increase the number of flights coming in to not only the Dallas-Fort Worth area but also the cities surrounding the region, including Waco, Colorado Springs, and Albuquerque.³²

Another important aspect of RSRI's 1969 forecast was that it demonstrated that other airports in the Dallas-Fort Worth area were inadequate in many ways. The main area of concern was the growing number of passengers. The report predicted that Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport would receive at least 23 million annual passengers by 1990.³³ This number dwarfed Love Field's estimated 8 million capacity, which the airport was already approaching by the mid-1960s. In its analysis of these numbers, the RSRI and NCTCG claimed that the exponential growth of passenger numbers "could not occur in the region if Love Field were to continue in operation as the region's only airport."³⁴

Another area of concern that the report indicated was the lack of proper facilities at Love Field capable of meeting the region's air freight demands. Showing how technologically advanced the Dallas-Fort Worth economy was at the time, the RSRI noted that 40% of industries in the region shipped more than 1% of their products by air. This statistic was much higher than the average in the United States, in which only 14% of businesses depended on air freight. A wide variety of businesses in the region, from "women's, misses', girls' & infants clothing" vendors to "optical instruments and lenses" firms, heavily utilized air shipping for good reason.³⁵ Because of Dallas and Fort Worth's eternal problem with geographic isolation, using rail service to ship goods would cost firms valuable money and time. The opening of a new airport able to carry nearly three times Love Field's maximum freight capacity would therefore massively boost the economy of the region.

The most important line of evidence in support of a unified airport was the projected population growth of the region, which included the metropolitan areas of Dallas and Fort Worth in addition to Wise and Parker counties. This hinted that the two cities viewed themselves as part of a larger region of Texas and not as a region in and of themselves. The report predicted that the population of the "North Central Texas Region" would increase from 2.3 million people to 3.5 million people from 1960 to 1980.³⁶ The RSRI claimed this figure was proportional to the airport's target of 11,375,000 annual enplanements, or passengers arriving by airplane, which was 3,375,000 more than Love Field. The firm further calculated that this level of traffic in an airport would result in 15,000 more jobs than Love Field due to the regional airport's larger capacity and an expected annual revenue

of \$202 million.³⁷ It seems the RSRI provided some much-needed perspective to the region, specifically Dallas, whose citizens had of course voted to maintain Love Field's position as North Texas's supreme airport despite its facilities being incommensurate to rapid industrialization and population growth. It was now clear even to nearby cities that one world class airport was needed if North Texas wanted to dominate the air traffic of Texas and the United States. The next task was to find the right people for the job.

For one of their first acts, members of the airport board chose Thomas M. Sullivan as the first executive director of the Dallas Fort-Worth Regional Airport in 1968. The board selected Sullivan because of his engineering experience working with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey in the construction of the La Guardia, Newark, and Idlewild (JFK) airports.³⁸ He had learned from his career that DFW needed to be capable of prolonged rapid expansion upon its initial completion in order to weather the inevitable exponential increases in passengers and aircraft size. In fact, he had fallen in hot water with Port Authority executives because he recommended the immediate construction of another airport near New York City after its third and most recent, Idlewild, was finished. When this plea fell on deaf ears, long lines of planes had remained on the ground for hours until the runway was clear for takeoff, a fate Sullivan desperately wanted the Dallas-Fort Worth region to avoid.³⁹

Furthermore, the Oklahoma native shared Jonsson's ideal of making Dallas-Fort Worth one of the most important regions of the country. Sullivan boldly declared his mission was to "open up new avenues to people who do not know the history and the quality of life here in the Southwest," not just in Texas but in Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona as well.⁴⁰ In a February 1972 article for the nationally syndicated *Airport World* magazine, Sullivan outlined how he would fulfill this mission. He believed the future of air travel would feature passengers transitioning from parking lot to plane and vice versa in a matter of minutes, writing

If a passenger is driven to the airport to meet an outbound flight, he can be let out of his car at the terminal gate, drop his baggage at the curb and step onto the escalator to the second level boarding area and then walk the few steps to the front door of the

plane. When he returns to D/FW by air, he will get off the plane at the second level, get his bags only a few steps away, and walk out to the roadway.⁴¹

This served as the extremely efficient master plan to which most of the airport's funding and construction over the next few decades would be directed.

Sullivan also rectified a potential issue affected by this plan, specifically regarding how to transport passengers arriving at DFW by a different terminal back to the one which they originally entered. He created AIRTRANS, a monorail system located underneath each terminal's baggage claim that would ferry passengers to other terminals in a matter of minutes.⁴² This concept was revolutionary at a time when airports started to build terminals farther apart due to the increase in aircraft size and the number of airline contracts negotiated by each airport.

Jonsson and Sullivan then turned to hiring architects capable of enacting Sullivan's vision. Sullivan suggested the St. Louis-based Gyo Obata lead the project, with the New York City-based Richard Adler being second in command.⁴³ Obata believed that a semi-circular terminal design would maximize the number of planes capable of landing at each terminal. Locating a parking garage on the semi-circle's interior would also accomplish the quick access to ground transportation that Sullivan envisioned.

Once Sullivan approved Obata's plan, the Airport Board then created a two-part master plan of the airport, a short-term plan for 1975 and a long-term vision for 2001. The 1975 or "Phase I Plan" estimated that 20 million passengers would pass through eighty-five airport gates of the five completed semi-circular terminals to board roughly 1,000 daily aircraft departing and arriving from three runways, numbers that already matched or exceeded the statistics of Love Field.⁴⁴ To mitigate the one major initial problem with the airport, a lack of adequate parking for the airport's 40,000 employees, the master plan called for "remote parking lots...to be developed as interim uses for at least two areas scheduled to be occupied by passenger terminals during later phases."⁴⁵

The document also detailed the airport board's long-term vision for 2001. To start with, the number of terminals would expand from five to fifteen, and the number of runways would expand to

seven, each runway being four miles of reinforced concrete.⁴⁶ In addition to this basic expansion, the airport board made plans for luxuries and other features designed to truly demonstrate the grand scale and anticipated importance of DFW. The airport board envisioned the construction of world-class hotels that featured “acoustically treated sleeping rooms,” among other amenities, and a World Trade Center specializing in “world air commerce to be developed concurrently” with the airport’s expansion leading up to 2001.⁴⁷ Interestingly, the master plan also called for the development of a “museum of aviation” to immortalize DFW.⁴⁸ In the document’s conclusion, the board stated that DFW “must continue to be considered...an integral part of the total regional environment” to succeed in the future.⁴⁹

Jonsson and his board members needed roughly \$700 million, both from federal and local governments, to set Sullivan’s master plan in motion with a projected start of commercial operations by 1972. Demonstrating the two cities’ desire to finally work together, the funding from Dallas and Fort Worth was extremely helpful. They provided \$412 million in bonds that taxpayers, for better or for worse, were forced to cover.⁵⁰ The cities also paid the \$60 million out of pocket that was required to purchase the 17,000 acres of land, mostly privately-owned farms, located in the cities of Grapevine, Irving, and Euless, which TAMS and the Board agreed was to be the airport’s location.⁵¹ Because the federal government’s \$40 million contribution was less substantial, the remaining funds came from bonds. Additionally, Sullivan praised the airport board for negotiating 60% of its construction contracts with firms outside the region to ensure hiring based on merit instead of political connections, declaring they had “kept politics, in the bad sense of the word, out of this program.”⁵² In Sullivan’s view, this would ensure the project’s federal and municipal funds would be spent in the best way possible.

The construction of DFW took place shortly after the master plan was written. To begin work, the ground-breaking ceremony for DFW occurred on December 11, 1968 with Jonsson, Johnson, Sullivan, and United States Secretary of Transportation Alan S. Boyd holding one shovel to pierce the Grapevine dirt together.⁵³ This signified that officials from Dallas, Fort Worth, and the federal government all shared a common vision in DFW’s success. The first task of builders was to move hundreds of thousands of tons of earth away from the future locations of buildings and runways. Next, the airport’s

contracted construction companies completed various engineering marvels on schedule, including the largest concrete paving operation in the United States and the tallest air traffic control tower in the world, despite “heavy winter snowfalls [and] five times the normal amount of rain in the spring.”⁵⁴ The rapid construction of DFW stood in stark contrast to the local politics that prevented Midway’s completion more than twenty years before, representing a climate of regional cooperation that would hopefully continue after the first flights departed from the airport.

The opening of DFW occurred in two phases: the dedication and the start of commercial operations. The first event took place from September 20-23, 1973, consisting of an “International Press Day” featuring the landing of a supersonic Concorde jet, an open house for the general public marred by the lack of adequate parking predicted by the master plan, and the day of the official dedication ceremony.⁵⁵ On an outdoor stage surrounded by flags of countries to which travelers from DFW would be transported, local, state, and federal politicians praised the airport for symbolizing a subsidence of the rivalries between Dallas and Fort Worth. Keynote speakers included Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe and US Secretary of Transportation John Volpe, who optimistically declared that the “two great cities have put aside natural rivalries in recognition of a regional need that could only be met by joint action.”⁵⁶ On the other hand, the airlines delayed the start of commercial activity due to logistical difficulties, much to the chagrin of the public and airport officials. The “regional need” had to wait another eighty-seven days despite the airport’s facilities being fully complete and ready for operation, costing taxpayers an estimated \$18 million.⁵⁷ With this postponement, the next chapter of the DFW airport’s history began, featuring actions of commercial carriers that continue to threaten the master plan of the airport.

The late ’60s and early ’70s saw the rise of regional airlines, and it was not long before this mode of air travel began to create problems for commercial aviation in DFW. One of these regional carriers was Southwest Airlines, which began intrastate flights out of Love Field in 1971. Southwest announced it would remain at Love Field later that year, which the two cities claimed was in violation of the Regional Airport Concurrent Bond Ordinance. Passed in 1968 by Dallas and Fort Worth, this bill required that all CAB-certified airlines servicing the region transfer operations to DFW.⁵⁸ Because

the airline was intrastate and therefore did not have to be CAB certified, a federal district court allowed Southwest to continue operating at Love Field. Additionally, the Automatic Market Entry provision of the 1978 Airline Deregulation Act strengthened Southwest's position, allowing the carrier to conduct interstate flights from Dallas to New Orleans.⁵⁹ Consequently, DFW officials became afraid that Southwest would offer more interstate flights at cheaper rates, jeopardizing the airport's revenue and integration into the growth of the region as recommended by the master plan.

In order to protect DFW from Southwest Airlines, United States Democratic Congressman Jim Wright of Fort Worth included the Wright Amendment in the International Air Transportation Competition Act of 1979 while he was the Speaker of the House.⁶⁰ The Wright Amendment stipulated that Southwest could not sell tickets and fly planes with more than 56 seats from Love Field to destinations outside of Texas.⁶¹ The amendment made it inconvenient and costly for passengers who wanted to fly Southwest for multiple flights. For example, a passenger traveling from Dallas to Colorado Springs via Oklahoma City would have to retrieve his or her luggage to change planes and purchase a separate ticket for the next flight. Furthermore, the Department of Transportation ruled in 1985 that the Wright Amendment applied to all commercial airlines operating out of Love Field, relegating Love Field to permanent inferiority compared to DFW despite Love Field's potential to rival DFW through a more convenient location and cheaper tickets.⁶² Proponents of the Wright Amendment have claimed it guaranteed the economic success of not only DFW but also the North Texas region at a time when the continued operation of Love Field was a viable threat to the massive amount of public and private money invested in the new airport.⁶³ On the other hand, critics have claimed that it restricted the freedom of interstate travel guaranteed by the United States Constitution.⁶⁴ Southwest and other regional airlines would continue to push for the Wright Amendment's repeal for the next few decades. For the moment, however, it seemed that the fears of DFW supporters, specifically those from Fort Worth, regarding Dallas Love Field's competition were assuaged.

