

ARCHIVE

An Undergraduate Journal of History

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Note from the Editor

The Editorial Board has really enjoyed the process of putting together this year's issue of ARCHIVE for you. The daunting task of following the great work of editors past was made possible through a wonderful collaboration of Scott Burkhart, Professor William Reese and my fellow classmates that sat on the Editorial Board. Everyone brought amazing creativity and energy into the process all the while trusting that I actually knew what I was doing. I am most proud of how we came together to innovate ARCHIVE this year.

This year we have added two new features to the journal. Because we were inspired by the aesthetic accessibility of the Wisconsin Magazine of History, we've included color images to accompany the great scholarship of our authors. Additionally, you'll find a new section devoted to looking at films from an historical perspective. These pieces are not intended to be reviews of the merits of the films, but rather to spark dialogue about the relationship between history and films.

Lastly, I am excited to be able to feature the work of a photographer from UW-Madison on this year's cover. Anthony Hennes is a current Pharmacy student who also does freelance photography for student publications. It is a pleasure to include the talents of our fellow students and we hope that future versions of the journal will continue to display the abilities of students from all across campus.

Please enjoy the 16th volume of UW ARCHIVE.

Aneidys Reyes

Madison, Wisconsin

May, 2013

About ARCHIVE

In 1997, the UW-Madison chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, with the support of the History Department, created ARCHIVE: an Undergraduate Journal of History. To date, ARCHIVE has published 16 volumes, and has presented undergraduate research on topics as diverse as Wisconsin microbreweries to gladiatorial performances in ancient Rome. Each spring, students submit essays for review by the Editorial Board. Only a handful of the highest quality works are selected, and through a meticulous editing process, are prepared for publication.

In previous years, the demanding process of putting together the finished publication was done by undergraduates who received no academic credit for their work. Recognizing the immense effort that students have been putting into ARCHIVE since its inception, this year, the History department created a class that would give students time, resources and credit for their work. We hope this is a new direction that will allow ARCHIVE to continue to thrive into the future.

2013 Editorial Board

Aneidys Reyes, Editor-In-Chief

Aneidys is a graduating history major with a focus on contemporary Latin American history and LGBT history in the United States. Aneidys was a member of the editorial board in 2012 and served as Editor-In-Chief in 2013.

Bryce Luttenegger, Editor

Bryce is a senior history major also pursuing a European Studies Certificate. He is currently working on his senior honors thesis, which focuses on maternal and child welfare in Edwardian Britain. Bryce is very involved with history and, in addition to sitting on the ARCHIVE Editorial Board, he also serves as a Peer Advisor for the History Department as well as the President of the Undergraduate History Association.

Colin Rohm, Editor

Colin is a senior graduating in May 2013 with majors in Economics, History, and Mathematics. Within his History major he has focused on studying the Byzantine Empire, with a specific emphasis on the century preceding the First Crusade. He has accepted a position with the Economics Department at the University of Wisconsin - Madison as their Undergraduate Advisor for Fall 2013, and will be applying to Graduate Programs in Economics and Educational Policy as a part-time student for Spring 2014.

Elizabeth Lampp, Editor

Elizabeth is a history major at UW-Madison and a member of the class of 2013. Her concentration is in European Studies, with a particular focus on sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and twentieth-century England.

Joe Fitzgibbon, Editor

Joe is a senior majoring in History and Political Science. His academic focus is on American history, with an emphasis on the nineteenth century. He also has a more general interest in the history of sport. This is his first year as an editor of ARCHIVE.

Laura Luo, Editor

Laura is a junior majoring in history and physics. While she began her studies at the University of Wisconsin Madison as a physics major, she soon found herself captivated by the narratives her professors told in history courses, and committed herself to a history major. This spring, Laura was awarded the Holstrom Environmental Scholarship for her senior thesis proposal titled, "Environmental History of Jiajiang Ceramic Industry: Autonomous Enterprises Under an Authoritarian Government." She looks forward to beginning her research and continuing her explorations in history.

Marc Sieber, Editor

Marc is currently in his third year at the University of Wisconsin. Marc has interned with Krause Publications and the Historical Society Press and hopes to continue work in the history publishing field. Marc is an avid football fan and enjoys arguing about sports on his weekly radio show.

Megan Ness, Editor

Megan is a sophomore studying History and Anthropology. Her academic focus is on American history as well as Classics and Archaeology. Next year she will be working as a George Mossee Peer Advisor within the History Department. This is her first year on ARCHIVE.

Samuel Vergara, Editor

Samuel is a senior student majoring in History and Legal Studies at UW-Madison. He has concentrated his studies on the evolution of the rule of law throughout history, while also serving as a research assistant in the Department of Sociology. Sam will continue his legal studies in law school beginning in the Fall of 2013.

William J. Reese, Faculty Advisor

Professor Reese is the Carl F. Kaestle WARF Professor of Educational Policy Studies and History.

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ARCHIVE Editorial Board

Special Thanks

The issue of ARCHIVE that you hold in your hands was significantly different than those previous. This year, thanks to the work of Scott Burkhardt, ARCHIVE was offered as a course in publishing. Under the guidance of Professor William Reese, the board of editors was able to learn and read about historiography and the discipline that is history. We were fortunate to also be able to speak with many talented folks at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Jane De Broux, editor of the Wisconsin Magazine of History, gave us a wonderful presentation that inspired us to use images in this issue. Simone Munson from the Library-Archives Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society showed us a day in the life of an archivist. Finally, Andy Kraushaar donated his time to show us the vast image collections housed in our fine historical society. Many thanks to all who have lent their knowledge and experience to help us through this process.



Lapham Peak Tower, Kettle Moraine State Park; photo taken by the author, Brian Drout.

A Noisy View:
An Environmental History of Lapham Peak

Brian Drout

Brian is a junior studying Political Science in the Letters and Science Honors Program. He has focused on Environmental Studies and Latin America in his undergraduate coursework. Brian has found history to be a critical discipline in his field. He has also studied Spanish and will be studying abroad in Lima, Peru in the fall of 2013. Brian grew up in Wales, Wisconsin, five miles from Lapham Peak. A Noisy View was written for Bill Cronon's History 460 in the fall of 2012. Brian runs for the Wisconsin Track Club and is a member of the Bipartisan Issues Group.

Lapham Peak Tower sits at the top of a hill climbing out of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. The terrain of the Kettle Moraine area rises and falls in dramatic fashion, a unique topography carved out from a glacial past. From atop the tower, Waukesha County rolls out to the horizon. Immediately visible are the stoic evergreen guardians of the state forest, presiding over spider-webbing ski trails spun out across the park. They have seen much change. To the south the barbed wire fences of the Ethan Allen Boys School creep above the forest canopy, the repurposed sanatorium buildings below shrouded by tree cover. If one were to follow the Ice Age Trail from the base of the tower's steps they might miss the park's edge, as the path indifferently crosses the divide between the public and the private.

All this is visible from atop the tower. What cannot be seen as clearly is the story of how this block of state land came to be as it is today. If examined more closely, the narrative is audible. The features speak of an evolution in the way citizens solicited government at various levels to solve problems. The fences of Ethan Allen whisper of tuberculosis and Progressive leadership. The ski trails murmur of ending war and the hopes of recreation, while the Ice Age Trail cries private mobilization, and the tower protests unemployment. Loudest of all, the wind laments death on Lake Michigan. Within that howl, a pioneering meteorologist can be heard calling Congress to act. The story begins with the wind, and as it carries storms, clear skies, and fates untold to the east, an environmental history of Lapham Peak begins.

The weather on Lake Michigan became more important after the Erie Canal was completed in 1825.¹ With increased traffic on Great Lake waterways, more and more people died on ships moving goods to global markets. Until the advent of the telegraph in 1845, little could be done to forewarn sailors of violent weather systems heading their way.² Improvements in communication and forecasting technology could not be put together without tremendous costs to individual actors. Such costs greatly outweighed the benefits to these individuals and could only become cost-effective through group action; in this way, effectively mobilizing communication and forecasting technology was a prototypical collective action problem. Coordinating such a vast communication system and deploying meteorological forecasting methods was a project of national scope that required federal action. Increase Lapham would be the individual who mobilized Congress to act.

Lapham, who did not live far from the hill that would one day bear his name, was a pioneering meteorologist. He observed weather data from atop Stoney Hill, as it was then known, taking advantage of the 1,233 foot elevation.³ Lapham grew concerned about the tragic loss of life due to a problem he knew was preventable. As a leading intellectual, he had unique access to Representative Halbert E. Paine. A bill was presented, and in 1870 Congress passed legislation authorizing a new federal agency that would become the National Weather Service. The purpose of the agency was to transmit weather information from various signal stations ahead of storms that would affect vulnerable populations. Stoney Hill was one of 24 initial such sites. Lapham assumed responsibility for the Great Lakes region, issuing the first ever national weather forecast from atop the hill.⁴

The story of the creation of the National Weather Service presents a framework for analyzing how members of society came together to address a collective action problem. The telegraph helped to make maritime deaths preventable, and action was mobilized via interaction of public and private entities. The Federal Government was the appropriate public entity to intervene because of the scope of the issue. The Signal Service Corps, a division of the army, operated the system because of the ability of "military discipline ... [to] secure the greatest promptness, regularity, and accuracy in the required observations."⁵ Increase Lapham acted as a private individual, using his status as an elite to mobilize Congressional action. He cited a "duty" to act.⁶ This structure of how society addresses issues would evolve over time. When tuberculosis emerged as a public health problem, it was the State Government that mustered the initial response.

The land that encompasses Lapham Peak and what would become the Ethan Allen Boys School was purchased by the State of Wisconsin at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was designated for the creation of a state sanatorium known as Statesan to treat tuberculosis patients.⁷ A 1906 *Waukesha Freeman* article cited protection from winds, the presence of hills for exercise, high elevation, and the ability of the forest to eliminate dust as physical characteristics of the site that made it ideal for the institution.⁸ The presence of a train station in the nearby town of Wales meant that the site was well situated to transport patients from Milwaukee, where the disease was most prevalent, to the sanatorium.⁹ Local farmers in Wales were more receptive to the presence of the facility than other areas of Wisconsin, prompting the State to select the site.¹⁰

When, tuberculosis emerged as an issue requiring attention, the State Government responded in the person of Governor Bob La Follette. A pioneering Progressive leader, La Follette appointed a commission to investigate the "feasibility and need for a sanatorium." He would authorize the purchase of the 200-acre site.¹¹ Decades after its inception, Statesan called upon the Work Projects Administration to improve its grounds. The WPA, like other New Deal agencies, came into existence as a response to the freefalling economy in the Great Depression.¹² This shift away from state level autonomy toward partnering with federal agencies exemplifies a new political context for environmental change.¹³

In 1940, The Work Projects Administration, in conjunction with the Conservation Department, constructed the tower that now stands prominently atop Lapham Peak.¹⁴ This partnership between a federal New Deal Agency and a state level department shows the importance of central planning as a governing ideology in response to the Great Depression. Young men were put to work on a variety of projects across the nation, and the construction of the tower, like the improvement work for the sanatorium, is an example of how the Federal Government mobilized the jobless toward productive ends. State level agencies deployed this national plan for economic stimulus because lower levels of government had better information about potential projects. The tower, which offers such an incredible view of the landscape, is evidence of how society

looked to central planning as a method to solve collective action problems. This transformation was also present in the proliferation of parks in the post-war period.

The spread of public spaces for recreation after World War II was enabled by the legacy of comprehensive planning from the New Deal coupling with deeply entrenched Romantic ideals surrounding parks.¹⁵ The Federal Government created the National Park Service in 1916 in the spirit of Romanticism; it was chiefly concerned with forging sublime landscapes into an American identity.¹⁶ Lapham Peak entered the emerging park system in 1939 when Statesan ceded 50 of its 200 acres for the creation of a state park.¹⁷ Projects of comprehensive planning such as the tower at Lapham Peak attracted returning troops who drove increased demand for the emerging park system. Crucially, these troops and their families expected the park system to fit into the American Romantic narrative born with the National Park Service in 1916.

State parks like the one at Lapham Peak had less to do with nationalism, but, like the NPS, placed emphasis on facilitating recreation. The breathtaking vista from the tower's top certainly evokes Romantic ideas of nature, and fastens the Kettle Moraine site to the broader national theme of parks as sublime spaces. The collective action problem present here was the demand for spaces of recreation. Americans looked to government, both at a federal and state level, to provide these spaces. Lapham Peak met this demand. It was able to do so because some of the public land allotted to Statesan was converted to a state park when tuberculosis declined as a public health issue. Furthermore, the quality of the public land was improved through projects like the WPA tower, which both addressed the problem of unemployment and enhanced the sublime quality of the park. Another enhancement would come to Lapham Peak through the creation of the Ice Age Trail, though this time a less centralized process was employed to generate collective action.

The certificate of incorporation for the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation is a very curious document. It represents a complex web of public and private relationships. On the one hand, it is a document issued by the State of Wisconsin certifying the existence of a private non-profit organization. Yet, a critical goal of the group is to assist "in the establishment, development, and maintenance of public lands."¹⁸ The way in which these public and private relationships played out have left a legacy visible from atop Lapham Peak Tower, etched into the very ground.

The Kettle Moraine State Forest held public hearings in the 1980s to discuss future plans for the park, and the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation's Waukesha County chapter organized members to attend and advocate on the Foundation's behalf as residents.¹⁹ As a result of the plan discussed at these meetings, the Department of Natural Resources purchased a large tract of land northwest of Lapham Peak's original location. The path would run through this area to meet up with private trail sections.²⁰ While the State provided use of public land, the Foundation provided volunteer labor to clear the land and maintain

stretches of the trail. The relationship between the Foundation and the DNR was then one of reciprocity, where public and private entities worked together to promote societal interests.

This is a significantly different story of environmental change than is seen in Increase Lapham's letters to his assemblyman. In the case of the Ice Age Trail, a private entity not only solicited the state bureaucracy of the park system, but generated its own collective action in creating and maintaining the trail. Though the Foundation was a state-wide organization working on a state-wide project, a local chapter achieved local action. Through public-private partnership, the Ice Age Trail was carved out, Lapham Peak State Park expanded, and the view from atop the tower changed once more.

Atop Lapham Peak Tower one can see the barbed wire fences of Ethan Allen and the Ice Age Trail as it slowly marches past the tower base and across Wisconsin. Yet these features in the landscape, even the tower itself, are more than just physical markers. They are evidence, and they tell a story of environmental change through an evolving structure in generating collective action. The name of the park, Lapham Peak, commemorates one individual who influenced Congress as a societal elite. The fences of Ethan Allen surround repurposed sanatorium buildings, all of it enveloped in the legacy of Bob La Follette. The tower is held together not only with steel but with the belief in central planning to combat the Depression nationally and provide recreation locally. The Ice Age Trail was carved out by a grassroots organization bridging public and private initiatives to solve collective action problems. The evolution has been one from top-down to bottom-up, with shifting American political ideologies in between. It has been played out at different levels of government, and curiously, whereas once a single man could spur the creation of an entire national agency, it more recently took an entire community of people to expand a park. The journey between these counterpoints is anchored in changing political attitudes about the responsiveness and responsibilities of government regarding collective action. Where society once deferred to elites to bring about change, it has more recently required the efforts of the masses. The features of Lapham Peak illustrate these moments, and the change is told in their stories.

Notes:

1. William Cronon, "The Flow of the River" (lecture, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Madison, WI, October 3, 2012). <http://www.williamcronon.net/courses/460.htm>
2. Gary Grice, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "The Beginning of the National Weather Service: The Signal Years (1870-1891) as Viewed by Early Weather Pioneers." Last modified 2004. <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/pa/history/signal.php>.
3. Barbara Barquist, and David Barquist, *The Summit of Oconomowoc: 150 Years of Summit Town*, (Oconomowoc, WI: Summit History Group, 1987), 9-10.
4. Grice.
5. Grice.
6. Grice.
7. Bennett Odegard, and George Keith, *A History of the State Board of Control of Wisconsin and the State*

Institutions 1849-1936, (Madison, WI: State Board of Control, 1939), 138-140.

8. "Wales Gets Sanatorium," Waukesha Freeman, January 4, 1906. Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Series 3077, Box 2, Folder 5.

9. "Wales Gets Sanatorium."

10. "Wales Gets Sanatorium."

11. Odegard et al, 138.

12. William Cronon, "Planning Against Disaster" (lecture, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Madison, WI, October 31, 2012). <http://www.williamcronon.net/courses/460.htm>

13. WPA Project Card, Registry no. 247954, W.P.A. Project Card File Records 1936-1942. Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Series 1688, Box 5.

14. Lapham Peak, Kettle Moraine State Forest (Delafield, WI, Department of Natural Resources, 2007).

15. Nelson, Garret. "Public Parks and Pleasuring Grounds" (lecture, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Madison, WI, November 21, 2012). <http://www.williamcronon.net/courses/460.htm>

16. Nelson.

17. Lapham Peak, Kettle Moraine State Forest.

18. Certificate of Incorporation, Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation of Wisconsin (State of Wisconsin, Department of State, 23 December 1958). Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, M2007-061, Box 1.

19. January Meeting, (Waukesha County Ice Age Chapter, Ice Age National Senic Trail, January 1985). Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, M2007-061, Box 2, Folder 2.

20. Business Meeting of Segment Leaders, (Waukesha County Ice Age Chapter, Ice Age National Senic Trail, July 1985). Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, M2007-061, Box 2, Folder 2.



Damnatio Ad Bestias, Roman Floor Mosaic, Archeological Museum of Tunisia; Wikimedia Commons, Copyright Rached Msadek, 2007

“He Burned Alive, Like Heracles of Long Ago”
Roman *Noxii* as Unwilling Actors

Crescentia Stegner-Freitag

Crescentia is a graduating senior at UW-Madison majoring in History and Classics. Her paper was written for Professor Marc Kleijwegt’s Spring 2012 History 600 and she is currently writing a thesis with him called “Music in Roman Pantomime.”

And recently, in my own time, a certain Selurus, who was called "son of Aetna," was sent to Rome. For a long time he had led an army and run about frequently raiding the lands around Aetna. I saw him torn apart by wild beasts at an established gladiatorial combat in the Forum. He was put on a tall wooden contraption, as though on Mount Aetna; suddenly the contraption broke and collapsed and he fell down into a flimsy trap of wild beasts, which had been built beneath the contraption for this purpose.¹

This vivid account of the theatrical execution of a troublesome brigand is the earliest existing attestation of that class of "performers" in the gladiatorial program known as the *noxii* (feminine *noxiae*). A full program in the Roman arena (the *munera*) included more than just gladiatorial games; the day would normally begin with wild-beast hunts (*venationes*) and was followed by lighter forms of entertainment, including acrobatic-type performances and the *noxii*, with the gladiatorial combats following in the afternoon.² The *noxii* were the most unfortunate of the performers in the arena, for they alone could not expect to outlive their act. They were generally convicted criminals condemned to painful and violent public executions; they were most frequently mauled by animals, as Selurus was, but could also be burned alive, crucified, tortured, or killed in some combination of the above. Such forms of execution were not uncommon in Rome; thieves were regularly crucified, for example.³ The unique feature of the *noxii*, though, is the theatrical nature of their torture and death. Some, like Selurus, were forced into scenarios designed to remind the viewer of their crimes (the same will also be true for Meniscus below). More commonly, however, they were simply slotted into the roles of legendary, often mythological, figures who had also suffered painful deaths. The punishment for these criminals, then, was to cast aside pretence and perform scenes of mythological violence in which, as they say, "the blood is real." In short, the *noxii* were the performers in what shall henceforth be termed "entertainment-executions."

Why would this type of performance, a perversion of the actor's craft, even develop? Once developed, why would it become and remain a standard element of the gladiatorial program? These entertainment-executions were consistently more violent and fatal than the duels of the gladiators themselves. What function did they serve in the context not only of the arena, but of Roman society in general? This paper aims to address these questions. It will propose that the entertainment-executions were the ultimate realization of the mimetic performances so common in Roman society, especially the funerary and theatrical mimes and the pantomime. They were a natural fit in the gladiatorial program,

which was, after all, a sort of theatrical performance itself, and probably served to relieve the monotony of the "state business" that was public executions. Ultimately, the nature of the development of the entertainment-executions and their practical function within the gladiatorial program completely alienated the *noxii* from the spectators. This disjuncture in fact reinforced Roman collective identity and the sociopolitical order, which explains why entertainment-executions were an integral part of the *munera*.

Development of Public Entertainment-Executions

Funerary Mimes

It makes good sense for the public entertainment-executions to appear in a gladiatorial context, given the funerary associations of the *munera*. Archaeological and literary evidence suggest that the gladiatorial games likely originated from the tradition of funeral games.⁴ The important link is not that both funerals and gladiatorial games involved death, but that both had agonistic elements. It would not be unreasonable, therefore, for the entertainment-executions—as a part of the gladiatorial program—to also have developed from a funerary context.

One of the most distinctive features of the Roman aristocratic funeral was the practice of mimicking the dead during the procession and elsewhere. Typically, an actor⁵ would wear a mask and clothing reminiscent of the deceased's appearance and representative of his political accomplishments, and could also imitate his behavior.⁶ In essence, the entire life and character of the deceased man would be encapsulated in a single act.⁷ The Greek historians Diodorus and Polybius largely agree in their descriptions of the funerary mime.⁸ Diodorus indicated that the funerary mime would be well-acquainted with the deceased's appearance and behavior and would imitate the same at the funeral. Although he did not specifically state that the mime would wear a mask, since he was supposed to resemble his subject in facial features, the use of a mask seems likely. Doing so would have encouraged the audience to subconsciously unify the actor with his character and emotionally identify with him.⁹ There would also be mimes for the deceased's ancestors, although it is unclear to what extent these men would be imitated. In any case, every mime in the procession would wear clothes and carry items indicative of his political status. Similarly, Polybius indicated that mimes would portray the deceased's ancestors' appearances and deeds. He especially emphasized the use of masks, which were casts of the deceased, to help further the illusion. This practice of having funerary mimes was a long-established Roman tradition; Diodorus' account describes a 160 B.C.E. funeral.

The mime is attested as late as the Flavian dynasty. At Vespasian's funeral, "the chief mime actor, wearing his mask and imitating the deeds and words of the living man, as is the custom," even mocked Vespasian's famous parsimony.¹⁰ This account affirms the practice of funerary mimicry, but adds an important element: mockery of the deceased could occur without consequence.¹¹ Clearly, a well-established figure in aristocratic funerary practices was the mime, especially since he outlived the funeral games themselves.

Proposing a link between entertainment-executions and funerary mimes is by no means straightforward: the one consists of the deaths of pseudo-mythological figures, the other of the lives of real men. The essence of the connection, however, is that both activities were variants on the same art form. Each involved mimicry, sometimes light-hearted in manner, in a funerary context. The most serious problem with proposing this link is that there is very little evidence for funerary games and mimes occurring in the same chronological period. Furthermore, the gladiatorial games were all but divorced from a strictly-funerary context by the time the *noxii* were added to their program,¹² so it is unlikely that the entertainment-executions were developed specifically as a parallel to funerary mimes and as a complement to funerary/gladiatorial combat. Both types of performance, though, appear to be part of the same intellectual milieu of imitation. It is not difficult to imagine that there may have been some sort of non-lethal performance during the earliest *munera*, which only became deadly later. That some sort of imitative performance would have occurred during the gladiatorial games is further supported by the association between entertainment-executions and the Roman theatrical tradition.

Theatrical Mimes and Pantomimes

The entertainment-executions of the *noxii* encapsulated aspects of both mime and pantomime. Although variants of both of these originally-Greek forms of performance originated as early as the fourth century B.C.E.,¹³ they were not fully developed and integrated into Roman popular culture until the first century B.C.E. Mime actors typically portrayed genre stories, including what may be called "folk" or common characters and plotlines, a la *commedia dell'arte*.¹⁴ These performances tended towards the populist and farcical.¹⁵ Although no specifically Latin scripts survive, it is likely that mime plots developed into literary tropes; elegiac poets are especially famous for using them as inspiration for their literary creations.¹⁶ The pantomime developed later than the mime and is not attested in Rome before Augustus' principate (27 B.C.E.-14 C.E.).¹⁷ They usually had a somewhat more sophisticated character than the mime. The stories that were portrayed or "danced" were significant scenes and plots from mythology.¹⁸ The dancer would portray the story from the perspective of individual characters, much as the funeral mime did the life of the deceased.

Even before Nero's reign, when the majority of available references to entertainment-executions begin, the pantomime was a regular part of the Roman cultural experience.¹⁹

The relation between mime and entertainment-executions is largely one of style, not content. At no time does any Roman author describe the *noxii* as sophisticated performers, a description more in keeping with mimes and pantomimes. Indeed the Roman elite usually cast the entertainment-executions as the lowest part of the gladiatorial program. For example, the biographer Suetonius lambasted the emperor Claudius for his bloodthirsty nature. Part of his evidence includes the claim that Claudius "was delighted by the beast-hunters and the midday performers [*noxii*]." ²⁰ Again, the philosopher Seneca the Younger criticized the entertainment-executions as unsophisticated performances that pandered to the lowest of the crowd.

I happened to go to the midday performances, expecting to see plays and some witty entertainment, when human eyes rest from the sight of human blood. On the contrary! The fighting that had occurred before was merciful. Now with all trifles put aside, there was pure slaughter. . . In the morning, men are thrown to lions and bears, but at midday they are thrown to the spectators themselves.²¹

The casual reader may think that Seneca was criticizing the entertainment-executions for their inhumanity, but the letter is actually a plea for his friend Lucilius to avoid base emotions and to maintain a Stoic attitude. The crudity of the entertainment-executions²² and their generally low reputation remind the reader strongly of the mimes. We can imagine that the two had similar audiences, if not messages. Furthermore, their relegation to the midday performance slot suggests that they served an almost light-hearted, interludal function between the somewhat more "serious" business of *damnationes ad bestias* and the *munera* proper.²³

Even so, the mythological scenes the *noxii* portrayed were more typical of the pantomime than the mime. There is at least one instance of genre or mime-esque scenes. The author of the *Liber Spectaculorum* (most likely Martial)²⁴ described the execution of a thief staged in the style of a popular mime of the crucifixion of the infamous thief Laureolus.²⁵

Laureolus, hanging on no false cross, gave up his defenseless entrails to a Scottish bear. His mangled limbs were still alive, though the parts were dripping with blood, and in his whole body there actually was no body. . . This miscreant had surpassed crimes recounted in tales of old; in his case, what had been legend really was punishment.²⁶

This example aside, the majority of the attested performances were of myths or

mythological figures. There are five particularly notable examples of this practice. Since they will all return for later discussion, each instance will be quoted in full here for the reader's convenience. The epigrammatist Lucillius²⁷ described a certain Meniscus who was burnt alive for stealing three golden apples—events drawn from the Heracles myth.²⁸

From the Hesperian garden of Zeus, Meniscus stole three golden apples,
like Heracles of long ago. And then he was captured and starred in a
great show for everybody. He burned alive, like Heracles of long ago.²⁹

Whereas a pantomime dancer would have only simulated the immolation of Heracles, Meniscus is *actually* immolated. Most likely he was dressed in a *tunica molesta*, a garment covered in some sort of flammable substance—when it was time for the immolation, the tunic would have been set on fire, leading to Meniscus' death.³⁰ Tertullian, a Christian apologist, affirmed the immolation of Heracles as a typical scene and also added that of the castration of Attis.³¹

Your gods dance about while the criminals act out their plots and stories,
or in their guise are criminals punished. We often see a criminal take on
the role of castrated Attis, that god from Pessinus, and Heracles, who
was burned alive.³²

The instance of Attis is potentially troubling. Castration is not an obvious cause of death, the possibility that it can lead to a fatal infection aside. Kathleen Coleman, who wrote the preeminent study of entertainment-executions, hypothesized that the criminal portraying Attis cooperated with this scenario as a sort of mitigated punishment; instead of losing his life, he would merely lose his genitalia.³³ Since, as will be demonstrated later, the plots of the entertainment-executions were generally true-to-myth, Coleman's explanation seems sensible. Although the paucity of evidence makes it difficult to judge how often such mitigated punishments occurred, Tertullian's treatment of the Attis-story as a typical example indicates that such phenomena were not uncommon.

Marital in the *Liber Spectaculorum* is the source for the final three examples. His text describes a series of public performances dedicated to the Roman emperor.³⁴ These three epigrams each describe a different entertainment-execution scenario.³⁵ In the first, a woman is forced to have sex with a bull, as Pasiphae did with the father of the Miontaur.³⁶

You must believe that Pasiphae did couple with the bull of Dicte; we have
seen it happen; the age-old myth has been vindicated.³⁷

Again we have an instance in which the condemned may not have actually died. As noted above, though, death by mauling was a common type of punishment and it is not improbable that the bull could have killed "Pasiphae" post-copulation. What is more important, though, is the emphasis on the realization of the myth; Martial, like the other authors above, tends to be more concerned with the story portrayed than the experiences of the "actors." This statement is less true for the instance Daedalus,³⁸ who in Martial's account dies by bear attack.

Seeing that you are being torn apart like that by a Lucanian bear, Daedalus,
how you must wish you had your feathers now!³⁹

Here Martial dwelled on the irony in the death of the renowned craftsman "Daedalus": his famed skill cannot help him at this most critical moment. Nevertheless, the reference to the inventor's "feathers" implies that at some point during the performance, the *noxius* was probably wearing wings, thereby clearly rooting the entertainment-execution in the context of the Daedalus myth. The final example contains yet another mauling by yet another bear as final cause of death; this time the victim is the poet Orpheus.⁴⁰

Whatever Rhodope is said to have seen in one of Orpheus' stage-performances,
Caesar, the amphitheatre has displayed to you. Cliffs crawled and a wood ran
forwards, a wonder to behold; the grove of the Hesperides is supposed to have
been just like that. Every kind of wild beast was there, mixed with domesticated
animals, and above the minstrel there balanced many a bird; but he fell, torn
apart by an unappreciative bear. *Nevertheless, this thing happened as has
been painted.*⁴¹

This passage illustrates two ideas: that part of the spectacle was the elaborate sets and that the unfortunate criminals died in the guise of mythological figures.

The entertainment-executions, then, contained elements of both mime and pantomime. They appealed to the audience's desire for interludal entertainment, which matches well with the simplistic, everyday character of the mime. Unlike the mimes, however, the subject matter was almost exclusively mythological in character, as was true for the pantomime. From a thematic perspective, the entertainment-executions were well-designed: they instigated the visceral reactions desired by the arena audience using the larger-than-life figures of myth, which played better in the spectacles of the arena than everyday stories.

Gladiators as Actors

Thus far, it has been demonstrated that the entertainment-executions of the gladiatorial arena could easily have assumed some of the funerary associations of the *munera* proper and that they contained elements of other popular forms of narrative entertainment. A more pressing question is why “acting” should have occurred at all at the gladiatorial games. The practices discussed above were theatrical performances, after all, not solely punitive measures. Although the link between this mimicry and that of the entertainment-executions is clear, it does not necessarily justify the inclusion of the entertainment-executions in the gladiatorial program. If one realizes, however, that the gladiators themselves were, in a sense, actors, then the inclusion of other theatrical performances becomes more natural.

Attestations of the some of the earliest gladiatorial performances indicate that the gladiators assumed the identities of “others”—that is, were acting. For example, Livy indicated that the Campanians required their gladiators to assume the weaponry and identity of their defeated foes, the Samnites.

The Campanians, on account of their pride and hatred of the Samnites, dressed their gladiators—for this was the entertainment between courses at the banquet—in the armor of and called them by the name of the Samnites.⁴²

There is no indication that these gladiators actually *acted* as Samnites, but it is clear that the Campanians had conflated their identities. The “Samnite” became a particular style, or “type,” of gladiator; he would carry a large shield and either a short sword or lance and would wear a leather legging and a helmet with visor and crest.⁴³ Some gladiators were “Thracians,” named for the warriors of Bulgaria, another conquered foe of Rome.⁴⁴ Other types were identified with certain creatures or occupations. Examples include the *murmillio*, whose helmet decoration and name came from the *murma*, a type of fish, and the *retiarius*, whose distinctive net and trident was likely inspired by fishermen.⁴⁵ In the earlier days of the gladiatorial games, the *murmillio* and *retiarius* were normally paired against each other, a combat that some scholars call reminiscent of a general “marine mythology.”⁴⁶ Indeed, the very fact that gladiators assumed specific styles of armor and fighting reminds one of the standard character-types that featured in mime and comedy (i.e. the conniving slave, the boastful soldier, the shrewish wife)—the types are distinct from each other, but the members of a single type are not particularly individuated. Even the names that gladiators assumed, such as Celadus⁴⁷ (“The Shielded One”), Recius Felix⁴⁸ (“Recius the Lucky One”), or Hermes (a god famous for his agility and cunning),⁴⁹ indicate that they were adopting new identities for the purposes of performance, which is much the same purpose as the modern “stage

name.” That an individual gladiator could be perceived as both himself and his character should hardly be surprising, since the same phenomenon occurs now (as when one says that Richard Harris played a better Albus Dumbledore than Michael Gambon). Thus, when one observed a gladiatorial combat, one was watching a battle not only between two individuals, but between two archetypes, and not a spontaneous fight, but a deliberate performance.

The gladiators had adopted larger-than-life personae and acted them out, albeit in a limited sense. In much the same way did the *noxii* perform. They were all-but-nameless criminals who died not as themselves, but as famous figures from Roman history and culture. The development of the entertainment-executions was not necessarily straightforward. It would have been in keeping with the theatrical spirit of the gladiatorial games to include multiple kinds of mimicry, especially since the funerary context from which the games arose was not unconnected with notions of acting and performance. Clear evidence of entertainment-executions does not exist until after the development of funerary and theatrical mimes. The *noxii* provided the sort of “light” entertainment that the mimes did during an event indelibly associated with spectacle and theatricality. They seem to have developed most specifically from the mimes, but adopted the larger-than-life demeanor of the pantomime and aristocratic funeral.