The next set of controversial developments effected by carriers at DFW came from Delta Airlines. Two major crashes of Delta flights occurred at DFW in 1985 and 1988, forcing the airport into the

national spotlight. On August 2, 1985, Delta Flight 191 lost control after flying through severe wind shear, a sudden change in wind speed or direction, caused by a microburst, a severe downdraft of low pressure air, in a thunderstorm during its descent to DFW.⁶⁵ Killing 137 passengers, the plane crashed on State Highway 114 and collided with a fuel tanker on airport grounds before bursting into flames. It is still the deadliest aviation disaster in the history of Texas.

The crash demonstrated to the nation that the Dallas-Fort Worth area was simultaneously prepared and unprepared to deal with such a disaster. First responders were quick to arrive on the scene but were shocked at the crash's horrors.⁶⁶ Residents of Dallas lined up to give blood to the thirty-eight injured being treated at Parkland Memorial Hospital, but the Parkland medical staff's overwhelming task of treating all of the injured and identifying all of the bodies meant many families had to wait with false hopes.⁶⁷ Thus, the picture of DFW painted by the crash was one of confusion affected by an underdeveloped disaster protocol.

Afterward, local and federal officials put reforms in place to address the issues raised by the crash. The most important change was the National Transportation Safety Board's stipulation to pilots that extreme caution should be exercised when dealing with potentially severe weather upon descent.⁶⁸ Because of this, many pilots now delay their landing if storms are present. The provision was mainly a reaction to 191's pilots choosing to navigate the storm on their descent after air traffic control informed them that flights traveling the same path minutes before had reported a "little rain shower."⁶⁹ The implementation of other reforms would be evident three years later when DFW was once again the site of an aviation disaster.

On August 31, 1988, Delta Flight 1141 crashed at DFW after a failed takeoff attempt. The crash was horrific but less deadly than 191, with thirteen of its ninety-six passengers losing their lives and seventy-six sustaining injuries. The National Transportation Safety Board concluded that the crash occurred because either the crew did not properly configure the plane for takeoff or a warning system failed to alert the crew of the improper configuration.⁷⁰ Occurring three years after the events of 191, the region's response was profoundly different. First, the grim scene witnessed by emergency responders did not weaken their resolve. In the words of paramedic Mike Sympson, first responders had an efficient and emotionless "click, click, click"

mentality to the disaster, in part due to new counseling sessions mandated by the airport.⁷¹ Additionally, DFW did not repeat its mistake of treating all of the injured at one hospital, this time splitting patients between Parkland Memorial in Dallas and Baylor Medical Center in Grapevine.⁷² The public of Dallas-Fort Worth, comprised of a substantial number of DFW passengers and employees, also appeared to be desensitized to airplane crashes after the shock of 191, with most residents concerned about the cause of the crash rather than response efforts.⁷³ The public treated such events as an unfortunate consequence of living near the world's largest airport.

Indeed, the disasters did not decrease the local population's optimism generated by the presence of the DFW airport. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram published an article just months after the 1141 crash that detailed plans to make the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex area a "technopolis," a post-industrial cityscape featuring "high quality of life, infrastructure and investments in the education of the people."⁷⁴ These aspirations received strength from the construction of Fort Worth Alliance Airport led by Dallas businessman Ross Perot, Jr., son of billionaire Ross Perot. Alliance, opened in December 1989, was to be primarily an industrial airport designed for shipping air freight in record numbers, promising to supplement the much-championed \$5 billion contribution of DFW to the region's economy.⁷⁵ The boom in aviation business would also revive older issues of DFW policy.

At the dawn of the new millennium, commercial aviation at Love Field was still in good health. Its convenient location had allowed it to survive two critical blows dealt by the Wright Amendment and the collapse of Braniff Airways in 1983. In fact, short-lived "deregulation" airlines attempted to use Love Field as a base for operations that exploited weaknesses in the Wright Amendment. DFW officials were once again alarmed when in 2000 former FAA official T. Allen McArtor founded Legend Airlines, which offered costly but luxurious national and international flights because its planes had fifty-six seats and were therefore not subject to restrictions posed by the Wright Amendment.⁷⁶ The target passenger of Legend was a Dallas-based businessperson who frequently traveled to other states or Mexico for work. Due to almost exclusively targeting this limited demographic,

Legend folded after less than a year of operation. Despite the failure of experimental deregulation airlines such as Legend, Love Field was able to stay open because of Southwest's continued presence.

The cities of Dallas and Fort Worth eventually came to realize that the Wright Amendment was increasingly unnecessary. DFW was no longer a new giant competing with the smaller but established Love Field. Consequently, Legend Airlines failed dismally when it might have succeeded twenty years earlier. By this time, DFW had become ingrained in the local economy and fabric of American commercial aviation, demonstrated by the numerous and valuable contracts, especially with American Airlines, possessed by the airport. With the departure of Braniff, Southwest was the sole carrier operating profitably at Love Field in the long-term, reducing the airfield to permanent inferiority. On June 15, 2006, Dallas mayor Laura Miller and Fort Worth mayor Mike Moncrief announced the Wright Amendment would be repealed and set to expire entirely in 2014.⁷⁷ This joint municipal effort reinforced that Dallas and Fort Worth were equally committed to the airport's success and proved that Love Field was no longer a viable threat to it.

The most crucial development regarding DFW's controversial relationships with airlines persisting through the Wright Amendment and Delta crashes has been the profound influence of American Airlines on the airport. It began in 1979, when American announced it planned to relocate its main headquarters from New York City to DFW. This decision resulted primarily from the spirit of intense competition typical of the airline industry, because Braniff Airways, famous for its fleet of super-sonic Concorde planes, began moving its base to DFW three years prior.⁷⁸ Both Braniff and American faced struggles due to the increase in smaller carriers effected by the Airline Deregulation Act and hoped space and new markets would revive their profits.

The next year, Braniff continued to struggle while American began to thrive. In 1980, following an increase in fuel prices, Braniff suspended all Concorde flights, including the route from DFW to Europe via Dulles.⁷⁹ While it was the fastest commercial airplane in the world, the Concorde could only seat a limited number of passengers for high ticket prices, making the rise of jet fuel its death knell and consequently dealing a critical blow to Braniff's finances. On the other hand, American's non-stop flights to Hawai'i and London

generated tremendous profits after they began in 1979, inspiring the carrier to open a plethora of new international routes through DFW.⁸⁰ The once luxurious Braniff soon became a shell of its former self and declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 1982 and again in 1989, with its final incarnation being a budget carrier in the vein of Southwest.⁸¹ The collapse of Braniff set the stage for a dramatic change in the future of DFW.

Since 1989, the consequences of American Airlines's dominance have posed a significant threat to the original mission of the Dallas-Fort Worth airport. To begin with, the master plan of DFW did not account for one carrier dominating all the others present at the airport. This is evident in the "horseshoe" design of the planned fifteen terminals, which was intended to quickly transport passengers to and from the gates they had parked near via AIRTRANS, even if they had flown on a different airline on their return.⁸² The efficiencies at DFW were consequently heavily geared toward local passengers as opposed to connecting passengers. To the connecting passenger, for example, the seamless experience of walking to his or her car minutes after landing was meaningless. To make matters worse, American has conducted a "hub" operation out of DFW since 1981.⁸³ Because of this, countless numbers of connecting passengers, to whom the multiple terminals, separate baggage systems, and diverse gate assignments are inconveniences, flow into DFW. As of April 2019, roughly sixty percent of DFW's passengers arrive to connect to another flight.⁸⁴ This has caused both airport officials and American Airlines to reexamine following the master plan.

In May 2019, DFW and American announced they would cooperate in the construction of the airport's sixth terminal. Containing twenty-five new gates with a planned opening in 2025, Terminal F will represent the strong partnership between American, which captures eighty-six percent of DFW's traffic, and the airport.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the partners, including DFW CEO Sean Donohue, Dallas mayor Mike Rawlings, and American CEO Doug Parker, declared their consideration of a wide variety of terminal designs to ameliorate DFW's problems with accommodating connecting passengers. T. Patrick Sullivan, the son of Thomas M. Sullivan, has claimed that any terminal design other than the "horseshoe" would not only abandon the master plan, but also betray the North Texans who work for and use the airport.⁸⁶ Furthermore, a terminal specifically built for American

would become a tremendous financial liability if the airline were to collapse as Braniff did. Indeed, it seems that airport officials are less concerned about being “an integral part of the total regional environment,” as originally stated in the board’s master plan, and more interested in the international commercial air industry.

Nothing represents American’s influence over DFW more profoundly, however, than the American Airlines C. R. Smith Museum, which was opened in Fort Worth in 1993. Although it was never built, the airport’s master plan recommended the construction of a “Museum of Aviation” that not only featured a “permanent exhibit of early aircraft” of all kinds, but also frequent “national...and international air shows,” demonstrating the airport founders’ desire to connect North Texas’s aviation past with the future of global air travel.⁸⁷ The C. R. Smith Museum, on the other hand, does not feature any permanent exhibitions on the airline’s relationship with the region. Rather, it “serves American Airlines team members and the aviation industry” as a whole according to its website.⁸⁸ American’s decision to not discuss its impact on DFW and the Metroplex’s growth is likely a hint that the carrier views itself existing outside of its Texas base. American’s view of its relationship with DFW is the most crucial factor in the airport’s future, especially if the airport board listens to American’s plan, which could stifle competition with other airlines operating out of the airport.

The C. R. Smith museum represents the latest chapter of DFW’s history. North Texas was swept up in the national craze for commercial aviation, with Fort Worth and Dallas officials seeking to project their own respective rustic and urban views of Texas to the world while raking in tremendous profits. The two cities finally agreed to a common vision, but airlines soon presented numerous problems, including the airport’s delayed opening, the aviation disasters of the 1980s, the rise of regional airlines, the short-lived threat of deregulation airlines, and American’s growing influence. All of these developments allowed politics, federal intervention, and the threat of monopoly to creep into the aftermath of the “impossible dream” to the point that the aviation interests of North Texans are now in danger of being sidelined. Given that the Texans and non-Texans who led DFW to its early success championed the “history and quality of life...of

the Southwest,” it is imperative that the present and future leaders of the airport perpetuate this vision in order for Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport to remain a leader in commercial aviation.

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The history of Mexico's democratic progress houses familiar events like the Revolution of 1910, 2000 presidential victory of Vicente Fox, and the 2018 election President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. While these openings to party diversity and election fairness are widely studied, limited research examines the advancements in substantive democracy Mexico has made in the past century. Through analysis of relevant outside studies and government data on Mexico's social development programs, I argue that the principles of substantive democracy within Mexico's Constitution have progressed the social and political enfranchisement of women and indigenous persons.

Progress in Substantive Democracy: Enfranchising Mexico's Female and Indigenous Populations

Lawson Sadler

I. Introduction

Mexico's Constitution of 1917 defines democracy as "not only a legal structure and political regimen, but as a system of life founded on a constant economic, social, and cultural betterment of the people."¹ Keeping this vision of democracy in mind, Mexico has made significant democratic progress in enfranchising marginalized groups, including women and indigenous persons, through substantive democracy. In asserting this claim, a definition of substantive democracy and its relation to Mexican government will be offered as grounds for measurement of democratic progress. Subsequently, the historical and modern improvements in substantive democracy to women and indigenous persons will be considered, with a focus on government efforts to close gaps in inequality through provision of public goods. Finally, a prediction will be offered for the future progress substantive democracy in Mexico.

II. Substantive Democracy Theory

Mexico's democratic progress over the course of its national history has featured moments of triumph and tyranny. From independence to dictatorship, dictatorship to revolution, and revolution to single-party authoritarianism, Mexico has emerged in the 21st century as a multi-party system confronting serious threats to its quality of democracy. According to the "2017 Democracy Index" by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Mexico ranks 66th in the world in democracy and categorizes it as a flawed democracy, in close ranking with Indonesia and Serbia.² Mexico still has significant improvements to make in the corruption and internal security threats to its democratic system, but the Mexican government has never been more successful in providing substantive democracy to citizens.