This all suggests a likely scenario for the development of entertainment-executions. As suggested above, some sort of unsophisticated acting or performance may have occurred as a sort of intermission during the earlier gladiatorial games. Certainly, the standard program did include other non-lethal types of performances, such as Pyrrhic dancers.⁵⁰ There is, for example, one instance of a dancer portraying Icarus, who accidentally crashed into the imperial box instead of landing safely in his safety net.⁵¹ Meanwhile, painful and public corporal punishment was a standard part of Roman punitive practices—examples range from the crucifixion of thieves along well-traveled roads (as in the story of Laureolus) to the display of the severed heads of political enemies in the Forum (the most famous victim of this treatment is Marcus Tullius Cicero, whose hands were also amputated and displayed). Killing prisoners-of-war and criminals in the arena was a normal feature of the gladiatorial program (this was the primary function of the *damnations ad bestias*). The impetus for assimilating the actors with the condemned may have been a desire either for greater realism on the part of the performers—and realism of the sort that only an arena could provide—or for some variety in the program to relieve the “monotony” of regular beast-maulings. In either case, the elements for the entertainment-execution were all in place and realized by the earliest attested instance of the practice, during the reign of Augustus.

Crowd-“Performer” Interactions

The above discussion was mostly concerned with the entertainment-executions as a form of entertainment. More intriguing, however, is the sociological function of the displays. It is difficult to accept that the entertainment-executions served no purpose beyond providing pleasure to the audience. Kathleen Coleman has suggested that they were a sign of imperial power and were at their most elaborate when the emperor needed to distract the people from infringements upon their liberty.⁵² She also noted a plausible relation between the entertainment-executions and the practice of “scapegoat rituals,” in which the victim is temporarily elevated before being punished in some way that relieves the collective guilt of the community.⁵³

Her argument, though, has some serious shortcomings. In the first place, as Coleman herself noted, the ritualistic scapegoat is an acknowledged innocent; *noxii* were anything but. It is difficult to see how this sacrifice of an already-pariah group to compensate people for increasing autocracy would even work theoretically. The ritual of legal condemnation by which the *noxius* would transform from guilty man to soon-to-be-victim simply does not parallel the rituals of transformation from innocent to condemned that the scapegoat would undergo. Also, there really is no sacrifice occurring in the entertainment-executions: the condemned were going to be killed anyway—how would dying in the arena satisfy a sense of *quid pro quo*?

Furthermore, Coleman thinks that the visible and intellectual gulf between the spectators and the *noxii* was essential for instigating the fear of the emperor’s power and sympathy for the sacrifice of the condemned that are necessary for her theory to work. She is certainly correct that the gulf did exist. After all, the *noxii* were real people, but these “performers” had also assumed identities that sundered their suffering from the everyday experience of most Romans. They were victims of humiliation and dehumanization so great that they could not but be objectified. Because the primary identity of the *noxii* was as something “other,” their sufferings united the audience and reinforced its sense of Roman identity. Thus, the entertainment-executions served not only as entertainment, but also as a form of social control that appealed to the spectators’ sense of order and continuity.

Entertainment-Executions as Storytelling

The history and development of Greco-Roman theatre reveal a tendency towards increasing realism, especially in terms of depictions of physical violence. The tragedies of Periclean Greece generally avoided representing violence onstage. Inflictions of

bodily harm occurred offstage, only to be revealed to the audience later.⁵⁴ A particularly common way of revealing this violence, especially when it ended in death, was through the ἐκκύκλημα (*ekkylema*), a wheeled platform that would reveal interior scenes to the open air of the stage.⁵⁵ Suicides and murders did not occur under the gaze of the audience in Greek tragedies, but behind closed doors; the chorus might suspect that such action was occurring or might be told of it by a servant or messenger, but the audience would only ever be able to see the “dead” body.⁵⁶ Representations of violence were more likely to occur onstage in a comedic context, but these instances did not end in death.⁵⁷

It would appear that depictions of death did not occur onstage until the development of mime and pantomime (such as in the mime of Laureolus), and even then perhaps not until as late as the first century C.E.. Lucillius criticized one pantomime dancer by suggesting that he had performed so poorly that it would have been better had he consummated the death of the characters he portrayed:

You were true to the story in your pantomime dancing, besides the one huge thing from your work that really upset the crowd. For when you danced Niobe, you stood like a stone, and again when you were Capaneus you suddenly fell [from the wall], but you failed as Canace, for although you even held a sword, still you left the stage alive. This was contrary to the story.⁵⁸

The vivid nature of the text suggests that Lucillius was describing the action on the stage, not merely the action that occurred behind the scenes, as occurred in tragedy. Since pantomime dancers did not actually die during their performances, we can assume that this dancer merely pretended to die onstage, much as modern actors do now. We can imagine him freezing into place to mimic Niobe’s transformation into stone or falling in some carefully-contrived way off a ladder to lay motionless on the ground to depict Capaneus’ death, perhaps then escaping offstage during the bustle of scene changes or other action. Indeed, Lucillius’ criticism that the dancer did not actually commit suicide à la Canace suggests that the faked suicide occurred onstage. This passage is evidence for an increasing desire for realism on the part of the classical audience—or, at least, an increasing ability on the part of performers to deliver that realism. The appeal of the *noxii*, then, would be the ability to see these fatal myths made real.

The audience connected with the *noxii* on two levels: primarily as mythological characters and only secondarily as actual people. This first level of identification is obvious from the literary material. One usually identifies a *noxius* because he is referred to by the name of the character he is portraying, rather than

as a *praedo* (robber), *maleficus* (criminal), or some other term to indicate that the condemned was anything other than his character. Those few occasions when the primary level of identification was as real people and not characters illustrate the dehumanizing nature of the entertainment-executions and will be discussed below.

One of the most significant reasons for the identification of the *noxii* with mythological figures is that the scenes they portrayed were generally true to myth. For example, as mentioned earlier, Meniscus' death by immolation mimicked the death of Heracles. Again, the *noxius* portrayed Attis suffered castration, as did his character. Even apparent exceptions, such as the execution of the Orpheus-*noxius*, in fact abide by the essence of the story. Coleman highlights this instance as an example of a deviation from the standard plot, since "Orpheus" died by bear attack, instead of being torn apart by Maenads—the female followers of Dionysus—as the legend states.⁵⁹ She proposed that the change occurred to heighten the element of surprise.⁶⁰ Coleman, however, missed some key considerations affecting this particular account. As we know from the "Homeric Hymn to Dionysus" and other sources, Dionysus was a shape-shifter and shape-creator; among his shapes is that of a bear.⁶¹ Since the Maenads were, after all, his creatures, it seems quite probable that a bear would be an acceptable substitute for raving women. Furthermore, using the bear had several practical advantages, not least that having Orpheus be torn apart by Maenads would have required the cooperation of multiple other people, who may not even have been condemned themselves. Therefore, the "exception" of the Orpheus-*noxius* is not an exception at all, but rather an acceptable variant on the commonly-held myth. Similarly the death of "Laureolus" by bear, which was not a part of the normal story, remained largely in keeping with the original plot. Crucifixion is protracted death by asphyxiation, shock, and other physiological traumas and not terribly exciting to view. It was common, therefore, for those crucified in the arena to be simultaneously offered as bait for animals.⁶²

The only truly troubling exception to the true-to-myth rule is the Daedalus-*noxius*. There exists no account of Daedalus' death, whether by bear or some other method.⁶³ Coleman offers several attractive explanations for how the scene could have played out in the arena,⁶⁴ although none match any extant myth. This exception need not defeat the argument, however, since it is not necessary for every instance of every entertainment-execution to fit the rule for the generality—and its affect upon audience perception—to hold true.

The storytelling aspect of the entertainment-executions created a disjuncture between the *noxii* and the spectators. They were separated from the audience by some combination of space (i.e. the physical distance between the stands and the arena floor), time (when the stories

portrayed were not contemporary), and ethnicity (since most of the characters portrayed were non-Roman, usually Greek). This notion of *noxii* as mimics has already been belabored; suffice it to say that this forced portrayal of famous figures hindered the identification of the crowd with the "performer" and solidified the association of the latter with the "other."

Entertainment-Executions as Humiliation and Dehumanization

This dissociation was furthered by the humiliating nature of the entertainment-executions themselves. Performers in general were not well-respected in Roman society, at least by the elite. Actors in areas ranging from the Atellan farce to the pantomime were considered *infames*,⁶⁵ an especially low level of repute that prevented one from engaging in certain activities typical of citizens, including the right to testify at court. One can easily imagine that being forced to assume the costume of some famous figure and to reenact his death or other mutilation (such as self-castration) would be humiliating, even dehumanizing. Indeed, humiliation is one of the five main purposes of punishment acknowledged by most sociologists.⁶⁶ It was a common element of public punishment in general in Roman life. For example, one man sentenced to crucifixion by the emperor Galba "beseeched the laws, swearing that he was a Roman citizen [since crucifixion was not considered a fitting punishment for citizens]. Galba, as though he were lessening the penalty with some comfort and honor, ordered that a cross much higher than the others be set up and painted white and the man moved to it."⁶⁷ Although this occurrence serves as an instance of Galba's cruelty, it also demonstrates that crucifixion itself was perceived of as humiliating.

Degrading the condemned was an important element in forming the gulf between spectator and "performer." Martial is especially guilty of propagating this occurrence. He ignored the "actors" entirely, identifying them solely by the name of the mythological figure portrayed (i.e. Pasiphae or Orpheus).⁶⁸ These *noxii* have been so reduced that they have lost their identities. Evidence of this gulf is especially clear in *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas*.

And immediately at the end of the spectacle, Saturus was thrown to a leopard. With one bite he was bathed in so much blood that the people shouted out a witness of his second baptism to him as he returned, "Well washed! Well washed!"⁶⁹

Interestingly, the crowd does acknowledge Saturus' Christianity in their mockery, with their reference to the sacrament of baptism. Saturus was not portraying any character

during his execution, so his identity was only lost insofar as he was seen as just another Christian. Even so, the audience expressed no sympathy for his suffering. The purpose of these jeers that specifically invoked Satorius' crimes was to humiliate him.

Those *noxii* who merely suffered torment and not death were also objects of humiliation. It is in fact quite possible that these people experienced a greater sensation of degradation than their counterparts condemned to death, since their scenes seem to have required a greater degree of complicity. One particularly notable example of these *noxii* is one portraying the legendary historical figure Gaius Mucius Scaevola, who willingly burnt his right hand to prove his resilience to torture.

Recently in the morning in the arena you saw Mucius, who put his own hand in the fire. If he seems to you to be suffering with determination and bravery, you have the mind of the crowd in Abdera. For when one is faced with the *tunica molesta* and is told, "Burn your hand," it is worth more to say, "I won't."⁷⁰

"Mucius" is here mocked for cowardice, even if the audience did not necessarily recognize his actions for what they were. Certainly the *noxius* would be aware that he was choosing the less-honorable path by taking torture over death. Similarly, the *Attis-noxius* would have had to willingly cooperate in the self-castration scenario. To publicly submit to self-mutilation would be humiliating both because of the act itself (and its permanent aftereffects) and because of the cowardice such an act implied.

Those few instances in which the audience did identify sympathetically with the condemned highlight by their rarity the general dehumanizing character of entertainment-executions. The first attempt to execute Perpetua and Felicitas failed because of a sympathetic audience reaction.

They were cast out into the arena naked and wearing nets. The crowd shuddered to see one elegant girl, and another with breasts drooping from her recent childbirth.⁷¹

It appears that the crowd objected to the nudity of Perpetua and Felicitas not from any sense of modesty, but because they were reminded too strongly of their humanity. The crowd was unable to objectify the two women sufficiently to allow the executions to proceed, and so they were clothed and re-presented the arena, to the audience's satisfaction. Again, Plutarch describes

spectators who react poorly to the executions when they fail to fully dehumanize the condemned.

But there are some people, no different from little children, who see criminals in the arena, dressed often in tunics of golden fabric with purple mantles, wearing crowns and doing the Pyrrhic dance, and, struck with awe and astonishment, the spectators suppose that they are supremely happy, until the moment when, before their eyes, the criminals are stabbed and flogged, and that gaudy and sumptuous garb bursts into flames.⁷²

The audience in this case formed a positive emotional connection with the criminals, which made dehumanization impossible. It was essential that any emotional connection be scornful or dismissive, or else the effect of the entertainment-executions would be ruined. The event was designed so that the spectators would enter the arena already predisposed to objectify and dehumanize the condemned, a condition psychologists call a negative affective disposition.⁷³ Defiant martyrs like Perpetua and particularly attractive performers like Plutarch's dancers subverted this disposition, disturbing the spectators.⁷⁴ These examples illustrate how essential the gulf between *noxii* and audience was for the success of the entertainment-executions.

The humiliation and dehumanization of the *noxii* was significant, even all-encompassing. The nature of these events reduced the occurrences of secondary identifications between the *noxii* and the audience—that is, hindered the tendency of the spectators to see the condemned as real people and not the archetypal models discussed above. Given the lack of empathy expressed for the condemned, it is unlikely that the entertainment-executions served mainly as a deterrence, as Kathleen Coleman suggests,⁷⁵ because effective deterrence would require that the witnesses identify primarily and directly with the ones being punished. In short, while it *was* possible for the audience to see themselves in the *noxii*, it was far more usual and natural for them to see the *noxii* as "others," either not human or at least totally alienated from the audience's daily experience. The entertainment-executions encouraged a powerful "us vs. them" mentality, which hints at their social function.

Entertainment-Executions as Social Control

The lack of an empathic connection between “performer” and spectator is essential to its social function. It seems certain that the entertainment-executions reinforced a sense of Roman identity, thereby solidifying class distinctions and social order in general.⁷⁶ Such practices were already inherent in the organization of the amphitheatre and theatre. Seating at public performances, such as the mime and pantomime, was regulated by one’s class.⁷⁷ Augustus imposed a similar set of restrictions on seating in the amphitheatre; he reserved the *ima cavea* (the seats closest to the arena floor) for senators, slotted the equestrians into the next-highest set of seats, other Roman citizens behind them, and finally required most women and non-citizens to sit in the *summa cavea*.⁷⁸ Such seating arrangements indicate that social identity was already an explicit part of the amphitheatrical experience. Each member of the audience would already be aware of his or her sociopolitical identity, at least subconsciously, by attending the gladiatorial games. Observing the sufferings of the *noxii* would have reinforced that awareness of social identity by encouraging the audience to form an “us vs. them” mentality devoid of sympathy.

The nature of the acting in which the *noxii* engaged slotted them into a marginalized status with respect to the audience. They were already social outcasts in a sense because they were condemned criminals—now they were objects of scorn and torture, whose newly-acquired legendary identities served only to heighten the distance between them and the spectators. Unlike the pantomime dancers and gladiators, the entertainment-executions were an inversion of the sophistication and glory of these art forms, a perversion of the entire notion of acting. The *noxii* occupied the lowest order of the hierarchy of the arena, since they were inferior even to the animals; indeed, their reputation was such that it was considered unbecoming of an emperor to show too much interest in the entertainment-executions.⁷⁹ Except in the hagiographies, descriptions of the *noxii* have no positive connotations. The entertainment-executions encapsulated everything that a normal Roman would desire not to be.

Conclusion: Entertainment-Executions and Roman Identity

Such a phenomenon is in keeping with sociological theories of social cohesion and criminology, especially as expressed by Emile Durkheim. Especially in societies that practice repressive law⁸⁰ (i.e. punishment which inflicts an injury against a person’s body, property, or honor) crime and society’s response to it are intimately related with societal cohesion. Durkheim sees crime as a purely social construction—no act is inherently

criminal.⁸¹ Therefore, the purpose of labeling certain acts as criminal and punishing those acts must be to reinforce and sustain society’s self-definition and cohesion, its “collective consciousness.”⁸² The entertainment-executions are an excellent example of this theoretical framework. Every aspect of the “performance” solidified the audience’s sense of social identity. It explicitly highlighted and condemned criminal actions—even, in certain cases, reminding the audience that the crimes and punishments of modern society had mythological or historical precedents. While individual audience members could have differentiated actions to the same “performance,” (and it is lamentable indeed that we do not have multiple accounts of any single specific entertainment-execution), they also experienced an overarching sense of Roman-ness, of superiority to the tortured condemned.

Every part of the gladiatorial program provided some kind of social control. The arrangement of the amphitheatre explicitly divided the audience by status. The feats of the gladiators reinforced a confidence in Rome’s military greatness.⁸³ The system of game-sponsorship by public officials and the emperor emphasized the generosity and prestige of the elite. The accommodation of spectators’ opinions in the running of the games (especially in deciding the fate of the defeated gladiator) empowered the audience, at least temporarily, especially as the more democratic institutions of the state lost power.⁸⁴ The beast-hunts asserted humanity’s control over natural forces. The entertainment-executions tied together all these ideas to demonstrate Rome’s dominance over itself and everything else. The *noxii* accurately enacted legendary tales, affirming the veracity of Rome’s cultural background, both mythological and historical. They performed Roman law by suffering on behalf of justice. Their objectification united all the spectators. In short, the entertainment-executions demonstrated that the Roman state, in all its social, political, military, and religious manifestations, functioned as it ought. The *noxii* were unwilling actors in the drama that was Roman identity. Their case provides yet more evidence for the broader picture of the Roman collective, rather than individual, mentality.

Notes:

1. νεωστί δ’ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἀνεπέμφθη Σέλουρός τις, Αἴτνης υἱὸς λεγόμενος, στρατιᾶς ἀφηγησάμενος καὶ λεηλασίαις πυκναῖς καταδεδραμηκῶς τὰ κύκλω τῆς Αἴτνης πολὺν χρόνον, ὃ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ μονομάχων ἀγῶνος συνεστῶτος εἶδομεν διαπασθέντα ὑπὸ θηρίων• ἐπὶ πῆγματος γάρ τινος ὑψηλοῦ τεθίς ὡς ἂ ἐπὶ τῆς Αἴτνης διαλυθέντος αἰφνιδίως καὶ συμπεσόντος κατηνέχθη καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς γαλεάγρας θηρίων εὐδιαλύτους ἐπίτηδες παρεσκευασμένος ὑπὸ τῷ πῆγματι. Strabo, Geography 6.2.6. Unless noted otherwise, all translations are my own.
2. Suetonius Claudius 34.2. Seneca the Younger, Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales 7.3.
3. Kathleen Coleman, “Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments,” The

Journal of Roman Studies 80 (1990), 48.

4. As early as archaic Greece, funerary celebrations included combat (John Mouratidis, "On the Origin of the Gladiatorial Games," Nikephoros 9 (1996), 118-122). Even if the Greeks were not the inventors of gladiators, as Mouratidis suggests, archaeological evidence suggests that the Campanians and Etruscans also included some form of combat in their funerary rites (Katherine E. Welch, *The Roman Amphitheatre: From its Origins to the Colosseum*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 12-15). Even if these combative rituals were not related to the development of gladiatorial games or damnationes ad bestias specifically, they still suggest a culture of violence at funerals which was likely associated with the gladiatorial games. Certainly the munera themselves promoted associations with the underworld. For example, the person who removed dead gladiators from the arena was called Iovis Frater, a reference to Pluto (Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 15.5). The specific process by which funerary combat rites became gladiatorial games is not important to this study, but the association between the two is.
5. Possibly from among the slaves of the deceased; Geoffrey S. Sumi, "Impersonating the Dead: Mimes at Roman Funerals," *The American Journal of Philology* 123, no. 4 (Winter 2002), 564.
6. Sumi, "Impersonating the Dead," 559.
7. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* 31.25.2.
8. Diodorus 31.25.2 and Polybius 6.53.5-9.
9. Recent studies in cognitive psychology suggest that humans experience neurological reactions imitative of the emotions that a masked actor portrays, thus creating a stronger emotional connection between actor and audience than would otherwise occur. The use of the mask in ancient Greece subsumed the identity of the actor with that of his character and encouraged a narrative (rather than collective or choral) approach to storytelling; Peter Meinke, "The Neuropsychology of Masks in Greek Theatre," lecture, Madison, Wisconsin, 27 March 2012.
10. archimimus personam eius ferens imitansque, ut est mos, facta ac dicta vivi. Suetonius, *Vespasian* 19.2.
11. Sumi, "Impersonating the Dead," 565-566, 578-581. Although he notes that neither Diodorus nor Polybius support its presence at Roman funerals, Sumi argues that the mime added a "carnavalesque" element to the funerary ceremonies, one which paralleled what he identifies as a culture of mockery and abuse in general Roman society. I find this claim to be exaggerated, especially on the basis of the limited evidence, but am willing to accept that the mime could at times adopt the role of critic of the deceased.
12. Julius Caesar is the last sponsor of munera who held the event specifically as part of a funerary commemoration.
13. Eric Csapo and William J. Slater, *The Context of Ancient Drama*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995, 370.
14. Csapo and Slater, *Context of Ancient Drama*, 371.
15. Csapo and Slater, *Context of Ancient Drama*, 371-372. The mime was a common source of popular songs and expressions.
16. Examples are numerous and range from the flight of the adulterer in Propertius, 2.23 to the dinner-party ruined by every conceivable mishap in Horace, *Sermones* 2.8.
17. Edward John Jory, "The Literary Evidence for the Beginning of Imperial Pantomime," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London*, v. 28 (1981), pg. 147-148.
18. See Lucian, *De Saltatione* 37-60 for a lengthy list of appropriate topics for pantomime.
19. Two Julio-Claudian emperors were infamous for giving public performances. Caligula performed tragedy and pantomime (Suetonius, *Caligula* 54) and Nero performed tragic roles, such as Canace—who

- killed herself after giving birth to a child by her brother (Suetonius, *Nero* 21). We also have one extent text about the art of pantomime, Lucian's *On Pantomime*, written during the second century C.E.
20. bestiariis meridianisque adeo delectabatur. Suetonius, *Claudius* 34.
21. casu in meridianum spectaculum incidi lusus expectans et sales et aliquid laxmenti, quo hominum oculi ab homine curore adquiescunt; contra est. quidquid ante pugnatum est, misericordia fuit. nunc omissis nugis mera homicidia sunt. mane leonibus et ursis homines, meridie spectatoribus suis obiciuntur. Seneca the Younger, 7.3-4.
22. We know from authors such as Tertullian that the audience in general considered these violent acts to be in some sense comical or farcical (Tertullian, *ad Nationes* 1.10.47).
23. Seneca the Younger 7.3. Although Seneca was unpleasantly surprised by the content of the midday performances, it is clear that he still associated this time of day with more light-hearted entertainment.
24. See Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum*, trans. and ed. by Kathleen M. Coleman, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, lxxxi-lxxxiv for a discussion of the authorship of this text.
25. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 64. We know that the crucifixion of Laureolus is a mime-plot from Juvenal, *Satire* 8.188-189: "The quick Lentulus also performed Laureolus well: I judged him worthy of a real cross." *Laureolum velox etiam bene Lentulus egit/iudice me dignus vera cruce.*
26. Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum* 9. Translation by Coleman, page 83. This epigram is part of a collection celebrating performances at the Colosseum, so we can assume that Martial is describing an entertainment-execution, not a mime or the suffering of Laureolus himself.
27. Not to be confused with either Lucilius the satirist or Lucilius the friend of Seneca the Younger.
28. One of the Labors of Heracles was to steal three apples from the garden of the Hesperides. His wife Deianira accidentally gave him a poisoned cloak (she had believed the poison to be a love potion). The pain of this poison was relieved only when Heracles was immolated on Mount Oeta.
29. ἐκ τῶν Ἑσπερίδων τῶν τοῦ Διὸς ἦρε Μενίσκος ὡς τὸ πρὶν Ἡρακλῆς χρῦσεα μῆλα τρία καὶ τί γὰρ ὡς ἐάλω, γέγονεν μέγα πᾶσι θέαμα ὡς τὸ πρὶν Ἡρακλῆς ζῶν κατακατόμενος. Lucilius 11.184.
30. It is debatable how a victim of the tunica molesta would have actually died. Like many victims of stake-burning in medieval Europe, he could have asphyxiated before being significantly burnt. As we know from the experiences of self-immolators, the tunica molesta would not have guaranteed Meniscus' death; if he survived the fire, we can presume that he would either be killed by arena officials or would die of his injuries later.
31. Attis was the consort of Cybele, who is most famous for his self-castration.
32. saltant dei vestri argumenta et historias nocentibus erogandis, aut in ipsis deis nocentes puniuntur. vidimus saepe castratum Attin deum a Pessinunte et qui vivus cremabatur Heraclem induerat. Tertullian, *Ad Nationes* 1.10.46-47.
33. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 61.
34. Coleman's description of the *Liber Spectaculorum* is striking: "All that one can say with moderate certainty about this book of epigrams is that it comprises an untitled collection of uncertain length celebrating a series of unspecified occasions in honour of 'Caesar' (unnamed); and it is attributed to Martial." Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum*, xix.
35. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 62.
36. Pasiphae was the wife of Minos; she was cursed by Poseidon into falling in love with a bull. From this union was born the Minotaur.
37. Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum* 6. Translation by Coleman, page 62.

38. Daedalus was a famous mythological inventor, with an extensive corpus of famous deeds. He constructed the vehicle by which Pasiphae was able to copulate with Poseidon's bull. As punishment, Minos imprisoned Daedalus and his son Icarus and forced the inventor to construct the Minotaur's Labyrinth. Eventually, Daedalus and his son were able to escape by constructing wings. Icarus, however, flew too close to the sun, so the wax holding his wings together melted and he fell to his death. His cause of death is unknown.
39. Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum* 10. Translation by Coleman 97.
40. Orpheus was a skilled musician whose song had almost divine power. After the death of his wife Eurydice and his failure to retrieve her from the underworld, Orpheus retreated into the wilderness.
41. Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum* 24. Italicized translation is my own; all the rest is Coleman 174. Coleman has accepted Housman's suggestion that the final line should be *haec tantum res est facta par j iJstorivan*, rather than *haec tamen res est facta ita pictoria*. I am not satisfied by Coleman's defense of this emendation, which she makes on the grounds of both style and sense. Her explanation of the former, that it would not be inappropriate for a Greek expression to appear in a Latin epigram dedicated to an emperor, seems convincing enough, but her argument that the change is necessary for reasons of sense is not.
42. Campani ab superbia et odio Samnitium gladiatores, quod spectaculum inter epulas erat, eo ornatu armarunt Samnitiumque nomine compellarunt. Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 9.40.17.
43. Luciana Jacobelli, *Gladiators at Pompeii*, trans. by Mary Becker, Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003, 7.
44. Jacobelli, *Gladiators at Pompeii*, 9.
45. Jacobelli, *Gladiators at Pompeii*, 13, 15.
46. Alex Scobie, "Spectator Security and Comfort at Gladiatorial Games," *Nikephoros* 1 (1988), 195.
47. CIL IV.4342, IV.4345, IV.4356.
48. CIL IV.1024, IV.4870.
49. Martial, *Epigrams* 5.24.
50. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 56.
51. Icarus primo statim conatu iuxta cubiculum eius decidit ipsumque cruore respersit. "Icarus, at the first blow of the horn, immediately dropped into the imperial box nearby and splattered the emperor with blood." Suetonius, *Nero* 12.2. See Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 68-69 for a discussion of the technical aspects of this unintentionally-fatal performance.
52. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 72-73.
53. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 69-70.
54. Almost every tragedy contains at least one instance of this practice. Two particularly notable examples come from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Euripides' *Hippolytus*. Again, the audience first learns of the self-blinding of Oedipus through a report by a messenger (*Oedipus Tyrannus* ll.1265-1284) and only later sees the mutilated king onstage (l.1308). Presumably the actor portraying Oedipus would have exchanged his normal mask for one representing the mutilation while he was offstage.
55. Csapo and Slater, *Context of Ancient Drama*, 270-273.
56. Examples of the use of the ἐκκύκλημα are prevalent, ranging from the revelation of Agamemnon's and Cassandra's murdered bodies in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* to the display of Eurydice post-suicide in Sophocles' *Antigone* to Deianeira's suicide in Euripides' *The Trachiniae*.
57. The audience witnesses violence loosely-defined in comedies such as Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai*, in which Euripides' kinsman's genital area is depilated through scorching as part

- of a cross-dressing scene or as in Plautus' *Menaechmi*, in which Messino and his master's twin brother Menachmus fight off a group of slaves attempting to abduct the latter.
58. πάντα καθ' ἰστορίην ὀρχούμενος ἐν τῷ μέγιστον τῶν ἔργων παριδῶν ἠνίσσας μέγας τὴν μὲν γὰρ Νιόβην ὀρχούμενος ὡς λίθος ἔσσης καὶ πάλιν ὁ Καπανεὺς ἐχαπίνης ἐπεσεσ· ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τῆς Κανάκης ἀφοῶς, ὅτι καὶ ξίφος ἦν σοὶ καὶ ζῶν ἐξῆλθες. τοῦτο παρ' ἰστορίην. Lucillius 11.254.
59. "Now Orpheus also found the mysteries of Dionysus and was buried near Pieria, after he had been torn apart by Maenads." εὖρε δὲ Ὀρφεὺς καὶ τὰ Διονύσου μυστήρια, καὶ τέθραται περὶ τὴν Πιερίαν διαπασθεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν μαινάδων. Ps-Apollodorus 1.3.2.
60. Coleman 65.
61. "He created a shaggy bear, a sign of his wonders." ἄρκτον ἐποίησεν λασιαύχενα σήματα φαίνων. Ps-Homer, *Hymn to Dionysus* 7.45.
62. For example, the martyr Blandina was suspended in a crucifixion-position and exposed to animals in the arena (*The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* 5). This parallels the treatment of "Laureolus."
63. Searches in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, and *Perseus* all failed to produce any link between Daedalus and a bear of any sort, or between Daedalus and Lucania.
64. Martial, *Liber Spectaculorum* 97-99.
65. Csapo and Slater, *Context of Ancient Drama*, 211, 373.
66. The other four are retribution, correction, prevention, and deterrence. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 45-49.
67. implorantique leges et civem Romanum se testificant, quasi solacio et honore aliquot poenam levaturus, mutari multoque praeter ceteras alioem et dealbatam statui crucem iussit. Suetonius, *Galba*, 9.1.
68. Tertullian and Lucillius both at least indicated that there was a non-mythological agent involved. Tertullian says that the criminal inderat ("takes on") his role, while Lucillius is careful to compare Meniscus with "Heracles of long ago."
69. et statim in fine spectaculi leopardo obiectus de uno morso tanto perfusus est sanguine, ut populo revertenti illi secundi baptismatis testimonium reclamaverit: salvum lotum! salvum lotum! *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs. Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, 21.
70. in matutina nuper spectatus harena/Mucius, imposuit qui sua membra focus/si patiens durusque tibi fortisque videtur/Abderitanae pectora plebis habes./nam cum dicatur tunica praesente molesta/'ure manum,' plus est dicere, 'non facio.' Martial *Epigrams* 10.25.
71. itaque dispoliatae et reticulis indutae producebantur. horruit populous alteram respiciens puellam delicatam, alteram a partu recentem stillantibus mammis. Tertullian, *Passio* 20. Note that Perpetua and Felicitas were forced naked into the arena because they had refused to adopt the garb of priestess of Ceres, apparently a typical costume for Carthaginian noxii (Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 66).
72. Plutarch, *Moralia* 554b. Translation by Coleman 70.
73. Garrett G. Fagan, *The Lure of the Arena: Social Psychology and the Crowd at the Roman Games*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 252.
74. Fagan, *Lure of the Arena*, 256-257.
75. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 48-49.
76. Fagan (*Lure of the Arena*, 277-278) argues that the games could not have had a significant relation to a sense of Roman identity, since the majority of the game attendees were a self-selected segment of the population. Even if Fagan's argument should be accurate for Roman society as a whole, it does not keep the

entertainment-executions from being significant for the formation of Roman identity within the context of the gladiatorial program. Furthermore, no one institution or activity will inspire the same sense of identity in all people equally; the games were simply one of many ways for Romans to develop a collective identity.

77. Csapo and Slater, *Context of Ancient Drama*, 306.

78. Scobie, "Spectator Security," 204.

79. Suetonius, *Claudius* 34.2.

80. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, Trans. W.D. Halls, New York: The Free Press, 1997, 28-29.

81. Durkheim, *Division of Labor*, 39-40.

82. Durkheim, *Division of Labor*, 63.

83. This statement is true in many senses. Casting defeated enemies as gladiatorial types reminded the audience of Rome's military conquests. Hosting the games in response to victories, such as the construction of the Colosseum after the defeat of the Jewish rebels in 70 C.E., commemorated those successes. The gladiators were expected to demonstrate military virtues, like bravery and steadfastness.

84. Fagan, *Lure of the Arena*, 137.



Empty storage bunkers, called igloos, on a stripped railbed at the Joliet Army Ammunitions Plant, Joliet, Illinois; photo taken by the author, David Meyerson

Ghosts in the Soil:
Environmental History in the Joliet Army Ammunitions Plant

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WHERE THE STREETS HAVE NO NAME

The railroad tracks from Chicago stop at the edge of a small town but the straight, level railbed goes miles further. There are no construction teams there. It is not a new railroad being built; it is all that remains of an old one. And it leads to something very strange. Down the line there is a prairie preserve growing over an abandoned ammunitions plant, contaminated soil, and the bones of farm families from before World War II.

Following the railbed, you pass a cluster of grain silos and make your way between farmhouses and cornfields. Then you reach a massive unkempt property bounded by a rusty barbed wire fence that stretches farther than you can see. Here the trail ducks under the fence and branches out, connecting to networks of other stripped railbeds that serve dozens of abandoned buildings. There are rows of grass-covered concrete bunkers with heavy steel doors. Some have been left open and you can see they are completely empty. Not far away, there are vacant industrial buildings being reclaimed by nature. Tiles and asbestos hang from their ceilings. They smell like the animal waste that is scattered on their floors. Most of their windows are broken and the wind has scattered papers left on desks or in open file cabinets. Dark algae-filmed water fills their basements to the tops of their stairways. Ivy creeps up their outside walls and tall grass grows in the buffer zones between them. Away from the buildings in the overgrowth, there is a crumbled foundation that looks like it could have been a barn or a farmhouse. Under a stand of tall trees near the middle of the site, there's a cemetery where all the headstones are dated before 1940. This place may have once been someone's home, or a factory, or a depot. Whatever it was, it was abandoned quickly and long ago.

But now you hear in the distance the rumble of diesel engines. South of you, backhoes are piling trash onto a small mountain of a landfill. To the northwest, in a rail yard where the tracks haven't been stripped, trains are loading cargo from warehouses owned by Walmart and other companies. Surrounding the empty plot you have wandered into are two industrial parks, an oil refinery, and acres of farmland. Developed properties wedge against the rusty fence like they are trying to get in. This is a valuable piece of real estate, but for some reason, it is not for sale. What is so special about these weedy fields and crumbling buildings?