Substantive democracy is a subset of democratic theory, which dictates that democracy must progress toward social and economic equality to achieve full enfranchisement. Understanding that participatory democracy relies on the inclusiveness and the scope of the system, disenfranchisement occurs when inequality fundamentally undermines a citizen's ability to be included in the system. This inequality can be thought of in traditional terms of judicial and electoral rights, but in modern liberal democracies income inequality and poverty disenfranchises specific demographics of citizens. Provision of public goods such as employment, healthcare, education, and housing thereby becomes an indicator of equality, citizen enfranchisement, and the progress of democratic development.³

While this paper argues that substantive democracy is a necessary fulfillment of democratic progress, states may find other tangible benefits to provision of public goods besides increased enfranchisement. The transition to a model of substantive democracy in Latin America emerged in the post-Washington Consensus years. According to Maxine Molyneux, the congruence of human rights movements, a necessary reformation of trust in government, and a general interest in governance being perceived as 'good', motivated officials to address social inequality and barriers to enfranchisement.⁴ Provision of public goods became a campaign for public support of governments in democratic transitions following the damage to public support of the Lost Decade – the economic financial crisis of

the 1980s. Substantive democracy performs a dual role of enfranchising citizens suffering from societal inequality and improving citizens' trust in federal governance.

Within a substantive democracy, groups that have been marginalized by the state require substantial and specific benefits to mitigate their history of disenfranchisement through political discrimination and state-sponsored violence.⁵ These benefits include education, employment, security, and recognition of the unique rights of each identity group. This paper seeks to address the improvements in substantive democracy for women and indigenous persons in Mexico. After suffering under centuries of labor and sexual servitude, cultural destruction, and legal discrimination, women and indigenous persons are unable to participate fully in political and civil society due to systemic racism and sexism. They receive unequal access to education, employment, security, and recognition of rights. The Mexican state has taken responsibility of improving its system of substantive democracy to remedy this history of oppression of women and indigenous peoples.

Enfranchisement of these marginalized groups additionally improves the quality of democracy, understanding that democracy manifest the principles of participation, competition, and accountability.⁶ Diminishing inequality through substantive democracy, as discussed previously, improves the quality of participation by lowering barriers to enfranchisement. Equality through substantive democracy also improves competition, as marginalized groups are able to challenge the political power of elite circles. Finally, enfranchised citizens exercise their voices and votes to keep politicians accountable within free and fair elections. Thanks to Mexico's progress in substantive democracy, the quality of its participatory democracy has improved to reflect the full diversity of its citizens.

In considering substantive democracy and how public goods are provisioned, it is worth noting that some efforts may in fact reinforce the stereotypical, and even discriminatory, societal structures that affect marginalized groups. Molyneux notes that social policy in Latin America works within a gendered construct of society; when the state attempts to provide goods such as healthcare and education to citizens, it does so within the context of a patriarchal family model.⁷ Molyneux's statement will be evaluated later in the context of analysis of the Oportunidades program, and similar inferences

will be considered in the state's handling of the *usos y costumbres* (uses and customs) model of indigenous autonomy. The charge of the Mexican government is to subvert these detrimental models of social provision, so as not to further disenfranchise women and indigenous persons while attempting to improve substantive democracy.

III. Women

When considering the enfranchisement of women, it is worthwhile to distinguish between feminine interests and feminist interests. Feminine interests address women's worth within traditional gender roles of the domestic sphere, while feminist interests desire to subvert and redesign the influence of feminine interests on a woman's worth and participation in society.⁸ Georgina Waylen found through study of women's representation in post-authoritarian democracies in Latin America that improvements in women's rights and representation in the new democratic structures depends on the gendered nature of inherited institutions and political actors.⁹ If national consciousness and institutions in authoritarian regimes were inherently egalitarian, the subsequent democratic system will make greater strides in the feminist interests of women. Rather, if a former institution operated under a gendered, patriarchal consciousness, then the new democracy will continue to operate within the confines of feminine interests.

Due to the patriarchal history of Mexican institutions, the modern democratic state has developed a divided approach using both of these interests, with feminist interests often serving as secondary to feminine. The subjugation of Latin American women within a context of class and race began with colonization; patriarchal society encouraged social subjugation of women to men and colonizing landowners exercised nefarious sexual control over both European and indigenous women.¹⁰ This historical context establishes the modern social reality for the majority of Mexican women today: they occupy lower societal positions than their male counterparts. In addition, Graziella Bertocchi finds that societies with higher levels of Catholicism have increased levels of female disenfranchisement, a prognosis that does not bode well for Mexico's majority Catholic population.¹¹ Mobilization of women's rights groups, therefore, is limited if the

system itself is structured against the provision of substantive democracy to this group. It requires the intervention of the democratic state to change the course of female disenfranchisement.

One type of government institution that can improve quality of female democratic participation is Women's Policy Agencies (WPAs). WPAs function at an intersection of the state and civil society; they run state sponsored public service programs geared toward female empowerment, while also funding non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other women's movements of civil society.¹² Within the relationship between WPAs and NGOs, disputes between feminine versus feminist interests can disrupt progress on women's enfranchisement. The appropriate WPA of Mexico is the National Institute of Women (INMujeres). INMujeres was formed in 2001 within the democratic transition from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to President Vicente Fox's National Action Party (PAN) administration.¹³ INMujeres has improved substantive democracy for Mexican women through security and labor reform, as well as holistic equalizing programs like Oportunidades.

Substantive democracy includes the provision of security, which takes a unique form when considering women: domestic violence. INMujeres has addressed this issue within its 2007 General Law of Access to a Life Free of Violence for Women, which made violence against women an issue of federal concern.¹⁴ With the law, INMujeres and other branches of the Mexican government guarantee the judicial equality of women to a life free of violence and discrimination, as well as establishing the Alert to Gender Violence against Women (AVGM), which analyzes violence against women in each state. Currently, nine out of 31 states have ongoing AVGMS, including Mexico City, Juarez, Oaxaca, Puebla, and Yucatán.¹⁵ These initiatives have generally improved the security of Mexican women; according to INMujeres, the violence against women at the state level has improved from a rate of 11.18 out of 100,000 women in 1990 to 4.7 out of 100,000 in 2015.¹⁶ While violence in Mexico is an ongoing issue, INMujeres and the Mexican government has taken a strong stance to prevent and properly adjudicate violence against women since democratization with Fox's administration.

Labor equality is another aspect of substantive democracy that uniquely affects women. Under Article 123 of the 1917 Constitution of Mexico, women are granted specific labor rights that limit their

employment under dangerous and strenuous conditions, as well as maternity leave and protection during pregnancy.¹⁷ While these provisions were rarely historically enforced, they paved the way for future labor reform and equality. One facet of labor equality that is often not considered is the value of unpaid domestic work, of which the burden falls unequally to women. In 2015, unpaid domestic work was valued at 24.25% of Mexico's GDP, with women's portion amounting to 18%, compared to men's 6.25%.¹⁸ These numbers are startling in their gendered dispersion, and the Mexican government has been largely unable to make significant changes within this domestic patriarchal structure since democratization. In empowering women with their own income, however, Mexico has made significant strides to promote inclusion practices of women in the workforce. From 2008 to 2016, the number of women who reported not having a personal income dropped by 21%.¹⁹ Female home ownership has also increased, and these trends bode well for Mexico's future of equality in economic distribution by gender.

The Oportunidades program, formerly Progresá, established under the PRI in the 1990s is the crowning jewel of Mexico's progress in substantive democracy. The conditional cash transfer program was not the first of its kind, but is now the largest in the world. Monthly stipends are provided by the state to female heads of household, on the condition that the children of the house attend school, the family utilizes the basic healthcare provided by the program, and the female head of the family attends educational talks.²¹ External evaluation by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in 2001 found that Oportunidades increased school enrollment and physical health indicators in children, and that women in the program felt empowered through controlling household income and even reported having more involvement in community affairs.²²

While Oportunidades is renowned for its proven results in improving access to education, healthcare, and economic stability, some have criticized its claim to empower and enfranchise women. Molyneux argues that Oportunidades has in fact done little to empower women; by focusing on the role of the women as mother within the condition of subsidies, Oportunidades reinforces traditional gender role structures and does little to encourage the involvement of the father in the domestic sphere.²³ However, there is significant evidence that Oportunidades enfranchises women and girls according to both

feminine and feminist interests. By utilizing the traditional structure of the household, Oportunidades empowers female heads of house by making them the beneficiaries of the cash transfers. According to research by Gertler, Martinez, and Rubio-Cordino, these women invest not only in the health and education of their children, but also the economic development of the household, so that by the time the children have aged out of the program the female head of house has improved her long-term living standard.²⁴ Additionally, IFPRI found that men in the program were more likely to listen to and value their wives because they control the cash transfers.²⁵ In terms of feminist interests, Oportunidades recognizes that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys due to patriarchal pressures on a women's role in the domestic sphere. Therefore, stipends at the secondary education level are higher for girls than boys by approximately 100 pesos, or 15%.²⁶ While the Oportunidades program may operate within gendered assumptions of society, the combined approach of feminine and feminist interests does not undermine the program's work in improving education, healthcare, and quality of life to Mexican girls and women.

IV. Indigenous Persons

Beyond a claim of a citizen's inherent right to substantive democracy, there is an additional argument to be made that the provision of public goods and enfranchisement of marginalized groups improves state stability and security. Donna Lee Van Cott finds through her analysis of indigenous social movements in Latin America that while participation outside of and against government can destabilize a democracy, participation and inclusion from within strengthens democracy by improving its quality.²⁷ Mexico first experienced an uprising of disenfranchised indigenous citizens in 1994 from the Zapatista National Liberation Army of Chiapas (EZLN). After the administration of President Carlos Salinas put an end to the constitutional land reform that protected their communal land holdings, the indigenous people of Chiapas utilized political and guerilla mobilization to call for Salinas' resignation and the full, peaceful political participation of indigenous and peasant groups in the land reform process. The Zapatista movement continues today, organizing largely outside of the state political sphere.²⁸ By not negotiat-

ing to develop adequate measures of participations for the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, the Mexican government has exacerbated the separation of state and community civil society, diminishing governmental control in the region and disenfranchising those citizens who feel unrepresented by the federal government.

At no point does the 1917 Constitution of Mexico mention indigenous persons or entail them any specific rights or protections. It was only under the pressure of the Zapatista movement that President Vicente Fox's administration moved to amend the Constitution with provisions to indigenous rights that the EZLN did not endorse. While the amended Article 2 defines indigenous rights on a collective and individual level, it also outlines the obligation of the federal government to intervene in indigenous communities on behalf of personal security, healthcare access, education, infrastructure development, and poverty alleviation.²⁹

This conflict of individual rights and the collectivist nature of indigenous groups creates conflict between the state's responsibilities. The inherent struggle with including indigenous persons in state democracy is the desire of many indigenous groups to exist autonomously from the state. When considering the Zapatista movement in Mexico, collective rights of indigenous peoples are actually meant to supersede individual rights, a direct contradiction to the principles of liberalism.³⁰ This collectivist perspective, however, can inhibit the development of those that are doubly marginalized within the community. Therefore, the Mexican state must merge models of collectivist governance and individualism to respect both the autonomy of indigenous communities and guarantee the federal rights of each person.