During World War II, the Army kicked out a community of Illinois farmers and, while

crops still stood in the fields, built the Joliet Army Ammunitions Plant.¹ The land would never be the same. This is the story of the bodies buried in the cemetery, the toxic chemicals buried in the landfill, and the values attached to both. This is, most of all, a story about those values, how they've changed, and how they have clashed on this piece of land since World War II.

A FAMILY HOME

Before the War, the Leupold brothers lived on a few acres of farmland near Joliet, Illinois. In late 1940, they were told by the U.S. Ordnance Department to sell their home or else fight the federal government in court.² The Leupolds were among hundreds of farmers asked to leave the area. The reason, they were told, was so that a massive munitions plant could be built on their land. One way or another, the Leupolds and their neighbors were gone within a few months. But in 1949, almost a decade later, the Leupolds would write to the War Department asking for their land back.³ They got on with their lives elsewhere for nine years, but they were still attached to the land they left behind. Farms like the Leupolds' had sentimental value above the Ordnance Department's asking price. That is why, when they were told to leave, many Joliet area farmers put up a fight.

The American public of 1940 did not see the war as a struggle between good and evil. Hitler was murdering innocents in Europe but that was not widely known in the U.S. The war, as many Americans saw it, had little to do with them. That is why, until the Pearl Harbor attack, public opinion favored noninvolvement. Like many other Americans, Joliet farmers were rooting for the Allies, but they were not ready to sacrifice their homes for the cause. So they had a short-lived protest. They had at least one community meeting during which they pled their case to a sympathetic but unhelpful Army Colonel. The colonel promised construction would start in the next thirty days.⁴ Community members could not stop the plant's coming or their going, but their protest still left a mark on the landscape.

The farmers wanted their cemeteries left alone. Although the Ordnance Department may have planned to dig up and relocate the graves, they granted the Joliet community that one concession, and left three cemeteries sitting between sections of the plant.⁵ The cemeteries are today the most tangible evidence of the multi-generational farm families from before the war. Their headstones recall both the people buried there and their children who moved away when the plant moved in.

THE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

For the federal Government, the land transfer was, predictably, a public relations disaster. But it was a difficult one to avoid. The U.S. needed military explosives as soon as World War II started – if not for itself, then for those defending its interests. The U.S. Ordnance Department built 77 munitions plants between 1940 and 1943. As in Joliet, many of the plants had to be built on land bought from unwilling midwestern farmers.

According to government specifications, to be safe from enemy invasion, each plant had to be between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains and at least 200 miles from national borders. Each plant needed close-by waterways for production and waste disposal. And, to move the raw materials and finished products efficiently, each plant needed access to major railroad and highway arteries. Finally, because of the risks of manufacturing explosives, each plant site needed room for blast buffers. Plant buildings had to stand far enough apart so that an accidental explosion could not cause explosions in adjacent buildings (This is why JAAP had to take up so much space and displace hundreds instead of dozens of farmers). The requirements meant that ordnance plants were most easily sited on rivers in the greater metropolitan areas of the mid- and near west, and that meant wherever the Ordnance Department went, chances were it had to kick someone out.

The site near Joliet was no exception. It was in the middle of the country, with thousands of acres to build on. It had easy access to Chicago's transportation infrastructure and to the Illinois River watershed. In addition, it had access to the human resources it needed – an ample workforce and public support. The displaced farmers were dissatisfied by the plant's establishment, but plenty of people in the region wanted the plant nearby for the cash it would bring. Construction workers came looking for jobs even before the project had begun.⁶ Ads sponsored by the State of Illinois flaunted Chicago's infrastructure, asking industries to take advantage of the region's railroads.⁷ The state government, job seekers, and Ordnance Department planners agreed that the chosen plot south of Joliet was an excellent place for a munitions plant. And yet as perfect for them as the site then was, it would soon become mostly useless.

After World War II, the U.S. would never again need such a massive bomb-making operation. There was still the Cold War, so JAAP was put on standby instead of shut down. It supplied U.S. forces in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Then, in 1977, it closed for good. War as the U.S. knew it went away and was replaced by something else. Most American military campaigns after Vietnam were what international relations theorist Mary Kaldor calls “new wars” – low-intensity conflicts involving non-state belligerents like Al-Qaeda.⁸ The Air Force could not carpet bomb a guerilla cell like it could Dresden, so it would not need so many bombs. Also, the military and its contractors developed new munitions technologies that made some of JAAP's facilities obsolete.⁹ JAAP ran its course and became mostly useless to the military. But the land it left behind, and the condition it was left in would shape a new struggle in the coming decades.

AN OPEN MARKET

A lot had changed by the time JAAP shut down so that new kinds of buyers had become interested in the plot. As the car's popularity increased, so too did the number of car commuters who could afford to live dozens of miles from their workplaces downtown. Around the nation's cities sprang up suburbs designed for those commuters and their cars – suburbs distinguishable by their curving non-grid street plans, the garages built

into to every one of their houses, and, sometimes, their lack of sidewalks.¹⁰ Since World War II, automobile suburbs had advanced from the edges of Chicago's metropolis. In satellite images, you can see their curved plans densely covering land between twenty and thirty-five miles from the Chicago Loop. As the suburbs sprawled, they moved the edge of the metropolitan area closer to JAAP, making land increasingly scarce.

But it was not just that land became scarce. A market developed that brought new interests to the JAAP site. As industries grew in the post-war decades, more companies became nationwide businesses and had to deal with economies of scale. A new corporation called Wal-Mart, for instance, had begun its rapid expansion and needed to coordinate its store network to increase profits. To successfully cut their costs, Wal-Mart needed enough transportation resources – warehouses, depots, trucks, barges, and trains – to make sure that opening a new store or factory didn't mean cutting off the inventories of old ones.¹¹ As companies like Wal-Mart grew, so too did demand for commercial shipping solutions. In this context, property developers recognized the dollar value of JAAP. The plot already had an industrial rail depot and access to railroads, highways, and rivers. It looked like an excellent investment. Developers eventually built an industrial park on the south side of the site and expand JAAP's rail depot, making it into an intermodal shipping facility, where Walmart (spelled without a dash since 2008) would buy space. But those projects only took up a fraction of the JAAP site and they did not start until years after JAAP's shutdown. As in-demand as the real estate was, pieces of it were not sold for a long time, and most of it was not sold at all, but repurposed. Something was still keeping the federal government from getting rid of it.

A HEALTH RISK

In the '90s, the Army hired contractors to perform a series of “ecological risk assessments” of JAAP's soil. One risk assessment investigated a burning ground, where plant workers had regularly incinerated waste explosives. The risk assessors tested the soil by taking samples and putting cucumbers, earthworms, and bacteria in them. They expected soils with high concentrations of explosive residues to be significantly harmful to living matter, i.e., kill at least half of it. But, unexpectedly, even some soils not contaminated with explosives killed half of the cucumbers, earthworms, and bacteria.¹² The assessors blamed other pollutants, like heavy metals, and encouraged the Army risk manager to conduct further studies to learn exactly what was wrong with the soil.¹³ Years of different kinds of pollution left sections of JAAP so contaminated in so many ways that the Army did not even know what it had to clean up.

Pollution was inherent to the 1940s manufacturing process used in JAAP. Workers started with a batch of toluene and, three times, added nitrate molecules, which bonded to the toluene hub, yielding trinitrotoluene, or TNT. Effective military-grade TNT had to be nearly pure 2,4,6 TNT (The 2,4,6 represents the positions where the nitrate molecules should be bonded to the toluene hub.)¹⁴ A problem with the TNT-making process in 1940

was that it yielded an impure mixture of usable 2,4,6 TNT and useless other kinds of TNT molecules. The useless molecules had to be extracted from the batch in a process called “washing.”¹⁵ Washing eliminated most of the useless – along with up to 5 percent of the useful – TNT so that the factory had two products: the almost-pure batch of useful powder, and a mixture of wastes called “red water.”¹⁶ JAAP flushed its red water into nearby Prairie Creek, which fed the Kankakee, and in turn, the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers.¹⁷ The red water went in the streams while the contaminants from the burning ground and other sites sank into the groundwater, where they might migrate to nearby communities’ well water.¹⁸

Before we put JAAP on trial, we should ask, why is this bad? The answer is we are not entirely sure. TNT in the bloodstream can break down the walls of red blood cells, keeping them from delivering oxygen to the other cells in the body – what we call anemia.¹⁹ Otherwise, TNT can cause liver failure.²⁰ It can kill a person if it is absorbed in a high enough concentration. But we do not fully understand what that concentration is or how it gets into the body. Even writers of recent medical studies complain of a lack of quantitative data on the medical effects of ingesting TNT.²¹ Government officials in the ’40s knew even less. They did not understand the toxicokinetics well enough to save 22 workers dying from TNT exposure during World War II.²² In obvious ways, the lack of information was terrible for the Army. In an indirect way, though, it was convenient. Knowing little about the potential effects of TNT in the environment, it was easy for the Army not to worry about the TNT it put into the streams and the soil.

Books like Rachel Carson’s best-seller *Silent Spring* (1962) made pollution much more of a controversy. Carson warned that the then-widely-used pesticide DDT would injure the environment and human health. At the time, those defending DDT (who were also those selling DDT) still had scientific credibility – that is, the jury was still out on Carson’s linking of DDT to environmental problems. But her book nonetheless convinced Americans to expect the worst of pollution so that, even if they did not fully understand its consequences (as they didn’t of TNT), they could still demand a cleanup.²³ Instead of forgetting what chemicals were put into the environment, as anyone easily could, Americans became increasingly concerned about them. That is why the use of pesticides declined. It is partly why Congress and President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency, and partly why Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (commonly known as Superfund), under which the Army was made liable for cleaning JAAP.²⁴ Partly because of Carson the American public came to see pollution much more negatively than it had. EPA officials did not need to fully understand the risks of contamination to mandate a cleanup effort that would last until the late ’90s. No part of JAAP was to be sold or repurposed until it had been decontaminated to the EPA’s standards. But decontaminated to the EPA’s standards did not mean decontaminated. The Army would get out of their cleanup responsibility early. And, strangely enough, it would have something to do with the nature lovers.

A BUTTERFLY

While the Army and its contractors were decontaminating parts of the site and developers were bargaining for pieces of it, a group of conservationists came to JAAP. Walking through the site, they probably saw fields dotted with burr oak and patches of waist-high grass and prairie flowers. They got the idea that this piece of land could go back to what it was before World War II and even before western settlement. With a human hand, the patchy ecosystem that had developed in JAAP could become a real prairie and a national park.

JAAP’s soil was heavily polluted in small areas around some plant buildings. But the buffer zones – those wide-open spaces included in the 1940 plan to prevent fire from spreading building to building – were open and uncontaminated. Having decades ago forced out the farmers and their crops, JAAP had unintentionally started the work of rebuilding a prairie. In the buffer zones, tall grasses had fewer competitors and plenty of room to grow. Native bird species, too, thrived in JAAP in a way they couldn’t in the surrounding landscape.²⁵ As writer Tony Hiss put it, JAAP was an “industrial brownfield... with a huge green difference.”²⁶ It had unique potential to become a national park.

If it did, it would be unique among national parks – one of the only laid on land with such a heavily developed past. That’s partly why conservationists put a high romantic value on the would-be park. If they made it into a prairie, they argued, they’d be opening a resource for the common good. It could be a classroom and a recreational space for 100 million people within a day’s drive.²⁷ Even better, the park would be a moral resource – a symbol of peace. By turning “bombs into blossoms,” the community would be making good from the evil of war.²⁸ “Midewin,” the name they gave it, reflects that romanticism. It is a word from the language of the long-gone Potawatomi that means “healing society.”²⁹ The prairie would not just serve the urban area; it would nourish it.³⁰ For Midewin’s supporters, the struggle for the JAAP property was one for ideal land use and ideal society.

They would eventually win, establishing Midewin National Park, which now occupies most of the acreage of the former JAAP site. The prairie is a work in progress. Since mature prairie soil can take a century to develop, parts of the park are still weedy, overgrown, or vacant-looking.³¹ Conservationists worked hard, but to make Midewin a reality, they needed the Army to hand JAAP over to them.

A CHORE

The Army’s contractors used at least two methods of “remediating” JAAP’s contaminated soil. Partly because the Army didn’t know what kind of pollutants were in particular areas, they just disposed of most contaminated soil. They dug it up, piled it at the on-site landfill, and replaced it with soil from somewhere else.³² They moved hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of soil before the site was acceptable to the EPA.³³ The Army Environmental Command (USAEC) estimated the project could cost up to

\$200 million.³⁴ But the USDA and EPA allow a low decontamination standard for non-residential, non-industrial land use.³⁵ Because Midewin National Park wouldn't have permanent residents or many plumbing systems drawing from the polluted groundwater, the Army was able to tailor its cleanup operations and limit the project's cost to around \$20 million – a tenth of the high estimate.³⁶ As a U.S. Army publication would frame it in a section called “Defending Your Dollars,” the Army had resourcefully saved an unnecessary expense.³⁷ But it left to Midewin sections of contaminated soil and groundwater.³⁸

It is unclear who made the decision to leave the plot how it was. But the Army saved millions, and it seems Midewin benefitted, too. Had the Army spent the estimated \$200 million to clean JAAP's groundwater to the highest standard, then it would have been legal for the Army to divide and sell the JAAP plot to any number of eager private sector buyers. It is unlikely that the preservationists would have been able to compete. The Midewin dream would have died. It would be interesting to find out whether the Army and the preservationists made a deal. In any case, Midewin is a compromise.

A SYMBOL

The place is simultaneously a natural beauty, a desirable piece of real estate, and a health risk. Decades ago it was FDR's “arsenal of democracy,” and before that, a group of family homes. The answer to the question “what is this place?” depends on who and when you're asking. Since 1940, people have been struggling over how this land should be used. None of them ever got exactly what they wanted. Instead, their competing values made this place into one that could not exist anywhere or any when else.

For all this struggle to start, the government had to coerce headstrong farmers like the Leupolds to give up their sentimental property. For the land to have become available after the war, it had to become useless to the Army. Global conflicts had to transform so that nations would no longer need a massive volume of explosives to fight in them. Once the land was available, businesses and developers moved in to the extent they could, but laws about contaminated soil mostly shut them out. For those laws to have existed in the first place, people had to become worried about the sometimes-vague connection between pollution and disease. For industries to have wanted the land in the first place, it had to have become an attractive commodity. That could not have happened without the midcentury evolution of the car, the suburb, and the national corporation. For Midewin to be established, there had to be strong community support. For that to happen, people in the community had to have romantic ideals about nature preserves and the beauty of the American landscape. Most necessarily, there had to have been a World War II in the first place. Forces at work on the other side of the world that threatened the United States' hegemony in its own hemisphere created the need for JAAP and, in turn, the opportunities for future land users. The landfill, the industrial buildings, the overgrown cemeteries, and the prairie blossoms, are all symbols of modern American history.

Maybe the most fitting symbol, though, is the first one you saw – the stripped railbed that led you here. Today the railbed and its branches are maintained as dirt trails. They no longer carry bombs but hiking nature enthusiasts who think of the place as a natural marvel rather than a piece of capital. Like the munitions plant, the railbeds are, essentially, the same thing they used to be. Yet the subtraction of two rails and the coming of a new era and new values have made them into something that is, in its relationship to people and the environment, entirely different. It is an industrial ruin, a scenic view, and a history exhibit.

Notes:

1. “U.S. Taking Arms Plant Site Now, Objectors Told,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 25, 1940, Proquest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune (1849-1988). Accessed April 15th, 2012, <http://www.proquest.com/>.
2. Ibid.
3. Letter to Paul L. Mather from Leupold Brothers, December 26, 1949; Box 420, Elwood Ordnance Plant, Elwood, IL. Real Property Liquidation Files; Chicago Region, record group 270, National Archives Bldg, Chicago, IL.
4. “U.S. Taking Arms Plant Site Now, Objectors Told.”
5. Kane is uncertain whether it was Ordnance Department policy to move graves, but she says it did happen. Goc says that the Ordnance Dept. had planned to move graves at BAAP, but decided not to after a sharp public outcry. See Kimberly L. Kane, *Historic Context for the World War II Ordnance Department's Government-Owned Contractor-Operated (GOCO) Industrial Facilities, 1939-1945*, (Plano, TX: Geo-Marine Inc., 1995) 191. See also: Goc, 111.
6. “Defense Comes to Main Street,” *BusinessWeek*, November 2, 1940.
7. Ad in *BusinessWeek*, November 2, 1940.
8. Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2001) 1.
9. The authors point out two big drawbacks to TNT production in plants like JAAP: inefficiency and pollution. The development they're selling in this fact sheet solves both. See Mr. Anthony W. Arber, Javid Hamid, Dr. Robert M. Endors, “Elimination of Redwater Formation from TNT Manufacture,” Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program WP-1408 fact sheet, December, 2007, accessed April 15, 2012, pdf can be downloaded here: <http://www.serdp.org/Program-Areas/Weapons-Systems-and-Platforms/Energetic-Materials-and-Munitions/Explosives/WP-1408/WP-1408>.
10. William Cronon, History, Environmental Studies, Geography 460, “American Environmental History,” lecture 19: “Environmentalism Triumphant?” Spring 2012.
11. Economies of scale happen when a firm opens another factory or store. If resources aren't coordinated, that expansion can diminish profits. Arthur O'Sullivan, Stephen M. Sheffrin and Stephen J. Perez, *Microeconomics – 7th ed.*, (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2012) 192.
12. “Evaluation of Soil Toxicity at Joliet Army Ammunition Plant,” *Environmental Toxicology* (April 1995): 629.
13. Ibid 630.
14. This study also gives a good overview of the TNT-manufacturing process. Arber, Hamid and Endors, 3.
15. Ibid.