In Mexico's progress in substantive democracy, the state has used local models of governance to provide public goods to indigenous communities. One of the outstanding opportunities for state and indigenous leadership cooperation is the use of *usos y costumbres* to complete public projects. Most *usos y costumbres* require volunteerism within the indigenous community for public good, which the state can then maximize as a labor force to complete public works projects it finances.³¹ Diaz-Cayeros, Magaloni, and Ruiz-Euler find that the traditional *usos y costumbres* model of indigenous governance provides public goods such as electricity and sewage more effectively than state political party governance models. Furthermore, the authors found that the *usos y costumbres* model improved overall

political participation and enfranchisement, as indigenous citizens were more likely to attend town halls and vote than in the political party governance model.³² While *usos y costumbres* has proven effective in providing infrastructural services to indigenous communities, enfranchising indigenous persons has required federal-level action to undo centuries of biased institutions.

Mexico began the process of indigenous inclusion and educational development with the post-Revolution establishment of the Department of Education in 1921 and the Department of Indigenous Affairs in 1936.³³ While the right to primary education is guaranteed in the Constitution of 1917, the fruition of universal education has eluded Mexico since its writing. Mexican education during the 20th century was also inherently discriminatory to indigenous children, as children were encouraged to assimilate into Spanish language instruction and offered no avenues for education in their native indigenous language, until the Department of Indigenous Education was established in 1978.³⁴ Creighton, Post, and Park found in their analysis of “Ethnic Inequality in Mexican Education” that educational inequality between indigenous and nonindigenous children statistically decreases following the founding of the Department of Indigenous Education. However, this does not mean that ethnic inequality in Mexico is nonexistent, as the overall socioeconomic and education levels between indigenous and nonindigenous persons are still unequal.³⁵ Forty-four percent of indigenous persons live in the lowest income quartile for poverty, making Mexico’s efforts to improve infrastructural and educational programs among indigenous communities all the more important to achieve substantive democracy.³⁶

V. Indigenous Women

When marginalized groups intersect, barriers to enfranchisement are augmented by the interplay of different types of discrimination. Within Mexico, this burden falls on indigenous women. Indigenous women must navigate disenfranchisement due to race, gender, and socioeconomic status. For example, indigenous girls in the state of Yucatán receive three fewer years of schooling on average than other girls.³⁷ This difference can be attributed to the higher poverty rate among indigenous communities as well as the increased focus on a patriarchal community structure. Girls are restricted from

attending school because they are remanded at home to fulfill domestic duties or forced into marriage at a young age. The patriarchal consciousness of some indigenous communities can also manifest itself in the very models of collectivist governance the Mexican state is legally obliged to respect.

While the *usos y costumbres* model can have positive impact on fair distribution of public goods among indigenous communities, local indigenous governments can be discriminatory towards subgroups, including women. In the state of Oaxaca alone, 22% of *usos y costumbres* municipalities do not allow the democratic participation of women.³⁸ This is a case where the amended Constitution would judicially validate intervention of the state, as indigenous legal institutions are required by the Constitution to protect the rights of women as fully enfranchised citizens.³⁹ The Mexican state must still have an interest in community governance to guard against discrimination of women and other community subgroups. Improving democracy in participatory and substantive terms in indigenous communities is the priority of the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI).

The CDI was founded in 2003 and replaced its former iteration, the National Indigenist Institute, in developing social programs to improve the equality and enfranchisement of indigenous persons.⁴⁰ The CDI began delivering on its promise of substantive democracy to indigenous women with the development of the Productive Organization Program for Indigenous Women (POPMI). POPMI takes into account the specific discrimination and disenfranchisement indigenous women face, and works to build capacity among indigenous women through business development, education, and health-care.⁴¹ Analysis of the POPMI program within the state of Michoacán from Angela Elvira Quezada recognizes the occasional contradictions that come with merging feminist interests with the cultural historicism of the feminine role of indigenous women. Eighty percent of the women in the program live with their husband; 37.2% did not complete their primary level education; and the sexual health aspect of the program was met with disapproval from certain segments of the community. However, 70% of women reported that this program improved the health of the family, and perhaps more significantly, renewed the value of 'women's work' within the patriarchal structure of the household and community.⁴² The Mexican state balances

on a fine line by intervening on behalf of indigenous women, while still respecting the autonomy of indigenous communities; it has not been inhibited from making real strides in providing public goods to improve substantive democracy.

VI. The Future of Mexico's Substantive Democracy

This paper demonstrated that Mexico has made significant strides in substantive democracy by enfranchising marginalized groups with education, healthcare, infrastructure, and security. This progress began in the late years of PRI authoritarianism and has continued through the subsequent multiparty democracy that has emerged in the 21st century. However, a threat to substantive democracy exists in all liberal democracies in the form of party alignment and polarization of the provision of these public goods.

When public good programs are perceived as benefiting specific groups or to be linked to a specific party rather than the state institution, substantive democracy can become a voting topic rather than a right. Susan Eckstein found in her study of poor Mexico City communities that citizens who were more formally linked to the government through federal programs were less likely engage in electoral disobedience.⁴³ Succinctly, linking a political party to an institutional program encourages voter retention for the party in power, so long as that party provides those public goods effectively. The ideal iteration of this finding is that political parties are then incentivized to continue substantive democracy provisions from administrations prior, and to build upon them to then claim greater electoral legitimacy and favoritism. However, this could lead administrations to be less willing to take on controversial topics in enfranchisement, like abortion and LGBTQ+ marriage rights. While the Oportunidades and POPMI programs have avoided being labeled as a partisan, it is reasonable to predict that future programs may become the rallying cry of one party and the fear-mongering platform of another. The Mexican state could avoid this dilemma by providing legal protections to INMujeres, CDI, etc. to protect them from the political turnover of each election cycle and allow them to continue contributing to Mexico's democratic progress. Much of this will depend on how Mexico's first leftist president,

Andrés Manuel López Obrador, builds on existing programs and fulfills electoral promises to the many female and indigenous Mexicans who elected him.

VII. Conclusion

The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) is committee of the Mexican federal government responsible for analyzing the effectiveness of state-sponsored social programs among indigenous persons and women.⁴⁴ Among the proposals for indigenous persons, CONEVAL suggests prioritizing programs that incorporate them into the formal labor market and celebrate their distinctive cultural heritage.⁴⁵ In empowering women, CONEVAL focuses on distribution of labor in the home, labor reform on paternity/maternity leave, and eliminating violence against women.⁴⁶ These suggested paths to enfranchisement bode well for the continued progress of substantive democracy in Mexico.

Government institutions like CONEVAL are the future of Mexican democratic progress. Programs like Oportunidades and POPMI have been proven by external evaluators to effectively enfranchise women and indigenous persons, but equally important is the self-examination CONEVAL undertakes. The existence of CONEVAL represents a nonpartisan, institutionalized approach to democracy and indicates that Mexico is committed to the betterment of its people. While the arguments between feminine versus feminist interests and the individualist versus collectivist approach to autonomy will persist, Mexico has proven it is willing and able to establish sustainable substantive democratic institutions. There are battles still to be won as Mexico grapples with a history of disenfranchisement, but women and indigenous persons today have more power in participatory democracy than ever before.

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“The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” by Washington Irving examines the formation of American history and culture. Irving’s story portrays the American anxiety present after the Revolutionary War. The gothic elements of the story illustrate the American fear of an unknown future. To crystallize the choices before the young nation, Irving utilizes a romance plot within the gothic tale. Irving’s comparison between Ichabod Crane, an outsider, and Brom Bones, a native of Sleepy Hollow, in their competition for Katrina Van Tassel, a young heiress, presents the romance plot as a metaphor for the American choice between tradition and change. Irving’s romance plot signifies that despite America’s official separation from England, newfound Americans, like Katrina, were still hesitant to discard the familiar.

Transforming the Future: The Romance Plot in Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”

Nicole Salama

Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” portrays the American anxiety present a few years after the Revolutionary War. Irving’s use of a gothic story illustrates the American fear of the unknown and fast approaching future. To crystallize the choices before the young nation, Irving positions a romance plot within the gothic tale. Initially, Irving’s emphasis on sleepy language, nature imagery, and tales of haunting establishes the gothic elements of the story while illustrating Sleepy Hollow’s comfort with the past. Secondly, Irving’s comparison between Ichabod Crane, the town’s schoolmaster, and Brom Bones, a native of Sleepy Hollow, in their competition for Katrina Van Tassel, a young heiress, presents the romance plot as a metaphor for the American choice between adhering to tradition and progressing through change. Through the use of food imagery and a comparison between Katrina’s suitors and her father, Irving utilizes the romance plot as a warning against rashly abandoning the present for an unknown and potentially dangerous future.

Irving uses sleepy imagery to illustrate Sleepy Hollow's separation from the rest of the world. As Geoffrey Crayon, Irving's narrator, introduces Sleepy Hollow, he observes, "A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land and pervade the very atmosphere."²¹ Irving's use of alliteration provides a lulling feeling to the tale. Additionally, his use of the word atmosphere separates Sleepy Hollow from the rest of its surroundings. Crayon continues to note that a person "however wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to imbibe the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative—to dream dreams, and see apparitions."²² By contrasting an individual's experience prior to and after spending time within the region, Irving emphasizes that Sleepy Hollow possesses a mindset and an ability all its own, upon which outside forces have no effect. Through his use of a hyphen towards the end of his sentence, Irving points to the ultimate result of remaining in Sleepy Hollow's atmosphere: a measure of belief in the tales that characterize the area. Richard McLamore claims that Irving "wields sentimental and picturesque discourses in the hope they might provide a model of cultural development, whether English neocolonial or American postcolonial."²³ Since Irving positions the landscape as the determining factor of development, he is able to highlight from the beginning that any development that occurs throughout must align itself with the physical atmosphere of Sleepy Hollow to be deemed beneficial. It is this characteristic of Sleepy Hollow which most clearly illustrates its importance as the setting of Irving's story. Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky asserts that one can "insist that the 'legend' is Sleepy Hollow itself. As an actual geographic entity, as a community."²⁴ Irving does everything but personify the region of Sleepy Hollow, ensuring that Sleepy Hollow distinctly appears as its own individual entity throughout the legend.

Through his use of nature imagery, which he also depicts as soporific, Irving likens the inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow to Sleepy Hollow itself. As Crayon relates his personal experiences in Sleepy Hollow, he adds his belief that the area still remains the same despite changes in time and surroundings: "I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom."²⁵ Irving's juxtaposition of the trees with the families of Sleepy Hollow equates the land with the people themselves. Thus, Irving emphasizes that Sleepy Hollow the place is the same as Sleepy

Hollow the people. Irving further describes the people to be vegetating, associating them both in nature and action with the farming culture of Sleepy Hollow. He continues this association by depicting the people as not only the farmers of the land, but also the product of Sleepy Hollow itself. Irving even labels the children by the same name as the town: "Its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys."⁶ By referring to them in this way, Irving places a significant portion of the boys' value in the fact that they not only reside in Sleepy Hollow, but are also physically a part of it. Rubin-Dorsky notes that "Irving chose to pursue the self metaphorically as it was reflected in its surroundings."⁷ In doing so, Irving elevates the importance of his setting, focusing on the nature and physical attributes of Sleepy Hollow. Thus, the nature of Sleepy Hollow as a place is indicative of the nature of the people who inhabit it.

Irving further characterizes his setting by infusing the Sleepy Hollow environment with tales of ghosts. He uses the haunting theme in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" to emphasize the importance of history and tradition to the residents of Sleepy Hollow. In fact, it is the focus on the past through which Irving grants the legend much of its gothic nature. William Hedges argues that "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" is one of Irving's attempts "to equip the American landscape with a kind of mythology, to crystallize a handful of memories, traditions, and a connection with a past already blurred and threatened with extinction."⁸ Irving makes this evident through his characters' incredible focus on the ghosts who supposedly haunt the area. The tales which circulate through Sleepy Hollow are those of a "high German doctor during the early days of the settlement," an "old Indian chief," and of course "the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the revolutionary war," whom the people refer to as the Headless Horseman.⁹ Each of these ghosts are figures firmly rooted in the history of the Revolutionary War. Through the people's focus on such ghosts, Irving highlights the control which history possesses over the inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow, literally haunting them.