16. Ibid, 5.
17. Aerostar Environmental Services, Inc., "Second Five-Year Review Report Soils Operable Unit for Joliet Army Ammunition Plant (JOAAP) Wilmington, Illinois," August 2009, accessed April 15, 2012, 33.
18. For more about the EPA's concerns about pollution in JAAP, see Bruce K. Means, Memorandum to William E. Muno, "EPA Region 5 National Remedy Review Board Recommendations on the Joliet Superfund Site," Accessed 4/23/13 <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/nrrb/pdfs/joliet.pdf>
19. "Toxicological Profile for 2,4,6-Trinitrotoluene," Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, June 1995, accessed April 15, 2012, 29.
20. "Toxic Jaundice" is one of the notable causes the author points to for factory deaths during World War II. Ibid, 17.
21. Ibid, 77.
22. McConnell WJ, Flinn RH, "Summary of twenty-two trinitrotoluene fatalities in World War II." *Journal of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology* 28:76-86 1946. As quoted in "Toxicological Profile," 38. <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/TP.asp?id=677&tid=125>.
23. At the end of the broadcast, Eric Sevareid implores viewers to find out more about just what risks come with DDT and other pesticides. Also, the program gives significant airtime to a scientist who insists Carson was stretching the truth. See "The Silent Spring of Rachel Carson," CBS Reports, April 3, 1963.
24. "Origins of the EPA," *The Guardian – EPA Historical Publication*, Spring 1992. Accessed at [epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/history/publications/print/origins.html) on April 15, <http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/history/publications/print/origins.html>.
25. Tony Hiss, "Bombs into Blossoms," *Preservation*, July/August 1998, 78.
26. Hiss, 76.
27. Hiss, 78.
28. The title of Hiss's article in *Preservation*, Ibid.
29. Hiss, 78.
30. Hiss, 78.
31. Hiss, 80.
32. Using Google Earth's historical imagery feature, you can see sites described in Aerostar's five-year review being excavated as the Prairie View landfill gets bigger. Ibid. See also Google Earth, <http://earth.google.com/>.
33. Aerostar Environmental Services, 58, 74.
34. This is part of an interesting dialog between the Army, the EPA, and the USDA. I'd like to have found more documents like it. There's juicy research yet to be done here. "Joliet Reduces Prairie Cleanup Costs," *Environmental Update*, vol. 17, no. 4 (Fall 2005), accessed April 15, 2012, <http://aec.army.mil/usaec/newsroom/update/fall05/fall05.html>.
35. The USDA refers to the cleanup plan implemented as below the "residential standard." See Logan Lee, "Decision Notice & Finding of No Significant Impact Land and Resource Management Plan (Prairie Plan) Amendment #1 – Establishment of Management Area 3 and Designation of Utility Corridors into MA 2," June 26, 2008, 1-2. Accessed April 15, 2012, http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5158006.pdf.
36. "Joliet Reduces Prairie Cleanup Costs," *Environmental Update*, vol. 17, no. 4 (Fall 2005), accessed April 15, 2012, <http://aec.army.mil/usaec/newsroom/update/fall05/fall05.html>.
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- tion areas and groundwater management zones," see also, Logan Lee, "Decision Notice & Finding of No Significant Impact Land and Resource Management Plan (Prairie Plan) Amendment #1 – Establishment of Management Area 3 and Designation of Utility Corridors into MA 2," June 26, 2008, 1-2. Accessed April 15, 2012, http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5158006.pdf.
38. Midewin planners call the still-contaminated areas "soil restriction areas and groundwater management zones," see Logan Lee, "Decision Notice & Finding of No Significant Impact Land and Resource Management Plan (Prairie Plan) Amendment #1 – Establishment of Management Area 3 and Designation of Utility Corridors into MA 2," June 26, 2008, 1-2. Accessed April 15, 2012, http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5158006.pdf.

The Price of Technology:
Coltan, Conflict, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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From supercomputers to cellular telephones, the world's technology runs on coltan. Coltan – short for columbite–tantalite, known industrially as tantalite – is a mineral crucial to the production of virtually all modern electronics. Global hunger for the mineral, however, has come at the highest cost to human life since World War II, in the form of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) First and Second Congo Wars. It is widely accepted that the conflicts themselves were a product of complex intergovernmental competition and deep-seated ethnic tensions between numerous ethnic groups. In this paper, however, I will argue that the illegal exploitation and laundering of the DRC's coltan played a primary role in the continuation of central Africa's bloody conflict from the mid-1990s until the mid-2000s.

To recognize the role of coltan in fueling conflict in central Africa, it is first important to understand the conflicts themselves. The First Congo War, lasting from 1996 to 1998 with the fall of President Mobutu Sese Seko, and the Second Congo War, continuing from 1998 to the mid-2000s, constituted the bloodiest series of conflicts since World War II, claiming upwards of 5 million lives. A combination of factors played crucial roles in the onset of the conflict, such as intrastate ethnic tensions within Congo and along its eastern borders, and international competition with neighboring nations such as Rwanda and Uganda.¹

The prewar state of Congo – previously Zaire – was dominated by dictator Mobutu Sese Seko from 1965 to his ousting in 1997. Mobutu's authoritarian agenda was dominated by a penchant for personal economic gain and a decisive inability to effectively govern the nation; in the course of his thirty-year reign, Zaire's gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 65%.² Furthermore, following the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, a combination of the United States pulling its support from Mobutu's anti-communist regime and a wave of African democratization heaped increasing pressure on the unpopular leader.³ Shortly thereafter, the 1994 Rwandan genocide provided the spark for existing ethnic tensions in the east of Zaire, tensions that came to a head in the August of 1996 and continued throughout the next decade.

Ethnic tensions had existed in the Congo since colonization in the late nineteenth century. Ethnic eastern Congolese – the Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga – had existed on their lands for generations. In two great waves, however, ethnic Tutsis migrated from their homes in Rwanda to the Congo, first as pastoralist migrants and forced laborers for the Belgian administration during colonization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and second as displaced people fleeing from the Hutu government installed in

Rwanda in the late 1950s, just before Congolese independence in 1960. These Tutsis – known as Banyamulenge if they were from the first wave of immigrants, or Banyarwanda if they were from the second wave – were given some political rights under Mobutu, but were considered foreigners and invaders by many ethnic Congolese in the eastern regions of the country. Negative feelings towards both Tutsi and Hutu Rwandan immigrants came to a head in the mid-1960s in a series of attacks by Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga, known as the Kanyarwanda War. After this relatively insignificant conflict, tensions heightened further throughout the 1970s and 80s, as Banyamulenge were granted citizenship by Mobutu. This represented a higher level of governmental acknowledgement and influence for the Rwandan immigrants, which aggravated ethnic Congolese who saw the bestowing of citizenship as official acceptance of a foreign interloper.⁴

The Rwandan genocide represented a crucial tipping point in the strained relationship between the Tutsis living in eastern Congo and the ethnic Congolese. During the atrocity, hundreds of thousands of Tutsis were massacred by Hutus within Rwanda until the pro-Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), operating from neighboring Uganda, overthrew the Rwandan Hutu government and forced the extremist Hutus to cross the border with Zaire, heightening ethnic tension in the region.

The exodus of Rwandans originally consisted of some Tutsis fleeing the Hutu government however, they were followed by massive numbers of Hutus fleeing the retaliatory RPF. Altogether, over 1.5 million individuals eventually settled in eastern Zaire in what is known as the Great Lakes refugee crisis. The situation was greatly complicated, however, by the presence within the refugee camps of numerous factions of Hutu militants, including *Interhamwe* extremists and Hutu government soldiers, among others. Operating within their camps in eastern Zaire, the Hutu militants attacked both refugee Tutsis within the country of Zaire as well as RPF outposts within Rwanda. These attacks, unrestricted by the Mobutu regime, represented a massive threat to the newly-formed Tutsi government in Rwanda, as well as to Tutsis living within eastern Zaire. By 1996, Tutsis within both Rwanda and Zaire could no longer allow the Hutu attacks to continue for their own safety. Rwandan and Ugandan intervention in the Congo from 1996 onward was necessitated in large part by the *Interhamwe* Hutu militia and former Rwandan army elements, held responsible for the Rwandan Genocide, who continued paramilitary operations from Zaire.⁵ These cross-border ethnic conflicts, coupled with general unrest and severe disapproval of Mobutu's reign, culminated in the Banyamulenge Rebellion in August of 1996.⁶

With the assistance of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA, the national army of Rwanda) operating within the eastern Zairian province of Kivu, the large scale uprising of Congolese Banyamulenge – the first wave of Tutsi immigrants to Congo during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – marked the start of a general revolution against the widely unpopular Mobutu. Though the Banyamulenge Rebellion's initial purpose was to stop Hutu attacks on Zairian and Rwandan Tutsis, the movement garnered massive support

from both within Zaire and in neighboring nations, such as Rwanda and Uganda. With large military and economic aid from a Rwandan government intent on influencing a post-Mobutu Zaire, the Banyamulenge rebels joined forces with a number of non-Tutsi elements to form the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL) led by Mobutu's future successor, Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Ultimately, by late 1997 Kabila and the AFDL had – with support from Rwanda, Uganda, and a host of others such as Zimbabwe and Angola – taken the Zairian capital of Kinshasa and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Though the takeover officially marked the end of the First Congo War, the second leg of the conflict was soon to follow, as international tensions flared in mid-1998.⁷

Though it is beyond the scope of this paper to comprehensively analyze every aspect of the instigation of the First and Second Congo Wars, it is valuable to consider the role of coltan in the continuation of the conflict. As mentioned before, coltan is a rare mineral crucial in the production of modern electronics, so it is noteworthy to investigate the role of coltan in the Second Congo War in particular, which coincided with the “tech boom” of the late 1990s. The DRC, furthermore, contains 80 percent of world coltan deposits, and illegal sales of the mineral substantially funded continued conflict within the country as “rebels and the armies of Rwanda and Uganda occupying the eastern DRC were making over US\$150 million per year from coltan sales.”⁸ This massive influx of wealth on account of coltan exploitation has meant that, in essence, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was the primary financier in a war against itself, because profits from the sale of illegally mined Congolese coltan were redirected to purchasing rebel supplies and weapons to continue the conflict. The highly militarized nature of the mineral is reflected in the 2002 UN report that found that “60-70% of the coltan exported from eastern DR Congo was mined ‘under the direct surveillance’ of the Rwandan army.”⁹

Nations with reserves of valuable natural resources which lack sufficient infrastructure and governmental framework often fall victim to international violence and avaricious political figures. The sad reality when evaluating the role of precious minerals such as coltan in prompting conflict is that:

[M]illions of people in... resource-rich countries have seen their lives devastated by the mishandling of vast revenues from natural resources. This pattern has reaffirmed the well-established resource curse: resource-rich countries are less wealthy and less competently governed than those lacking in natural resources. The resource curse gives reason for the empirical correlation between resource-rich countries and reduced investment in human capital, increased domestic political corruption, and perilous reductions in economic diversification. The ultimate result of these outcomes is the stunted long-

term economic growth of an ostensibly fortunate nation.¹⁰

The same holds true in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as greed for coltan, in conjunction with the country's history of instability, corrupt leadership, ethnic conflict, and invasion by neighboring states lustful for natural resources, has led to ongoing war.¹¹ While the nation's mineral reserves recently have been valued at an incredible US\$24 trillion, the country's history is rife with poor governance and resource exploitation – from the Belgian extraction of ivory and rubber in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the modern manipulation of coltan, among other minerals.¹² The story of coltan's role in the conflict is marked by a convincing correlation between the rise and fall of coltan prices and the respective intensification and reduction of conflict in the Congo, associated with the “tech boom” of the late 1990s and early 2000s as well as intensifying international pressure against buying Congolese coltan.

Although tensions between ethnic groups and the security of international borders were the underlying causes of the First and Second Congo Wars, “the heightened ethnic conflict and the dismantling of civil society... underway [as of 2002 were] a *by-product of international trade in this region*” (emphasis added).¹³ In truth, it follows that invading Rwandans and Western capitalists alike greatly benefited from the deregulated nature of illegal coltan sales, since, “the control of coltan... found in DR Congo [*sic*] has allowed Rwanda to prosper economically. It has also allowed Western multinationals to conjure and control the large masses of coltan supplies without capital intensive investment,” assuring the corporations' immense profits.¹⁴ This massive return on investments for international actors prompted the continuation of conflict in the rebel-dominated eastern Congolese provinces by providing the necessary funds to pay for guns and ammunition and accrue personal wealth for individual rebel leaders. Simply put, “the present war in the DRC did not begin with explicitly economic objectives. Rather, as the war reached a stalemate nationally, so belligerents turned inwards to the territory they control, capitalizing... on the rich resources available.” With the conflict linked so directly to the available resources, “[c]oltan both finances violence *and* provides an incentive for it.”¹⁵

The availability of coltan represented a fundamental shift in rebel groups' abilities to wage war.¹⁶ The globalized world has given rebel groups unprecedented access to world markets on which they can pander their illegal wares. Moreover, this globalized market is a relatively new phenomenon, since “mercantile exploitation of such commodities by warlords assumed importance only in the 1990s.”¹⁷ As opposed to traditional insurgencies, which require constant acceptance by local populations if they aim for long-term success:

[C]ontemporary insurgents have developed an ability to sustain themselves through traffic in high value resources under their control... such a mode of war finance has important repercussions for the nature of the militia. Any

motivation to seek popular support evaporates; having responsibility for servicing populations only dissipates resources better used in pursuit of warfare. The key object is control of the resource source; responsibility for a civil population becomes a needless burden.¹⁸

This fundamentally new mode of waging war has had major ramifications for the nature of combat in Africa: on the one hand, rebels have had no need to appeal to local populations while, on the other, global markets can play a substantial role in determining the relative wealth of insurgent groups. The consistent, lucrative revenue stream associated with the increased price of coltan in the late 1990s played a major role in the funding of the Second Congo War.

The conflict associated with the Second Congo War ultimately began within a matter of weeks of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's ascension to the presidency in 1997. Though the prior rebellion against Mobutu had garnered massive support within the country, the political power vacuum that emerged following his downfall left many in the country vying for power and influence, fostering a massively unstable political environment. No group was a larger destabilizing force, however, than Kabila's Rwandan allies. Fearing that native Congolese viewed his close ties with outside forces as personal weakness – as Kabila's chief of staff was, in fact, Rwandan – Kabila attempted to oust both the Rwandan members of his transitional government as well as the lingering Rwandan and Ugandan troops in the east, who fought to oust Mobutu from his newly-formed DRC. Kabila's order, seen as an attack not just on the Rwandan and Ugandan governments but their heavily Tutsi populaces as well, prompted a severe backlash from existing Tutsi rebel groups in eastern Congo, primarily the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD). This backlash was the spark that set the Congolese conflict ablaze yet again. The Rwandan and Ugandan governments, furthermore, jumped to support the Congolese Tutsi Banyamulenge rebels, providing the weapons and resources necessary to allow the rebel groups to entrench themselves in the mineral-rich eastern Congolese provinces, which hold the highest deposits of coltan in the country. Moreover, the Rwandan and Ugandan governments also staked claims in the eastern DRC, nominally to aid the ethnic Tutsis in the area while actually seeking to retain control of Congolese natural resources.

With Rwandan and Ugandan backing and funded in large part by their mining of the DRC's coltan reserves, the rebel groups began their bloody advance on the Congolese capital of Kinshasa. As the anti-Kabila Tutsi revolutionaries reached suburban Kinshasa, however, a coalition of African states consisting primarily of Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola provided enough military aid to the beleaguered Congolese government to stave off invasion and force the rebels to retreat eastward. An interstate stalemate resulted until the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in July 1999 amongst the six warring governments – Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Uganda, Rwanda, and the DRC. Nevertheless, intermittent fighting

continued between Congolese governmental forces and the country's various rebel factions; all the while, Rwandan and Ugandan proxy soldiers kept a presence in eastern DRC provinces.

Because of the mineral's key role in funding the rebel forces, fluctuations in global coltan prices in the late 1990s and early 2000s had a strong impact on war efforts in the DRC. Initially, coltan demand skyrocketed with the technology boom of the 1990s on the back of a 300 percent increase in the sale of tantalum electrical components.¹⁹ The increased demand for laptops and the newly-released Playstation 2 in 2000, for example, pushed coltan prices from \$30 per pound in 1999 to \$380 per pound in 2000. At the same time, as coltan prices continued to rise, conflict intensified as more rebels laid claims to coltan reserves. This generated more funds with which to purchase more weapons, since "the fortuitous discovery of coltan in the DR C [sic], which occurred alongside the technological boom in the 1990s, meant that the rebel armies of the east had more than enough funding to support their armies."²⁰ This positive economic trend caught the attention of a number of investors, notably a conglomerate of AFDL and Rwandan army financiers known as the *Banque de Commerce, du Developpement et de l'Industrie* (BCDI). The corporate maneuvering of the BCDI led to Rwandan and Ugandan companies both holding a monopoly on Congolese coltan exports and illegally reaping massive profits for their native governments at the expense of the economy of the DRC.²¹ At the peak of coltan demand in 2000 and 2001, the DRC was in its worst state since the outbreak of the Second Congo War: Rwandan, Ugandan, and Zimbabwean troops were ransacking the countryside, illegally exploiting Congolese coltan reserves, while Western businessmen and Rwanda investors reaped massive profits. In reality, this is because "the conflict in the DRC [was] largely fuelled and sustained by the drive for economic resources... While there are ethnic divisions that exist in the DRC, these differences are not the major cause of conflict."²²

Ultimately, conflict would continue in the DRC for seven more years after the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement of 1999. In 2001, Laurent Kabila died of injuries sustained during an assassination attempt, and his son, Joseph Kabila, English-speaking and Western-educated, was sworn in as president. His appointment was considered by many scholars to be a fresh opportunity for renewed diplomatic discussions between the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.²³ By 2002, the younger Kabila had engaged in peaceful dialogues not only with internal opponents – the Sun City Agreement in April provided a framework for unified, democratic Congolese government – but additionally with combative foreign nations – the Pretoria Accord in July saw a withdrawal of roughly 20,000 Rwandan troops from the Congo, and the Luanda Agreement in September formalized peace with Uganda. These peace talks, though focused on interstate relations and not on relations with rebel groups – which continue to operate in the country – helped to ease tensions in central Africa. Though the Democratic Republic of the Congo has felt continued political instability, especially in its eastern provinces, the takeover of the Transitional Government in 2003 and the country's first democratic presidential elections in 2006 have marked the official end of the Second Congo War.²⁴ Still, competition over natural resources has prompted the continuation of

conflict, for "even though the war is officially over, dozens of rebel armies remain fighting in the east," vying for resources sold to countries and corporations around the world.²⁵

The conflict eventually scaled back, because of a decrease in the price of coltan in late 2001, due in large part to a combination of the "tech bust" – a slowdown to growth in the technology sector – and mounting international pressure against the use of Congolese coltan. First, with the slowdown of global technological growth, the demand for coltan shrank, leading to a decrease in global prices. This decrease led to massive losses for rebel financiers, making the war far less cost-effective. Secondly, concurrent mounting international pressure against the purchase of Eastern Congolese coltan spelled lower sales of coltan throughout the DRC.²⁶ Furthermore, a UN report on the illegal exploitation of Congolese coltan was released in 2002, mounting even more pressure on the unpopular coltan dealers. From then on, conflict subsided until 2003 when the war officially ended and the Transitional Government took power. Currently, "although the war is formally over, outbreaks of violence continue today and spiked in 2005 *with a brief rise in consumer demand for coltan*" (emphasis added).²⁷ Ultimately, the relationship between global coltan demand and conflict in the DRC is striking; conflict intensified when demand increased and declined when demand decreased. With international condemnation of Congolese coltan in conjunction with lower global demand for the mineral, however, conflict in the DRC is currently at its lowest level since before the Second Congo War.

The history of conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is an incredibly complicated web of corrupt governance, international resource competition, and intrastate ethnic tensions. The presence of coltan played an important role in the continuation of the conflict, exacerbating tensions and providing funding for a host of rebel and proxy governmental militants over the course of nearly a decade. While the majority of militant groups involved in the conflict have disbanded, some elements linger on in the DRC's mineral-rich eastern regions committing acts of violence upon the local populace. Today, in light of the massive loss of life due in part to western lust for technology, consumers have a duty to become more informed and, upon hearing announcements for new electronic products "we need to consider the potential impact this has on the price and availability of coltan."²⁸ It is through this perspective that we can hope to limit coltan-fueled conflict in the future.

Notes

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23. Kevin C Dunn, "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father Passed Down to the Son," in *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, ed. John F. Clark (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 69.
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28. Whitman, "Sexual Violence, Coltan and the Democratic Republic of Congo," 10.



Illustration shows Anthony Comstock as a monk thwarting shameless displays of excessive flesh, whether that of women, horses, or dogs, with a “Jane Doe Warrant”.

St. Anthony Comstock, the Village Nuisance, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection, LC-DIG-ppmsca-26089

Excerpt from “Star Status: Selling Sexuality Through Porn.”

Maeve Heneghan

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Differentiating among Stars, Generics, and Amateurs was a task both unnecessary, and impossible, in the course of pornographic history. This is, of course, because the existence of categories is a current phenomenon, as this historical moment in time is a unique one. Changes in American social norms, sexuality, politics, and technology all contribute to the distinctiveness of the current historical moment in pornography. As long as there has been pornography, there have been actors within it, whether posing for a camera or engaging in sex for mass consumption on the Internet. However, the visibility of these actors has greatly changed over time, beginning from obscurity to the mainstream in American history.

Joseph Slade, author of *Pornography in America* states that domestic pornography first appeared in the 1830s, as Americans had been importing European pornography, such as erotic books and magazines like the *Onania*, which promoted masturbation.¹ The United States Tariff Act of 1842, as the first federal prohibition of erotica trafficking, aided in this domestication as it forced Americans to seek internal means of pornography.² In 1839, the “daguerreotype” emerged as a nearly photographic process where an image could be transferred on a metal plate. In 1846, the earliest daguerreotype depicting pornography shows a middle-aged couple where the man inserts his penis into the woman’s vagina.³ This is currently housed at the Kinsey Institute for Research on Sex, Gender, and Reproduction in Bloomington, Indiana. The daguerreotype was a difficult process that did not allow for mass production, lending itself to be surpassed by the collodian process, which used a glass plate technique.⁴

As economics go: production increased, prices dropped, and demand increased, and in 1852, 40% of all photos for sale were nudes, for sale legally at train stations, bars, docks, fairs, pushcarts, and theaters. They were also sold illegally by street peddlers, as documented by *The New York Times* in 1855, where “by order of Mayor Wood, the [police] Chief’s force made an onslaught on Tuesday on the newsboys selling an obscene weekly paper, called *Broadway Belle*.” The newsboys are then referred to as “little urchins” by the *Times*, indicating, along with the fact that the mayor himself called for their arrests, the broader view that obscene materials were not accepted at the time and would receive strong repercussions for their illegal distribution.⁵ The biased rhetoric is consistent with other *Times* articles found during this period in its description of the existence of obscene materials.⁶ Distribution, both illegally and legally, was furthered by the newest technological development in the early 1850s: halftone printing. It cut the cost of newspaper illustrations by 95%, and ushered in the notion of men’s magazines.⁷

Who the women, (as the overwhelming majority of those depicted), were remains a strong question. They were mostly prostitutes or burlesque dancers, and they received little fame. For example, photographer E. J. Bellocq gained posthumous fame in the 1970s upon the discovery of his photographs of nude prostitutes, taken in 1912 in Storyville, Louisiana, the legalized Red Light District of New Orleans.⁸ Some of the faces in the photographs are scratched off on the glass plate negatives, which was presumably done by Bellocq himself. There are various theories for why this is the case; regardless, the prostitutes photographed, even those whose faces are intact, are unidentified and anonymous.⁹ It is rare to find the origin of nude photographs around the turn of the 20th century, in general. Although Bellocq can be named, the women featured, as historical pornographic actors, still go unseen. The fact that there is so little information on them points to their invisibility in the era around the turn of the 20th century.

Photography has obviously continued to persist, but film was the next step in the history of pornography. As the Lumière Brothers in France developed what they patented as the Cinématographe, cinema was born in 1895 via a projector and a screen. *Le Coucher De La Marie*, produced in 1896, was the first pornographic film, produced in France, depicting Louise Willy performing a striptease followed by her having sex with a man.¹⁰ She, then, would be considered the very first pornographic film actress, although the film was just seven minutes long. This film would also be the first “stag film,” a type of pornographic film lasting until the 1970s. The film, and others, would not be considered legal in the United States at the time, as the 1915 Supreme Court ruled in *Mutual Film Corporation v. Industrial Commission of Ohio* that movies were spectacles similar to carnival shows, and thus not protected by the First Amendment under free speech.¹¹ The studios in Hollywood then responded by creating the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America in 1922 to “self-police,” a way to avoid governmental regulation.¹²

This court case, although overturned by *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson* in 1952, was not the first case in domestic censorship law.¹³ Anthony Comstock, an anti-obscenity fanatical, made it his mission to find and destroy any material he felt was obscene. He built the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1873, which Comstock used, with the legal approval of the New York State Legislature, “to investigate complaints concerning blasphemy, gambling, theatrical performance, lewd writings and pictures, scientific treatises on hygiene and anthropological customs, tracts on birth control and family planning, feminist tracts, sex education treatises, and other offenses against public decency.”¹⁴ He lobbied Congress successfully to pass the Comstock Act of 1873 to expand postal law to include obscenities, which entailed federal punishment for distributing “obscene” materials through the mail.¹⁵ He believed that obscenity was the greatest corrupter in society, and bullied his way into having others conform to this notion. However, as Victorian values began to lose appeal at the turn of the century, so too did Comstock’s support.¹⁶ He is long considered to be the most zealous opponent of pornography in modern history, and his record did indeed limit much pornography at the time.

The turn of the 20th century marked changes in American values, and new avenues existed for these values to be represented. As mentioned previously, *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson* (1952) decided that both First and Fourteenth Amendment rights were protected in cinema, greatly reducing censorship in Hollywood. In the 1960s and 70s, obscenity law was regularly challenged, and *Miller vs. California* was arguably the most influential decision in pornographic history. It constructed a test to determine what was obscene, (as obscene material was and still is not protected by the First Amendment), which includes:

“(a) whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest, (b) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law, and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.”¹⁷

Pornographers often refer to the “Miller Test” to make sure that their material falls within these guidelines. These cases set the legal stage for pornography and its popularity, and thus for the future categories of Stars, Generics, and Amateurs, to emerge as viable entities.

Although *Miller vs. California* occurred in 1973, stag films, as mentioned before, existed despite the legal blockade to their production. They were short films, usually under 15 minutes, “smuggled into towns by travelling salesmen for bachelor parties, military events, college fraternities and other exclusively male ‘smoker’ events,” as well as brothels.¹⁸ The vast majority of the films were not domestic, usually originating in Latin America, France, and Germany. The first American stag film was *A Free Ride*, (also known as *A Grass Sandwich*), a silent film with one male and two females, all unknown.¹⁹ I posit that this illustrates a detachment to the actual *actors* and *actresses*, unlike today, in lieu of an attachment to the novel idea of a *sex act* available for viewing. In addition to stag films, “beaver” movies displayed women stripping and doing “split beavers,” (spreading their legs), and often depicted soft-core lesbian scenes.²⁰ Neither the more popular stag films nor “beaver” movies achieved anything close to mainstream popularity, and were relegated to the underground world at the time. Thus, the actors in the films were obscured as well until these modes went out of date in the 1970s.

Mainstreaming, however, was synonymous with another form of pornography towards the mid-end of the era of stag films: soft-core porn, as defined earlier. *Playboy* was an overnight success, started in 1953 by the scandalously famous Hugh Hefner. Emerging in the era of *Leave it to Beaver* family ideals, *Playboy* touted anti-marriage by celebrating white upper middle-class bachelor life, something the 1950s male dreamed, or was supposed to dream, of.²¹ He insisted on “tasteful” pictures of women as well as employing top writers to boost its appeal of classiness as a lifestyle magazine. This allowed him to carefully construct his reader: the playboy, as described by Hefner in the April 1956 issue: “he must

see life not as a vale of tears, but as a happy time, he must take joy in his work, without regarding it as the end of living; he must be an alert man, a man of taste, a man sensitive to pleasure, a man who-without acquiring a stigma of voluptuary or dilettante-can live life to the hilt. This is the sort of man we mean when we use the word playboy.”²² A playboy, according to the magazine, was the ideal of what a man should be at the time, and thus entered mainstream status. This was further emphasized by the fact that one of the most famous actresses at the time, Marilyn Monroe, was the first to appear on the cover. Although hardly a pornographic actress based on her *Playboy* appearance, she epitomized the ideal sexuality of whiteness, blondeness, youth, heterosexuality, and beauty, and served as an example to the mainstream for the first time in a pornographic way. The message did not go unnoticed.

In August of 1971, *Playboy*’s readership was up to 7 million, in addition to competitor *Penthouse*’s emergence into the market in 1965 with a 4 million readers, exemplifying soft-core pornography’s solid grip on the mainstream.²³ Larry Flynt’s *Hustler* began in 1974 to start the mainstream hard-core pornography magazine business, and was the “first nationally distributed magazine to show pink.”²⁴ The *Hustler* ideal reader was far different than that of *Playboy*, but still appealed to the mainstream. The reader was not presented as the “ideal” of American men, but rather the “average.” Flynt presented the magazine as working class, and *Hustler* often includes images of overweight, middle-aged, shabbily-dressed white males, representing their ideal reader.²⁵ *Playboy*’s soft-core, (and ability to depict it as classy), paved the way for the hard-core *Hustler*. The two, with both sets of ideal readers, allowed for print pornography to achieve incredible popularity and mainstream success.

Print pornography was the small stepping stone, coupled with the underground stag film scene, for the first mainstream success of a pornographic film, and of the first porn Star: Linda Lovelace. *Deep Throat*, featuring Lovelace was shown in theaters and ushered an era of “porn chic.”²⁶ It opened the door to audiences that might not have gone to a porn film. Upon its release, Richard Corliss, of *Film Comment*, writes “for almost forty years the History of Sex in the American Talkie Cinema followed a curve of permissiveness so imperceptible that it could easily have been mistaken for a comma in the puritanical Production Code.”²⁷ The movie was revolutionary. To explain this revolution, it is necessary to explain Linda Lovelace.

Linda Susan Boreman, known as Linda Lovelace, entered pornography through a series of rather tragic events. She grew up in upstate New York, went to Catholic school, and moved to Florida with her parents at age sixteen. At age 20 she got pregnant and her mother tricked her into giving up her child for adoption, as she thought she was signing temporary foster papers.²⁸ Heartbroken, she moved back to New York, got in a car accident, and returned to Florida, more vulnerable than when she had left. She met the man that would bring her into porn- Chuck Traynor- on the beach, and began an abusive relationship-turned-marriage with the 33-year-old at age 21. He was running a topless bar at the time, and pimped many of the women who worked there, recruiting the naïve and broken Lovelace to do the same. He had complete control over her, and she cites in her True Hollywood Story

interview how he had he pimped her out and had her gang-raped in a hotel room. Author of *The Complete Linda Lovelace* Eric Danville explains that Chuck “was really sort of setting her up to see how long he could push her and how long she could stay with him.”

Linda says that “he decided that movie making was his next step,” and so, to, was hers.²⁹ Chuck took Linda to New York to get more sex work for her, and in the 1960s, for the first time a large number of pornographers were shooting hardcore sex scenes on 8 mm film. Cinema historian Nicola Simpson attributes this to the introduction of the birth control pill, the ensuing sexual revolution, and easier access to illicit drugs as Baby Boomers moved into adulthood.³⁰ Although easing the popularity of films, Linda claimed that she “didn’t know women didn’t do all this,” meaning act in pornography at the whims of their husbands, since she was so immersed in it, as well as brainwashed. She was playing a role, according to Danville, that saved her from being beaten by Chuck.³¹ By age 22, Lovelace was a porn actress, star of several seedy films, although because of the lack of mainstreaming, she would hardly qualify as a Generic by today’s definition.

Director Gerard Damiano, though, thought differently after seeing her films. Chuck Traynor explained that Damiano approached him with the idea and “he had kind of a script and he wished he had another gimmick to put in the film, and I came up with the Deep Throat idea.”³² *Deep Throat*’s premise was that Linda was unable to orgasm through sex, and upon visiting a doctor, discovered that her clitoris was in the back of her throat and could only achieve orgasm by “deep throating” her male counterpart’s penis, (as well as many different sex acts depicted in the film). This would be one of the first pornographic films with a story, a soundtrack, and a pretense that this film was like other films. She was paid \$100 a day-receiving \$1,200 total- that Chuck immediately took from her. She said that she had “no clue this was gonna be on the big screen,” as she was living in a world where pornography was not mainstream. After a glorious review in *Screw* magazine by Al Goldstein, claiming that it was the best porn film ever made, *Deep Throat* had unprecedented success.

According to former porn star William Margold, “when *Deep Throat* opened in 1972, it ushered in a whole new wave of mainstream acceptability for the X-rated industry. This [points to Lovelace on *Deep Throat* poster] could be considered the jazz singer of the entertainment industry because boy you haven’t seen anything yet!”³³ Another former porn star, Gloria Leonard, says that she saw the film as “an ordinary housewife, married, living, in all places, Minnesota, [and] went with a gal [she] worked with....[They] actually stood in line to see this movie!”³⁴ The movie, although not great by today’s standards, captured the popular social sexual trends and epitomized them as the movie burst into popularity, and so did Lovelace. She was invited by Hugh Hefner to do a photo shoot, staying at his mansion. She met Clint Eastwood and became friends with Sammy Davis, Jr. Being a box office success, staying with a cultural icon per his invitation, and having celebrity friends all certainly qualified Lovelace to become the first Porn Star in its true definition of the word. She embodied mainstream sexuality, the first time for a porn actress to do so,

and thus set the stage for the modern distinctions of Porn Star vs. Generic vs. Amateur.