After he clearly establishes the expectations for Sleepy Hollow's inhabitants, Irving introduces Ichabod as incoherent with the region. Though the people of Sleep Hollow reflect the place perfectly, Irving differentiates Ichabod from the rest of Sleepy Hollow and its inhabitants through the development of characters' voices.

Through comparison with Ichabod's students, Irving highlights the disturbance Ichabod causes within the community: "The low murmur of his pupils' voices conning over their lessons, might be heard of a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a bee-hive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master."¹⁰ Though the murmuring of the students does not interrupt the tranquility of the day, Ichabod's voice fails to blend in properly. Irving portrays this discordancy through Ichabod's aggressive actions towards his students. Additionally, Irving's comparison of the students' voices with the sound of working bees illustrates that children who grow up in Sleepy Hollow behave as a cohesive, collective unit with the rest of the region. However, Ichabod displays none of these attributes, interrupting the calm of his students and Sleepy Hollow as a whole with the simple action of speaking. Rubin-Dorsky notes, "There is no internal conflict in Sleepy Hollow, and the only tensions that exist are those introduced by Ichabod Crane, who is in all respects an outsider, one never quite accepted into the community."¹¹ Thus, Irving foreshadows Sleepy Hollow's ultimate and inevitable rejection of Ichabod.

After he establishes Ichabod as different, Irving introduces the romance plot, highlighting the consequences of this difference through Ichabod's desire for Katrina. Irving utilizes Ichabod's immense desire for food to reveal the destructive intentions behind his pursuit of Katrina as a wife. In describing Ichabod's love for food, Irving relates him to a snake: "He was a huge feeder, and though lank, had the dilating powers of an Anaconda."¹² Through his repeated emphasis of Ichabod's lank frame, Irving depicts him as ravenous and insatiable despite his constant and considerable consumption of food throughout the story. Additionally, Irving's likening of Ichabod with a snake depicts him as dangerous. Irving also portrays Ichabod's desire for Katrina in the same way as his desire for food. Ichabod views Katrina as "plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy-cheeked as one of her father's peaches."¹³ By describing Katrina as food, Irving emphasizes that Ichabod finds value in his potential marriage to Katrina not in Katrina herself, but rather in her ability to feed his appetite for wealth, comfort, and of course food. Thus, Irving writes as if Ichabod intends to devour Katrina rather than marry her. This depiction proves accurate as Irving reveals Ichabod's plan for his life should he succeed in marrying Katrina. Rubin-Dorsky discusses Ichabod's desire to "neither husband the resources nor conserve the

riches of Sleepy Hollow but exploit them by turning the self-sustaining farm of Van Tassel into a capitalistic enterprise.¹⁴ Ichabod's intentions are therefore not those of a loving suitor or a devoted resident of Sleepy Hollow, but rather purely a reflection of his desire for his own personal gain.

Through his use of a seemingly conventional love triangle, Irving emphasizes the contrast between Katrina's two suitors by comparing them with Baltus Van Tassel, Katrina's father. The physical comparison of Ichabod with Van Tassel, Irving depicts Katrina's preference for maintaining tradition. Irving describes Van Tassel as possessing "a face dilated with content and good humour, round and jolly as the harvest moon."¹⁵ Van Tassel's contentment sharply contrasts with Ichabod's continuously increasing appetite. Additionally, by characterizing Van Tassel's face as similar to the harvest moon, Irving emphasizes his particular likeness to the rest of Sleepy Hollow. However, Irving's description of Ichabod lacks these qualities: "He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together."¹⁶ Irving makes sure to highlight that Van Tassel's wholesome figure provides a sharp contrast to that of Ichabod. Irving fails to compare Ichabod to nature or farming, highlighting the difference in characteristics between Ichabod and Van Tassel. Instead, Irving characterizes Ichabod's feet as shovels that dig up the earth rather than nurture it, continuing to emphasize the destructive nature of this difference in Ichabod. However, Irving does highlight the similarities between Brom and Van Tassel through their names. Brom, whose proper full name is Brom Van Brunt, is, like Katrina and her father, originally a part of Sleepy Hollow and therefore shares its values. By specifying Brom's full name at the beginning of the tale, Irving highlights Brom's Dutch origins through his last name. Since Katrina is a true part of Sleepy Hollow, it is therefore no wonder that she chooses the suitor most similar to her father and her home. Through Katrina's choice of Brom over Ichabod, Irving illustrates her adherence both to the culture of Sleepy Hollow and to her Dutch origins. Rubin-Dorsky concludes that "Katrina Van Tassel's rejection of Ichabod as suitor and his subsequent flight signify the triumph of the pastoral community over its potential exploiter."¹⁷ Thus, Katrina's choice of Brom

protects the heritage of the community of Sleepy Hollow while also repulsing any potential threat Ichabod and his nonconforming nature presents.

Irving illustrates that Ichabod's shameful exit from Sleepy Hollow positively affects Sleepy Hollow through the resolution of the romance plot. In his pursuit of Katrina, Brom drives Ichabod out of Sleepy Hollow by impersonating the Headless Horseman. Thus, not only is Brom finally successful when he takes on the guise of a historical figure, but also the history of the figure he impersonates is the active force which ultimately expels Ichabod from the region, protecting the tradition of Sleepy Hollow through rather frightening, forceful methods. Bryce Traister notes that "the attack on the American bachelor indirectly voiced anxiety over the possibility that the United States might fail to unfold fruitfully."¹⁸ The residents of Sleepy Hollow make little effort to discover the true circumstances of Ichabod's removal, happy to remain in the comforting safety of the status quo of their lives instead. Afterwards, the inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow are able to proceed with their lives as normal despite Ichabod's previous presence by making him a part of Sleepy Hollow itself. Irving transforms Ichabod into just another supernatural tale of the past that circulates through the region through a return to one final characterization of Ichabod's voice: "The plough boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow."¹⁹ Whereas Irving previously characterizes Ichabod's voice as disruptive, he now depicts the voice as an affirmation of the quiet of Sleepy Hollow. The people's addition of Ichabod's tale to that of the Headless Horseman finally properly assimilates him to Sleepy Hollow, but only through memory rather than reality.

Through his mixture of romance with the gothic in the story of Sleepy Hollow, Irving provides a perspective of the choice America faces after the Revolutionary War between tradition and change. Irving's use of a love triangle in a gothic tale personalizes the fears of the national American anxiety towards the future. The romance itself elaborates on both the individual responsibility of every American to contribute to this choice as well as the direct consequences each person would shoulder as a result. Thus, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" embodies not only a political and cultural anxiety, but also

that of each individual American exchanging an established country for a nation which has not yet developed its own sense of identity and direction.

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¹⁷ Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky, *Adrift in the Old World: The Psychological Pilgrimage of Washington Irving*. The University of Chicago, 1988, 118.

¹⁸ Bryce Traister, "The Wandering Bachelor: Irving, Masculinity, and Authorship." *American Literature*, vol. 74, no. 1, 2002, 116.

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This work examines the impact of organized crime in Latin America on democracy. By focusing on the Northern Triangleregionin Central America and the Tri-Border Area in South America, the worklooks at how gang violence is perpetuated by government officials, who in turn benefit from the presence of gangs. These crime units lower the quality of democracy in Latin America, but also ensure democracy's survival. As regimes have more influence on other states in an increasingly globalized world, this workargues that outside states should implement multilateral strategies to reduce organized crime and help strengthen democracy in Latin America.

Gangs, Government, Globalization: The Impact of Organized Crime on Latin American Democracy

Michaela Scott

Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" portrays the American anxiety present a few years after the Revolutionary War. Irving's use of a gothic story illustrates the American fear of the unknown and fast approaching future. To crystallize the choices before the young nation, Irving positions a romance plot within the gothic tale. Initially, Irving's emphasis on sleepy language, nature imagery, and tales of haunting establishes the gothic elements of the story while illustrating Sleepy Hollow's comfort with the past. Secondly, Irving's comparison between Ichabod Crane, the town's schoolmaster, and Brom Bones, a native of Sleepy Hollow, in their competition for Katrina Van Tassel, a young heiress, presents the romance plot as a metaphor for the American choice between adhering to tradition and progressing through change. Through the use of food imagery and a comparison between Katrina's suitors and her father, Irving utilizes the romance plot as a warning against Latin America's political journey has had many twists and turns since colonial times, transitioning through monarchies, dictatorships, military rule, and democracies both strong and weak. In modern times, many of these states have landed in support of democracy, exhibiting the "third wave" of

democracy in Latin America. However, some of the democratic institutions today are not robust or complete. Many aspects threaten democracy in the region, but the most significant threat is the prevalence of organized crime. Primarily through the presence of gangs and other organized crime units, the lives of citizens, state borders, economies, and institutions are threatened by the power exercised by those with guns. Organized crime units threaten the rule of law in addition to the physical threats they perpetuate. A violated or weak rule of law undermines democracy by lowering the power and quality of control by elected government officials. To combat this, states around the world should focus on multilateral approaches to reduce organized crime and support robust democracies in Latin America.

Organized crime in Latin America affects citizens within the state and surrounding nations alike. Throughout the region, organized crime has been and continues to be a destructive problem. Major examples can be seen in the Northern Triangle consisting of Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua and the Tri-Border Area of South America consisting of the borders between Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. In the Northern Triangle, Guatemala sees high levels of gang activity. In the article "Leaving the Devil You Know: Crime Victimization, US Deterrence Policy, and the Emigration Decision in Central America," authors Hiskey et. al look at levels of violence and organized crime in the Northern Triangle to determine its influence on migration numbers. They find that "This surge in Central Americans arriving at the US border has coincided with unprecedented levels of crime and violence...raising parallels with the exodus of Guatemalans and Salvadorans fleeing the civil wars of their respective countries during the 1980s"¹. Due to the increased level of crime in the region, the United States has seen more migrants than ever leaving unsafe societies. The authors also find that over 36% of those surveyed in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador had been victimized by armed robbery, much higher than other Central American states². The constituents of the Northern Triangle are often and brutally victimized by organized crime.

In the Tri-Border Area of South America, citizens are also frequently victimized by organized crime. This area experiences porous borders that allow gang movement between states and even sees support for these groups as they are not stopped or held accountable by government agents. Dr. Ana R. Sverdlick, professor of political

science at South Texas College, studies this problem in “Terrorists and Organized Crime Entrepreneurs in the ‘Triple Frontier’ Among Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.” She finds that “[a] lack of proper border patrols, government corruption, and the smuggling of merchandise may put the region’s security at risk”³. She also states that in 2005, the relatively small border city Foz de Iguazú had a higher number of homicides per capita than Río de Janeiro and São Paulo, two of the most densely populated cities in the world⁴. This tri-border region experiences little to no rule of law. Dr. Alma Keshavarz, political science graduate of Claremont University, says, “The Tri-Border Area benefits from the dark economy of the region, which consists of money laundering, intellectual property crime and narcotics trafficking,” and is bolstered by the presence of international terror organizations like Hezbollah and ISIS⁵. While gangs and those associated use the illegal dark economy to make money that can actually help the legitimate economy of the region, citizens experience the violence and other negative results of weak law caused by these border issues and are exploited by organized crime.

Organized crime groups influence government officials and reveal a disruption in the political processes in both the Northern Triangle and the Tri-Border Area. These regions have not been able to eliminate gangs and the crimes committed against constituents. Dr. Sverdlick argues in her look at the Tri-Border Area that “the success of organized crime enterprises and terrorist groups depends to a large extent on officials who can be corrupted and who will look the other way. This obviously facilitates the commission of crimes”⁶. Rather than addressing the problem in many cases, government officials will ignore gangs and allow them to function without interference. These gangs influence government officials to ignore and/or support them with physical promises, using bribes and coercion to bring about favorable legislation to allow the continuation of crime. Dr. Bruce Bagley argues that though “criminal organizations... do not determine the type of state...they certainly can deter or inhibit political reform efforts at all levels of a political system from local to national”⁷. While not often destroying or changing the state, these organizations influence officials and alter state functioning, creating a weak democratic state that is resistant to change.

As the prevalence and agency organized crime units can have on government positions becomes known to a society, constituent trust in government dwindles. When a state has high levels of organized crime and violence against citizens, it appears that the government cannot protect its citizens from extra-governmental forces like gangs and other criminal groups and citizens lose their faith in the state. Dr. Miguel Carreras of the University of Pittsburgh studies the impact crime has on trust in government in “The Impact of Criminal Violence on Regime Legitimacy in Latin America.” He finds that “Support for political institutions among individuals who have a low perception of crime is more than 3 percent greater than among those who have a high perception of crime”⁸. In countries where constituents are often victimized, they support the government in power less often than those from a low-crime state. Carreras blames this increasing violence on results of organized crime such as transnational drug flows like in the Tri-Border Area⁹. These citizens will not support the government that cannot protect them and lose faith in the democracy that created this situation.

As a result of the lack of support and faith of citizens, these states see lower voter rates, emigration, or increased admissions into gangs. In his book *Homies and Hermanos*, Dr. Robert Brenneman conducts research and interviews with people in the Northern Triangle affected by high levels of gang activity. He finds that many of the young men who became “homies,” or gang members, see this as their only option¹⁰. Many of the interviewees feel as though the only way to stay safe is to join the gangs that run the government, turning from a fully Christian life to the powerful one of homie. In an area controlled by gangs rather than the rule of law, young boys and full-grown men cannot trust the government to protect them and believe they must either join a gang or leave their state rather than wait for the next election season to improve daily life and remove organized crime. The democratic process seems useless to those faced with these few options for the future.

In addition to a lack of trust and support shown in its actions, citizens see the government as corrupt when organized crime continues. Rather than following the wishes of the majority that elected them, officials follow the desires of the crime lords that pressure them. This corruption is one of the largest concerns for citizens of

Latin America. In their study of organized crime, Dr. Ivan Briscoe and David Keseberg find that citizens see and react harshly to this corruption. They state:

“Electorates across Latin America have already taken great offense at evidence of these high-level illicit linkages, most notably in Guatemala and Mexico, and tend to regard the infiltration of criminal actors in political life as a large part of the reason for the failure of governments to handle resources properly or provide adequately for their populations”¹¹.

Rather than a failure of one leader, perpetuated crime under many different ideologies and parties reveals a weakness of the system and undermines democracy. For example, leftist Cristina Fernández de Kirchner of Argentina saw rampant rural gang violence with little state intervention¹². Her successor Mauricio Macri, though of a different, right-leaning party, still presides over high death rates from gangs and corrupt police forces¹³. Individual leaders are elected, but many carry out the same policies regarding organized crime specifically that harm citizens in the long run. Democracy does not serve the people well, and they lose faith in it and stop participating, or protest, as seen in modern Perú, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, México, and Haiti, to name a few of many examples.

From an outside perspective, this is a major concern for foreign states as well as citizens of the affected states as it leads to other aspects that weaken democracy and threaten relations within the region. In his work “Transnational Organized Crime, Terrorism, and Criminalized States in Latin America: An Emerging Tier-One National Security Priority,” Douglas Farah looks at the United States’ response to organized crime, state support, and low-quality democracy as a result of organized crime. He says that the prevalence of gang violence and control in Latin America is influenced by a deep hatred for the West, specifically the United States, and is a major threat to national security¹⁴. With increasing globalization, the United States has an interest in supporting strong democracies to ensure neoliberal policies and human rights protection through minority rights. In an increasingly globalized world, the happenings in one state can have

global impacts. The prevalence of organized crime in Latin America has caught the attention of external actors and is an international security threat.

While corruption in government certainly lowers quality of democracy, it does not necessarily lower the stability of democracy in Latin America. The set-up of crime lords influencing elected officials allows for democracy to continue, albeit with some outside influence. Elected officials can maintain their posts and provide voting rights, but they still favor the gangs that help keep society moving. Without state support for organized crime, the police force or military would have to move against gangs, leading to astounding death tolls. Journalist David Gagne focuses on crime in Latin America, noting that El Salvador, Honduras, and Venezuela have turned to the military to combat organized crime. He also notes, though, that “Multiple studies have shown violence increased in areas where Mexican troops were deployed to battle the cartels. The United Nations came to a similar conclusion about the results of militarization in Guatemala”¹⁵. Elected officials here have allowed organized crime to continue to avoid an entirely un-democratic, lawless setting and to continue the way of life that many have become accustomed to. Citizens suffer from the violence and manipulation of gangs, but the government continues as it has been.

Though the state continues to carry out its legislative functions and maintains forces needed to combat crime, its actions favor organized crime and these security forces are not used to combat gangs. This could be an example of Mary Patillo’s explanation of Dis-Organization Theory. In “Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class,” Pattillo studies African American middle-class life in Chicago. She discovers that through coercing the opposition and guaranteeing the safety of those who do not oppose the gang, gang leaders in Chicago keep their neighborhoods safe from harm by allowing residents to go to work and carry out daily life¹⁶. Similarly, by allowing organized crime to continue, leaders in Latin America rule over a normally functioning society and thus ensure their protection in office. By this reasoning, as long as leaders allow gangs to continue, they do not threaten the government. As seen earlier, many citizens still suffer, but the democratic process continues, and the state remains.

As the state continues to function, these weak democracies will most likely remain semi democracies and avoid backsliding to authoritarianism. In looking at the state of democracy in 2015 in Latin America, Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán state, “[We] are not convinced that democracy has declined sharply enough in Mexico...although there is no question that democracy has been hollowed out in many parts of the country that are riddled with violence and corruption”¹⁷. States plagued by violence experience less freedom as well as decreased impartiality shown by the government as they favor the gangs that keep society running. In the cases studied, though, this weakened democracy does not lead to an entire democratic backslide. Citizens do experience fewer protected rights as organized crime groups experience more, no matter what the government shows as law on paper. “Even if new democracies do not revert to dictatorship, the quality of democracy may suffer if crime continues to rise. One particularly vulnerable component of democracy is the rule of law”¹⁸. While the law is not applied equally and citizens fall victim to groups like those in the Northern Triangle and the Tri-Border Area, they still have more power than those under authoritarian regimes.

Leaders do well to promote this stable semi democracy and prevent backslide to authoritarianism. In “Inequality and the Rule of Law,” Brinks and Botero study the causes of a weak rule of law. They state that citizen actions, “cannot explain the patterns of failures and successes of substantive rules to effectively structure interactions among individual citizens, between different groups, and between citizens and the state”¹⁹. Citizen actions do not upstage the regime, as voting does not influence the state of the rule of law in Latin America. Unlike a true democracy, though, citizens cannot revolt against the leader as the crime units there can put down rebellion, like Gagne notes in his article about military and control in El Salvador. The state can argue that it functions under democratic principles, but it still has excessive control over the population with their support of gangs to keep society functioning as it has.

The power of democracy in Latin America matters on a global scale. Weak rule of law and democracy in the region impacts every other state in the world. The Organization of American States (OAS) has done extensive research on the ability of democracy to grow in the modern world and its impact on other democracies in the world as a result. In “Our Democracy,” authors explore how individual de-

mocracies affect the world system. They emphasize the idea that “A group of nations’ capacities to negotiate with the rest of the world partly compensates for imbalances in political, military, and economic power”²⁰. Here they argue that the consolidation of democracy in a state influences its ability to interact with the world and maintain balances in power. If the majority of forces in Latin America are semi democratic and hindered by a weak rule of law, overall international relation will be hindered and Latin America’s support for robust democracy will be low.

The harm to society that transnational organized crime causes is prevalent in all sectors of life. The decrease in democracy in a region once praised for its successful third wave threatens regimes that have full trust in their democracy like Latin American citizens once did. Decreasing crime increases human flourishing and domestic and international opinion on the region, bettering social aspects of Latin America²¹. Transnational corporations see the results of this crime as their personnel and goods are threatened by the criminal groups supported by the government. According to Costa, the *International Journal of Human Rights*, “A 2004 study of multinational companies conducted by the Council of the Americas found that security investments as a proportion of total expenditures were 3% in Asia and 7% in Latin America”²². Corporations must spend more money to protect their shipments in Latin America, lowering competitiveness of business in that region. States must work together to discourage organized crime to secure the region and open it to trade.

With the human rights abuses and threats to international relations caused by weak democracies in Latin America, the international community should attempt to aid Latin America and its citizens to overcome the transnational negative impacts of gang rule. States and international organizations should attempt to decrease the human rights abuses occurring as a result of the violence in the Northern Triangle. Domestic gangs can take advantage of porous borders and even work with international terror organizations like ISIS in the Tri-Border Area, perpetuating violence and strengthening non-governmental entities that have government control. International powers should focus on reducing these organized crime movements to strengthen the rule of law. This will in turn strengthen democracy and better relations among all democratic states. In an article on transnational crime for the Council on Foreign Relations, the Global

Governance Program states that “Collectively, global conventions, multilateral initiatives, and international institutions provide normative standards of protection, target the movement of illegal goods, and criminalize illicit activities”²³. By taking multilateral actions to combat the problems in Latin America, states can bring international attention to the problem of organized crime, build expectations for states to reduce violence, and strengthen government processes and ultimately democracy.

Unilateral approaches by outside states to this problem will not work in the globalized world. Drs. Alfonso Valenzuela Aguilera and Tom Angotti study power and urban life in Latin America, describing the results of organized crime and government interaction. They state, “Crime may combine with institutional corruption in a symbiotic relationship in which organized crime becomes part of the structure of the state... [and] maintains a structure through violent methods”²⁴. The state and crime units work together to maintain society while harming citizens, and the state benefits in keeping it that way. International actors are needed, but a single international actor cannot solve a problem that plagues so many states. Unilateral actions can easily come across as combative, subversive, or even a declaration of war to a state that stabilizes society by weakening democracy and supporting crime. In his article on the impacts of United States action in Guatemala, Bill Perrigo warns against unilateral action against foreign governments. He says, “Installed in the wake of the [1954 Guatemalan] coup were a series of military, authoritarian governments, funded and advised by the United States. These governments waged a brutal war of repression against not just the guerrilla opposition that sprung up to oppose them, but against the indigenous way of life in Guatemala as a whole”²⁵. The United States, through the CIA, orchestrated this coup and saw terrible effects throughout Guatemala for decades. To avoid these same mistakes, actors, including states impacted by these problems, must work together to begin to solve them.

Hemispheric stability and, in turn, international stability rely on a strengthened rule of law and democracy in the region achieved by multilateral actions. The threat of transnational organized crime requires cooperation to overcome. Benjamin Wisnioski and the US Army Command conducted a study on the success of special forces and combating transnational organized crime in Latin America. They

found that “The research determines that the duration of the partnership and the degree of partner nation support are the two most important factors in developing national police units capable of targeting transnational criminal organizations”²⁶. Wisnioski sees that multilateral actions have the most success in fighting these criminal organizations and weak rule of law. By cooperating for an extended time, nations can build successful law enforcement forces that can combat organized crime. Rather than a single country pushing a security force, a coalition can work together to better the region.

International organizations like the OAS and the United Nations (UN) have dedicated many resources to advise on the issue of weak rule of law and combat it. The Permanent Council of the OAS produced an action plan “To promote increased contact among law-enforcement officials”²⁷. Through multilateral work, this organization has encouraged states to work together to better security. The UN has included combatting this organized crime as part of its Sustainable Development Goals. As part of their meeting, UN experts discussed “Exhibitions covering themes from terrorism prevention to trafficking in persons, anti-corruption and wildlife crime, and many more”²⁸. Experts in international affairs and organizations have pushed long-term multilateral efforts, and these plans are a way to strengthen rule of law in Latin America and relations throughout the world.

Furthermore, the plan produced by the OAS argues that all nations are interconnected and that the political institution of each impacts the whole. The authors of “Our Democracy,” produced before the plan, say, “The way the power of the State is limited, the way de facto powers interact with other parties abroad, solutions to problems and how they play out over time, all of these depend on a democracy’s level of integration with the world. No nation is an island”²⁹. Each government and citizenry are inextricably tied to the others, and stable democracies help non-democracies to grow and consolidate. Through targeted action by groups with expert knowledge, like the UN or the OAS, the world can work together to reduce organized crime and gang violence and strengthen democracy and the rule of law and in Latin America.

Organized crime and government support for it threatens democracy. Citizens lose trust in the government as they face daily violence without effective state intervention, officials become corrupt as state programs continue in favor of gangs, and citizen voices can be

lost even though they still have the right to vote. While these states may not devolve into authoritarian regimes, democracies in Latin America are low-quality as a result of these crime organizations and serve the needs of few due to the influence of organized crime. Even with these grave threats, Latin America may be able to come together with other actors in the world and initiate reforms to reduce organized crime in the region and restore validity to democracies that will govern well.

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- 3 Sverdlick, *Terrorists and Organized Crime*, 84
- 4 Ibid, 85
- 5 Keshavarz, *Iran and Hezbollah in the Tri-Border Areas*, 2
- 6 Sverdlick, *Terrorists and Organized Crime*, 89
- 7 Bagley, *The Evolution of Drug Trafficking*, 113
- 8 Carreras, *The Impact of Criminal Violence*, 94
- 9 Ibid, 86
- 10 Brenneman, *Homies and Hermanos*
- 11 Briscoe and Keseberg, *Only Connect*, 116
- 12 Greenfield, *Murder, Drug Cartels, and Misery*
- 13 Salomón, *Police Corruption Blamed*
- 14 Farah, *Transnational Organized Crime*
- 15 Gagne, *The Siren Call of Militarization*, 1
- 16 Patillo, *Black Picket Fences*
- 17 Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán, *Cross-
Currents in Latin America*, 116
- 18 Smithey and Malone, *Crime and Public Support*
- 19 Botero and Brinks, *Inequality and the Rule of Law*, 236
- 20 Insulza, *Our Democracy in Latin America*, 39
- 21 Carreras, *The Impact of Criminal Violence*
- 22 Costa, *Citizen Security and
Transnational Organized Crime*, 133
- 23 “The Global Regime for Transnational Crime”
- 24 Valenzuela Aguilera and Angotti, *Urban Surges*, 22
- 25 Perrigo, *The Devastating Effects of American Intervention*, 1
- 26 Wisnioski, *Countering Transnational Organized Crime*
- 27 Permanent Council of the OAS,
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- 28 “United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime”,
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- 29 Insulza *Our Democracy in Latin America*, 39

According to Plato, our soul must undertake a philosophical ascent in order to reach the realm of the Forms, yet Socrates claims in *Phaedo* that reason alone is insufficient to complete the philosophical journey. Through analysis of passages in *Symposium*, this paper argues that beauty complements the faculty of reason by motivating and enabling the soul's journey. Beauty draws the soul to encounter the ineffable, thus engendering moments of *aporia* or "not-knowing," yet beauty also provides a way for the soul to transcend its ignorance and ascertain the beauty of Truth. Plato's *Symposium* highlights that beauty initiates, facilitates, and consummates the soul's philosophical journey, working alongside reason to elevate the soul to the Forms.

The Soul's Philosophical Ascent: Beauty, Reason, and *Aporia* in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedo*

Natalie Widdows

In Plato's *Phaedo*, after delivering a long and detailed discourse regarding the nature of death and the immortality of the soul, Socrates makes a curious yet inspirational statement: "No sensible man would insist that these things are as I have described them, but I think it is fitting for a man to risk the belief—for the risk is a noble one."¹ In this quote, Socrates claims that belief constitutes a noble risk, one to which a "sensible man" might not assent. In much of his philosophical discourse, Socrates depends upon rational "sensibilities" to achieve understanding, so it seems curious that here Socrates implies that sensibilities, or rational faculties, fall short in their ability to fully elevate the soul to believe in Truth. Yet, despite the apparent disparity between sensibility and belief, Socrates states that there remains a certain fittingness to his convictions. This quote does not suggest that belief opposes sensibilities, but rather indicates that Socrates' ideas depend on more than pure reason: something else is at play that compels him toward Truth and dares him to believe in it. Something else captures him in moments of *aporia* ("not-knowing"),

when his own reason and knowledge falter, and provides him with a way forward. This compelling force remains unnamed in *Phaedo*, but when weighed against discourses in *Symposium*, beauty emerges as an implicit force that serves an essential role in the soul's philosophical ascent toward the realm of the Forms. I argue that the experience of beauty both motivates and enables the soul's philosophical ascent; the experience holds a privileged place in the soul's transcendence of physical realities and eventual union with the Forms. Beauty is the force which dares Socrates to believe. In this essay, I will first examine Socrates and Aristodemus' journey in *Symposium* to show how beauty initiates and progresses the philosophical journey. Next, I will analyze Diotima's "ascent passage" in *Symposium* to further explore the nature of beauty and its role in the philosophical pursuit. Finally, I will discuss the relationship between beauty and aporia, and assert that beauty both leads us into experiences of aporia and allows us to transcend them, thus serving as a conduit which ushers us onward toward Truth.

First, Socrates and Aristodemus' journey to Agathon's house in *Symposium* symbolizes the soul's ascent to the Good, indicating that the experience of beauty invites the soul to pursue something higher. At the beginning of the dialogue, Aristodemus bumps into Socrates and notes a peculiar quality about him: he looks beautiful. Aristodemus observes that Socrates has "bathed and put on his fancy sandals—both unusual events."² Regarding his appearance, Socrates states, "I'm going to Agathon's for dinner...so, naturally, I took great pains with my appearance: I'm going to the house of a good-looking man; I had to look my best."³ Socrates' comment may carry a jesting tone, but it gives rise to an important association between beauty and the philosophical journey toward the Good. Agathon's name literally means "Goodman," so Socrates' physical journey toward the Goodman's house signifies the philosophical ascent toward the Good.⁴ While the literal meaning of the passage states that the celebratory dinner party occasioned Socrates' beautiful appearance, the figurative meaning of the passage suggests the significant role that beauty plays in the soul's ascent.

Furthermore, Socrates' beauty causes Aristodemus to set out toward the Good as well. The text states that Aristodemus "ran into Socrates" and that Socrates' beautiful appearance provoked Aristodemus to investigate further.⁵ He encounters beauty without

seeking it, and the imposition of beauty stirs his heart and summons him into new considerations. He first responds to the Socratic provocation by inquiring of Socrates “where he was going, and why he was looking so good.”⁶ But the experience of beauty asks something much deeper of Aristodemus: it invites him to humbly submit himself and begin his own journey toward the Good. This invitation is voiced by the beautiful Socrates who states, “I know you haven’t been invited to the dinner; how would you like to come anyway?”⁷ Aristodemus utters his assent in reply: “I’ll do whatever you say.”⁸ With this statement, Aristodemus assumes a humble posture by surrendering his will, relinquishing his control, and committing to follow where beauty leads. Humility is a recognition of one’s own lowliness in regard to another; by responding to Socrates humbly, Aristodemus recognizes beauty as a transcendent reality worthy of his allegiance. The soul’s ascent to the Good is thus founded upon the virtue of humility, and beauty and humility appear complementary in initiating the philosophical journey. This episode illustrates that beauty serves as an invitation, beckoning us to reorient our path toward the Good—or at least the Goodman’s house—and to humbly begin the philosophical ascent.

Moreover, beauty not only initiates Aristodemus’ journey, but also escorts him the majority of the way there. After inviting Aristodemus to Agathon’s house, the beautiful Socrates accompanies him and guides him along the way. However, Socrates begins to lag behind and so “urg[es] him to go on ahead.”⁹ Aristodemus arrives at the Goodman’s house without Socrates and crosses its threshold alone. This event suggests that, while beauty plays an integral part in the journey, a willful act on the part of the pilgrim is also required. The pilgrim must step across the threshold himself. Once inside, he realizes that he has not left beauty behind, since within the Goodman’s house he encounters beauty again, represented by the beauty of philosophical discourse and the physical beauty of Socrates who joins later. Beauty, then, encompasses the entire philosophical pursuit: it initiates, facilitates, and concludes the journey.

Second, the role of beauty in Socrates and Aristodemus’ journey is confirmed later in *Symposium* by Diotima’s famous “ascent passage.” This passage details the interaction of the soul with beauty in its ascent from physical manifestations of beauty to the Form of Beauty itself. The passage begins:

“A lover who goes about this matter correctly must begin in his youth to devote himself to beautiful bodies...then he should realize that the beauty of any one body is brother to the beauty of any other and that if he is to pursue beauty of form he'd be very foolish not to think that the beauty of all bodies is one and the same.”¹⁰

From this passage we learn three important ideas. First, the soul's ascent begins with devotion to bodily beauty. These manifestations of Beauty serve as points of entry into the philosophical journey. Aristodemus' encounter with Socrates exemplifies this principle, for it is the physical beauty of Socrates that catches Aristodemus' attention.¹¹ Second, physical beauty is the lowest manifestation of Beauty since the philosophical journey is an ascent which begins with the physical. The goal remains to transcend the physical and reach at something higher. Third, all instances of beauty are beautiful by participation, and each refers back to the Form of Beauty. In the beginning of the ascent passage quoted above, Diotima states that a single encounter with the beautiful ought to lead the soul to an increasing number of beautiful experiences. Insofar as “the beauty of all bodies is one and the same,” recognizing one beautiful body conditions the soul to recognize others more readily.¹² Thus, the Form of Beauty unifies all instances of beauty. Just as blood vessels carry blood from the heart to the extremities of the body and back again, so too does the Form of Beauty serve as the center of all experiences of beauty; it is within this closed system that one may enter at the lowest point and be carried back to the heart itself. Moreover, Diotima asserts that “after [an encounter with physical beauty] he must think that the beauty of people's souls is more valuable than the beauty of their bodies.”¹³ The soul must not remain in the realm of physical beauty, but rather it ought to transcend the physical in order to continue its ascent. Spiritual beauty surpasses physical beauty, and the pilgrim soul must grow to recognize and love this form of beauty even more than the other. Once it does, “he will think that the beauty of bodies is a thing of no importance” and leave it behind in favor of the magnificence experienced at the higher levels of the journey.¹⁴

Diotima's ascent passage then moves us to consider both the fruitful and ineffable qualities of beauty. The passage concludes by stating:

“After customs he must move on to various kinds of knowledge. The result is that he will see the beauty of knowledge and be looking mainly not at beauty in a single example...but the lover is turned to the great sea of beauty, and, gazing upon this, he gives birth to many gloriously beautiful ideas and theories, in unstinting love of wisdom, until, having grown and been strengthened there, he catches sight of such knowledge, and it is the knowledge of such beauty...”¹⁵

Beyond spiritual beauty, the soul grows to understand and experience the beauty of knowledge in its various forms and disciplines. F.C. White, in his article “Beauty of Soul and Speech in Plato's Symposium,” summarizes the soul's journey this way: the soul travels by “ascending from beautiful bodies to beautiful ways of living, to beautiful forms of knowledge and finally to knowledge of Beauty itself.”¹⁶ The soul's journey culminates in knowledge and contemplation of Beauty, and Diotima explores the ways in which the ascent transforms the pilgrim soul. She states that an encounter with the great multitude or “sea” of the beautiful incites the soul to “give birth to many gloriously beautiful ideas and theories.”¹⁷ Beauty, then, is fruitful. It stimulates new ideas, spawns creativity, and conceives “unstinting love of wisdom.”¹⁸ In another article, “Love and Beauty in Plato's Symposium,” White writes that “the life of the initiated who has reached this stage, contemplating and communing with Beauty itself, is a life of very real worth. For in living it the lover begets no longer mere images but real goodness or virtue.”¹⁹ Communion with Beauty beatifies the soul such that its internal beauty radiates outward, manifesting in the begetting of virtue and goodness.

This passage alludes not only to the fruit that beauty produces within the soul but also to the intangible, ineffable quality of beauty which may render one speechless. Diotima trails off at the end of the

ascent passage and does not finish describing the final portion of the soul's ascent or its ultimate union with the Forms. Perhaps this lack of conclusion results from Socrates' wandering attention (for she does chastise him, saying, "Try to pay attention to me...as best you can"), or perhaps it indicates the extreme difficulty of articulating the latter portion of the journey.²⁰ Both interpretations are valid although I want to focus on the latter, which suggests that a transcendence of rationality occurs in which beauty elevates the faculty of reason and silences words, drawing the soul into a state of awe.

This interpretation of the ineffable quality of beauty is supported by Socrates' response to Agathon's speech. He states: "How am I not going to be tongue-tied, I or anyone else, after a speech delivered with such beauty and variety? . . . Who would not be struck dumb on hearing the beauty of the words and phrases?"²¹ Here Socrates implies that the natural response to the beauty of Agathon's speech is to be "struck dumb" and "tongue-tied."²² His response drips with sarcasm since Socrates is not, in fact, rendered unable to speak – though I would submit that this is because the encounter was merely with a manifestation of beauty lower than Beauty itself – but his comment remains indicative of the elusive, almost indescribable nature of beauty. Beauty affects the soul by causing words to falter, charming the soul with its splendor. Socrates' comment helps to illuminate the end of Diotima's passage where her speech trails off indistinctly. It ends without articulating the final portion of the soul's ascent to the Forms, mirroring the state of being "tongue-tied" or "struck dumb" that, according to Socrates, the soul would experience in the unrestrained presence of Beauty.²³ If this is the case, then perhaps Diotima's wordlessness is the most fitting way to convey to Socrates the final portion of the soul's ascent, for it demonstrates how the soul is drawn up into something that exceeds the soul's capacities to understand.

Third, the ineffable quality of beauty is also evident in its relationship to aporia. Aporia is the state of "not-knowing," indicating that one has reached the limits of his or her knowledge. Almost every Platonic dialogue includes an admittance of aporia, typically when Socrates' interlocuter is no longer able to answer his questions. Just as Socrates establishes a relationship between experiences of the beautiful and the state of being tongue-tied, so too do experiences of beauty and aporia coincide in the Symposium. This suggests that beauty

often brings the soul to the limits of reason, where knowledge and words falter. In the first example of *aporia* in *Symposium*, Agathon admits ignorance to Socrates when questioned about his speech: “Then do you still agree that Love is beautiful, if those things are so?” Then Agathon said, ‘It turns out, Socrates, I didn’t know what I was talking about in that speech.’”²⁴ It is during a discussion of beauty that Agathon arrives at this state of *aporia*. He struggles to articulate the relationship between Love and Beauty, and his knowledge reaches its limits. The next example of *aporia* also coincides with a discussion of beauty, only this time it is Socrates who admits ignorance, unable to answer Diotima’s question: “What will this man have, when the beautiful things he wants have become his own?” I said there was no way I could give a ready answer to that question.”²⁵ Interestingly, when Socrates proves unable to articulate an answer to this question concerning beauty, Diotima poses the question to him again, except now she substitutes the word “beauty” with “good.” Socrates readily answers this question, suggesting that beauty is unique in its relationship to *aporia*, since *aporia* does not occur in relationship with the Good. Thus it seems that based on the correlation developed in *Symposium* between beauty and *aporia*, encounters with beauty bring us to a state of “not-knowing” where we reach the limits of both our reason and are rendered speechless in wonder.

Moreover, beauty not only draws us into moments of *aporia*, but also provides a way to transcend these moments by leading us into a different form of knowing which results from an encounter with the Beautiful itself. After *aporia* occurs in *Symposium*, the dialogue does not cease; rather, the ascent toward the Forms continues as the characters continue to seek Truth. For example, Socrates’ speech (which includes his encounter with Diotima) comes after the reduction of Agathon to a state of *aporia*. This indicates that *aporia* is not the end of the road, but rather serves a crucial function in the philosophical ascent. Ludwig C. H. Chen, in his article “Knowledge of Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*,” also discusses the role of beauty in elevating the intellect beyond its own ability. He argues that the soul’s ascent consists of “cognitive striving,” and that while the initial part of the philosophical journey is a “horizontal expansion” by which the soul moves from viewing beautiful bodies to beautiful souls and on to beautiful knowledge, the soul must grow to “take suddenly the upward leap and to cross the ontic gap cognitively” to achieve “the vision of the

Idea of beauty.”²⁶ Even in this leap to behold Beauty, Chen gestures to the role of cognition. In fact, he calls “direct contact” with the Forms a kind of “intellectual seeing.”²⁷ For Chen, the soul ascends by means of its intellectual faculties, which continue striving even in the presence of that which surpasses the soul’s capacity to know. He argues that beauty engages the intellect persistently and encourages its ascent, not by overtaking the faculties of cognition, but by strengthening them. He writes: “[The soul] must wait until he has been strengthened and grows by contemplating the vast sea of beautiful instances. Then he will suddenly behold the beauty itself which is beautiful.”²⁸ The mind’s previous encounters with beauty and its “horizontal” growth in beholding more and more instances of beauty strengthen the intellect and enable it to leap upward to gaze upon the Form of Beauty. Chen’s argument demonstrates how beauty facilitates the soul’s philosophical ascent by elevating and strengthening the intellect. Beauty, therefore, does not negate or override the faculties of the mind, but rather enhances them so that the soul may transcend its moments of aporia and continue the upward journey to behold Beauty itself.

In Plato’s Symposium, beauty facilitates the philosophical ascent to the Forms by initiating, progressing, and consummating the soul’s journey. In his encounter with Socrates, Aristodemus is charmed and attracted by Socrates’ beauty, which encourages him to begin the philosophical ascent himself. Beauty does not simply initiate the journey; it also serves as a guiding principle which directs Aristodemus along the way, and it even concludes his journey by abounding in the Goodman’s house upon his arrival. The role of beauty in Aristodemus’ philosophical ascent is mirrored in Diotima’s ascent passage which points both to the fruitful, ineffable qualities of beauty and to the strong correlation between beauty and aporia. Beauty leads us to the limits of knowledge and reason, but it also serves to elevate the soul beyond these limits so that the philosophical ascent may continue. Returning now to the quote from Plato’s Phaedo cited at the beginning of the essay, it is clear that while sensibilities alone appear insufficient in their ability to propel the soul fully onward in its ascent to the Forms, beauty elevates the intellect and carries the soul onward. It is beauty that dares us to risk belief, challenges us to reorient our hearts and minds to the Good, and ushers us

beyond the physical into an encounter with something greater. Beauty thus captures our hearts and minds in its inexplicable wonder and elevates our sensibilities to believe in noble Truth.

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NOTES

- ¹ Plato, *Phaedo*, 114d.
- ² Plato, *Symposium*, 174a.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Ibid., 460n1.
- ⁵ Ibid., 174a.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid., 174b.
- ⁹ Ibid., 174d.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 210a-b.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 174a.
- ¹² Ibid., 210b.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 210c.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., 210d-e.
- ¹⁶ White, “Beauty of Soul and Speech in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 74.
- ¹⁷ Plato, *Symposium*, 210d.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ White, “Love and Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 151.
- ²⁰ Plato, *Symposium*, 210e.
- ²¹ Ibid., 198b.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 201c.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 204d-e.
- ²⁶ Chen, “Knowledge of Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 69.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 72.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 68.

About the Authors

JONATHAN CHEW is a junior Business Fellows major from Albuquerque, NM, with concentrations in math and Russian. He is a current member of Baylor's AEI Executive Council and has competed with Baylor's Model United Nations team at competitions in New York, Chicago, and Washington DC. Jonathan plans to continue his studies of foreign policy and international diplomacy in graduate school.

CLAIRE GOSTOMSKI is a University Scholar from San Antonio, Texas who studies Great Texts and American Sign Language Interpreting. Her scholarly interests include the impact of literature and imaginative works on personal development, theological interactions with narrative traditions, and raising awareness of the childhood language deprivation epidemic among deaf children. After graduation from Baylor in May 2020, Claire hopes to complete two years in the Teach For America Corp while earning her ASL interpreter's license.

CALEB GRAHAM is a Baylor graduate from Plano, Texas who majored in University Scholars with concentrations in Biology, Spanish, and Medical Humanities. Throughout his undergrad, he focused on volunteering through local clinics and exploring public health research, which inspired him to work on this project. After graduating in May 2020 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa, he went on to attend medical school at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

SARAH HENN is a senior University Scholar concentrating in linguistics, French, and Great Texts in the Honors College. Her undergraduate thesis is a preliminary phonological analysis of a Tibeto-Burman minority language spoken in northern Nepal, representing the most comprehensive phonological description of the language to date. Henn will graduate in May 2020 and hopes to pursue a career in the documentation of minority languages in her future.

GRAYSON JACKSON is a senior University Scholar from Grapevine, Texas, with concentrations in biology, public health, and medical humanities. Grayson is a member of the Baylor

Interdisciplinary Core and the Honors Program, and his thesis research concerns the influence of populism on the American anti-vaccine movement. A Hillis Scholar, Grayson has conducted research in environmental science at Baylor University and in vaccine development at Baylor College of Medicine. Grayson is also a Truman Scholarship finalist and an initiate of Phi Beta Kappa who will pursue a combined MD/PhD in the fall. He currently serves as president of The Pulse.

CONNOR PORTER is a sophomore history major from Arlington, Texas. He participates in the Honors Program, Baylor University Golden Wave Band, College of Arts & Sciences Ampersand Honor Society, and Phi Alpha Theta. He is the great-grandson of Thomas M. Sullivan, the first executive director of the DFW airport, which allowed Porter to be personally connected to his research.

LAWSON SADLER is a senior University Scholar concentrating in political science, Latin American studies, and Spanish in the Honors College. Her undergraduate thesis analyzes the effects of representation politics and campaign finance on legislative immigration detention policy development in Texas. Sadler will graduate in May 2020 and study for a Master's in Migration and Global Development at the University of Sussex as a Marshall Scholar.

NICOLE SALAMA is a junior Baylor Business Fellow pursuing majors in English Literature and Accounting and a minor in Creative Writing. Nicole is one of the Co-Editors of the Phoenix Literary Magazine and the Vice-President of Baylor's newly founded chapter of Orthodox Christian Campus Ministries. Her current thesis research explores themes of youth and trauma in the work of Sylvia Plath.

MICHAELA SCOTT is a junior University Scholar major from Cape Girardeau, MO, concentrating in International Studies and Spanish. She is an honors student and in the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core as well. Michaela is a member of Ampersand Society, the service sorority Clapsed Hands in Service, and Baylor's Model Organization of American States team, where she served as Secretary-General in 2019 and will serve as President this fall. For her honors thesis, Michaela is

studying how churches in Latin America and the United States impact the migration flows from the Northern Triangle in Central America.

NATALIE WIDDOWS is a senior University Scholar from Tulsa, Oklahoma concentrating in Great Texts and Theology. She is particularly interested in liturgy, sacramentology, and theological aesthetics. She is the Senior Fellow of The Theology Society, and she is planning to pursue an M.A. in Theological Studies after graduating from Baylor in May 2020.