Although achieving mainstream success on the big screen, pornographic films were even more successful with the coming of the VCR in 1977, and as writer John Heiderny of *What Wild Ecstasy* claims that it was “the most significant event in adult-film history and, along with *Deep Throat*, the impetus for a revolution in hard-core pornography.”³⁵ It allowed for anonymity and accessibility, as people could watch porn from the privacy of their own home. By the end of the 1980s, 40% of all VCR owners polled claimed to have watched a pornographic videocassette within the past year, an astounding statistic by any means.³⁶ Despite its overwhelming success, in the 1970s and early 80s, pornography was still illegal to make in California, (although people still did so), under the umbrella of prostitution. However, in 1986, convicted producer Harold Freeman appealed his pimping charge and the Supreme Court of California claimed that he did not violate prostitution laws, thus legally distinguishing prostitution from pornography.³⁷ This essentially legalized pornography production in the state of California, and the industry sprouted overnight in the San Fernando Valley, as California was the only state to make such distinctions.

Production studios, now allowed legal status, emerged and worked like the studio system of Hollywood prior to the 1960s. They employed the star system, where particular studios signed actresses to contracts to produce 6-8 movies a year. Jenna Jameson’s autobiography *How To Make Love Like a Porn Star: A Cautionary Tale* includes a copy of a sample contract, which stipulates, “The Company will feature the Talent in at least six (6) features each year and may increase this number eased on marketing.” Jenna was to be paid a “monthly compensation of \$3,000 paid on the first day of each month” in her one-year contract,” as well as receive compensation depending on the extremity of the scene.³⁸ This allowed for studios to pour money into promoting not just their films, but also the stars, and by keeping the stars under contract, the money came directly back to the studio.

Now that we can see the changes within law, politics, and sexuality in American culture, we have the historical context that lays a backdrop of the pornography industry. We are living in a unique historical moment where pornography, and thus the actors in it, have become mainstream. The question remains, though, as to who can make it to the Star level, receiving mainstream status, and who cannot.

To read the full version of this paper, please see the digital version of ARCHIVE 2013, available at uwarchive.wordpress.com.

Notes:

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2. Ibid, page 65.
3. "The History of Modern Pornography," accessed March 13, 2012, www.pornography-history.com.
4. Ibid.
5. "New-York City." *New York Daily Times (1851-1857)*, Feb 01, 1855. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/docview/95852349?accountid=465>.
6. See "Venders of Obscene Publications." *New York Daily Times (1851-1857)*, Aug 13, 1856. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/docview/95885175?accountid=465>; «Burning Obscene Books.» *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Sep 22, 1857. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/docview/91409712?accountid=465>; «A Moral Spasm.» *New York Daily Times (1851-1857)*, Oct 20, 1856. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/docview/95908323?accountid=465>.
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8. Leslie Gale Parr. 2011. "E.J. Bellocq." *KnowLA Encyclopedia of Louisiana*: <http://www.knowla.org/entry.php?rec=477> (accessed May 4, 2012)
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11. *Mutual Film Corp. v. Industrial Commission of Ohio*, 236 U.S. 230 (1915).
12. Slade, page 101.
13. *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson, Commissioner of Education of New York, et al.*, 343 U.S. 495 (1952).
14. Slade, page 170.
15. "The Suppression of Vice." *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Jan 01, 1876. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/docview/93531971?accountid=465>.
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24. Flynt, Larry, *Hustler*, 1984.
25. Dines, page 16.
26. Nicola Simpson, "Coming Attractions: A Comparative History of the Hollywood Studio System and the Porn Business." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 24, no. 4 (2004): 635-652., page 644.
27. Richard Corliss, "Cinema Sex: From 'The Kiss' to 'Deep Throat'," January/February 1973: 9 (1), page 4.
28. "'Linda Lovelace' from True Hollywood Story 1/3," November 5, 2000, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4950TrQ83A>, accessed May 3, 2012, YouTube. [Part 2/3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrqKvdk7Q-8>, Part 3/3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liEcEu0XF8w>]
29. Ibid.
30. Simpson, page 643.
31. "'Linda Lovelace' from True Hollywood Story 1/3," November 5, 2000, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4950TrQ83A>, accessed May 3, 2012, YouTube.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. John Heidenry, *What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution*. New York, NY: Simon Schuster, 1997.
36. Ibid, page 213.
37. *California v. Freeman*, 488 U.S. 1311 (1989).
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Film Perspectives

Through the publishing of this journal, the Editorial Board of ARCHIVE wishes to provide a space where our fellow students of history can contribute to this conversation through their own imaginings of the past. One student contributor, Alexandra Schmidt, has chosen to use the highly accessible medium of film as a lens through which to observe this process of imagining history. What follows is a thought piece collectively authored by the editors that allows us to further explore the role of films and film-makers in the popular imagining of history.



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Whose History Is It Anyway?:
Constructing a Multi-Faceted Perception of the American 1950s

Alexandra E. Schmidt

Alexandra graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in December 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in cultural anthropology and certificates in gender and women's studies, LGBT studies, and European studies. This paper, written for Gender and Women's Studies 310, Questions in Sexuality in Culture, in fall 2011, looks at the film Pleasantville through a historical lens.

While it is not difficult to view Gary Ross' 1998 film *Pleasantville* as subversive, the film's depiction of the disintegration of halcyon 1950s America can be seen as evidence of the careful pruning of the decade's social construction and history, as well as a sign of the subjectivity of "history" in general. In "Fear and Loathing in Postwar Hollywood," Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin note that in the turbulent years after World War II, social norms were strictly enforced in order to ease anxiety about differences between people.¹ This explains the nostalgia that taints the popular history of 1950s America, which can be seen in the film. Additionally, in "Forget Stonewall: Making Gay History Perfectly Queer," Thomas Piontek argues that such a nostalgic, homogenizing view of any era is due to an incomplete representation of history.² What we consider our "history" is truly subjective, as demonstrated by the stereotypical social construction of the 1950s and its subsequent deconstruction in the film *Pleasantville*.

In *Pleasantville*, director Gary Ross takes the audience back in time to the idyllic 1950s of American lore via a supernatural trick. The protagonists of the film, two modern teenage siblings named Jennifer and David, become trapped inside David's favorite TV show. With seemingly no options to return to their real lives, they must accept their new reality as high school students in the town of Pleasantville. The town is a nostalgic caricature of the American 1950s: cheery retro songs fill the soundtrack, the temperature is eternally a pleasant 72 degrees, and there is no social conflict whatsoever because everyone is happy and fulfilled.³ This "conformity to a white, middle-class, heterosexual, jingoistic American norm became a national obsession" in the 1950s.⁴ But is that all there is to Pleasantville (and the American 1950s)—the perfect town filled with perfect families and perfect people? According to Piontek, this idealistic writing of a master history is just that—a narrative constructed by the authors of mainstream "history:" white, middle- to upper-class, heterosexual men.⁵

The entire film occupies itself with deconstructing this pleasant, nostalgic fiction of the American 1950s; however, the scene in *Pleasantville* that most represents the pinnacle of social and historical deconstruction occurs when the townsfolk discover the nude painting of Betty Parker hanging in the soda shop. The significance is that the nudity—and female, erotic nudity at that—symbolizes the initial stripping away of the strictly enforced social mask of 1950s America, as highlighted by Benshoff and Griffin.⁶ The last layers of the metaphorical onion are being peeled back, and the townsfolk, like the film's audience, are forced to confront the unpleasantness of reality. The 1950s—and, indeed, every era—were not as they appeared. Despite strict social policing, the enforcement of idealized norms, and the complete historical whitewashing of any social factor that would be capable of chipping away at that ideal, the halcyon image of the 1950s and the town of Pleasantville itself were not and are not able to withstand deeper scrutiny.

When we look deeper into this moment of historical reconstruction, we can see what Piontek refers to as the "queering" of history, which recognizes "the impossibility of offering a singular interpretation of any particular event."⁷ Piontek calls for historical

narrative restructuring in addition to greater historical representation of minorities in order for us all to see something closer to true history than what we normally find in the illusive master history.⁸ Betty's nude painting represents such a plethora of hidden histories, both for the townsfolk and for actual 1950s America. The difference is that, until Jennifer and David were sucked into the Pleasantville TV show, the citizens of this town were actually unaware of their own diverse viewpoints and desires, unlike real people living in the 1950s. However, the film characters represent the physical and psychological embodiment of the cultural homogenization that Americans faced in the 1950s. Watching the townsfolk develop the desires that color their world is watching the social mask of the 1950s be ripped away.

As we can see from the nude painting of Betty Parker, women can be not only erotic, but erotic in ways that do not involve their husbands. This newfound depiction of female sexuality and of an adulterous threat to the institution of heterosexual marriage brings havoc to Pleasantville. Riots break out in the street, people smash store windows, teens have sex, racial discrimination and segregation emerges, and Betty is sexually harassed in the street by a group of young men.⁹ All of this occurs because Betty's nude portrait rips the pretty mask off of the conformist culture, and the seething underbelly of society terrifies the residents of the town. They do not know how to handle things that make them uncomfortable, things that cause them unpleasant feelings and threaten to destroy the narrative they have written about themselves. While exposing non-sanctioned views of history will certainly not always be a comfortable experience, revealing the true colors of history is more significant to the further development of humanity than maintaining the comfortable, "pleasant" history that caters to white, middle-class, heterosexual men.

Finally, there is something to be said about the fact that in the film, the very last citizens of Pleasantville to be changed to vivid color are the men. The town fathers remain unchanged the longest, and during the time of disruption and chaos in the town, they become the protectors and enforcers of the status quo. They desperately try to reinforce the old norms, as when George Parker instructs Betty, his wife, to cover up her newly colorful skin with gray makeup.¹⁰ The white, straight, middle-class men in the film are acting just as the men who have written our own history—they are trying to preserve what is most comfortable to them, even if it is not the full truth.

The 1950s have been—and often still are—just as terribly misrepresented as the black and white town of Pleasantville is in the beginning of the film. In addition to being victim to the standard telling of the historical narrative through the eyes of straight, white, well-off men, the one-sided story of this decade is compounded by the culture of conformity enforced as a form of self-protection against the uncertainty of the times. Though Benshoff and Griffin explain the reasoning behind the near unprecedented social strictness of the decade,¹¹ it still does not make the erasure of unsanctioned lifestyles acceptable. As Piontek so aptly states, "historical events (and memories of them) imbue the present with meaning,"¹² so the narratives with which we represent ourselves and our

past must be changed in order to change the present and decentralize our view of history.

The progressive change of the town of Pleasantville to vivid color, rather than shades of black, white, and gray, not only represents the characters' newly unfolding lives but also serves as a cue for the audience to color our own world with new understandings of history. To accept the simple shades-of-gray history as we currently know it is to be blind to the spectrum of truths that have always and will always constitute the human experience. History does not belong solely to white, heterosexual, middle-class men, and it is well past time for us to rip apart the "objective" historical narrative and reconstruct it in the plural to better suit reality.

Notes:

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Portrayals of Lincoln in Film:
The Idea of a Secular Saint

ARCHIVE Editorial Board

One simply cannot deny the popular fascination with Abraham Lincoln. With over 15,000 books written about the United States' 16th president, the position he occupies in American historical memory is unchallenged in its primacy.¹ But Lincoln goes beyond being the focus of multitudes of written works: Steven Spielberg's 2012 production of *Lincoln* places him at the center of a feature film.² This is not unprecedented. Several films released in the late 1930s and early 1940s, including *Young Mr. Lincoln*, *Lincoln in the White House* and *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, similarly cast Lincoln as their main character.³ Though differentiated by both the date of their release as well as their content, *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939) and *Lincoln* (2012) together provide an opportunity to analyze how Abraham Lincoln as a character in film has represented—and continues to represent—Americans' conception of a man of near-mythic stature.

In collective historical memory, it is common that certain figures stand out as exceptional among their peers. As those in the present age look back on the past, such historical figures are frequently placed upon a pedestal and idealized. In the United States, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other members of the founding generation are consistently placed in such a position. The legacy of their rhetoric is constantly invoked in public discourse as a shining example all should strive to emulate. Oftentimes such idealization can envelop these individuals in myth, making them out to be more than mere mortals and fostering what scholars sometimes refer to as secular sainthood. Abraham Lincoln is perhaps the most prominent example of this phenomenon in American historical memory. The two films analyzed here, for better or worse, both propagate this idea of a mythical Lincoln, whom many remember as the perfectly enlightened statesman.

“Lincoln is theology, not historiology. He is a faith, he is a church, he is a religion...”⁴ Perhaps author Lerone Bennett, Jr. comes close to the truth of how representations and perceptions of Lincoln elevate an ordinary man to semi-divine status. Several images in *Lincoln* toe the line between the godly and the mortal. The scene of Lincoln's deathbed is particularly striking: in a fashion that evokes the style and form of Renaissance-era paintings depicting Christ in the ‘Descent from the Cross’ tradition, the president is shown clad in white with a shaft of sunlight landing squarely on his limp form.⁵ Those surrounding Lincoln have looks of anguish on their faces similar to the individuals gathered around Christ's body. In both instances, the meaning is clear: their leader has been lost. Upon the announcement of Lincoln's death, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton says, “Now he belongs to the ages.” Though the line has dubious historical origins, its implications for the film are more significant: the words render Lincoln a man unmoored from his time on earth. In one sentence, he becomes an enduring symbol, a secular saint.

Young Mr. Lincoln contributes to the man's secular sainthood in a different tenor due to the film's pre-presidential chronology. Instead of focusing on Lincoln as the “Great Emancipator,” the film shows him as a young lawyer with an emerging sense of the absolute. At several points in the film the young Lincoln states: “That's all there

is to it—right and wrong,” or some variant thereof. Perhaps the most telling of these assertions follows his reading of Sir William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England*; the matter-of-fact manner in which this belief crystallizes in Lincoln’s mind represents the early manifestation of the ideal statesman coming to be. Indeed, as the film’s final scene fades to a view of the Lincoln Memorial, the viewer is left with the sense that the man’s judgment had foundations in an unequivocal understanding of the law—in both its legal and moral definitions. As such, Lincoln is cast as a man of absolute, infallible reasoning, pushing him even further into the realm of the divine.

However, holding Lincoln in such high regard makes it nearly impossible for the average person to relate to him. To fashion him as an accessible figure, attempts have been made to place Lincoln within two irreconcilable frameworks that often articulate his memory in confusing and contradictory terms. He is viewed simultaneously as both a man *of* the people and a man *above* the people. In a speech commemorating Lincoln’s centennial birthday, President Woodrow Wilson referred to him as both a “man with his rootage deep among the people” and as a man “lifted above the narrowness and limitations of the view of the mass.”⁶ This contradictory understanding of Lincoln is quite evident in *Young Mr. Lincoln*. Throughout the film, Lincoln is shown as down to earth, yet above the rest. He is humble, clever and very funny. This portrayal becomes problematic, however, when “Honest Abe” cheats at tug-of-war. Though it is clearly an effort to humanize him, this deviation of character seems artificial and uncomfortable because Lincoln is so fiercely remembered as being above such base trickery.

Looking only at the textual prologue to *Young Mr. Lincoln*, one can again see these contradictory understandings in conflict. Written by Rosemary Benét in 1933, the poem imagines the questions Lincoln’s deceased mother might have regarding her son’s life:

*If Nancy Hanks
Came back as a ghost
Seeking news
Of what she loved most,
She’d ask first,
‘Where’s my son?
What’s happened to Abe?
What’s he done?
You wouldn’t know
About my son?
Did he grow tall?
Did he have fun?
Did he learn to read?*

*Did he get to town?
Do you know his name?
Did he get on?’*

The poem is not written about Abraham Lincoln, the “Great Emancipator;” rather it is written about Abe, son of Nancy Hanks. Such a perspective deeply humanizes Lincoln as the mere son of a loving mother. However, as proposed by J.E. Smyth in her essay *Young Mr. Lincoln: Between Myth and History in 1939*, it is significant that only the questions are provided, but not the answers. Because viewers are familiar with Lincoln’s future, the questions take on greater meaning, the answers become monumental, and the figure is further mythicized.

In Spielberg’s *Lincoln*, the title character is humanized in different ways. His humanity is highlighted by contrasting major moments of supreme political leadership with moments of seemingly mundane humanness, which frequently come in the form of Lincoln’s stories. Before every major decision, Lincoln tells the people in the room to quiet down so he can tell them a story. Throughout the film, there is a progression to Lincoln’s humanity. As the situation in *Lincoln* becomes more crucial, Lincoln simultaneously becomes more mythical through his political maneuvering but also more human through his increasingly frequent storytelling. Lincoln’s mythical portrayal is temporarily betrayed when he finally loses his patience with his wife, Mary Todd. Lincoln expresses an inhuman amount of patience with her throughout the film and when he has finally had enough, it is almost a relief because his expression of anger makes him a figure with whom one can so easily sympathize.

In both films, Lincoln is the undeniable focal point, the centerpiece around which events revolve. One of the effects of filming in this fashion is that other applicable social issues are largely ignored. The abolition of slavery through the passing of the 13th Amendment is the cornerstone of *Lincoln*’s plot, and yet all African American characters in the film take on a certain docile, subservient role that robs them of their ability to be viewed as agents of change. The two most prominent African American characters, Elizabeth Keckley and the president’s butler, are both set in servant’s positions; prominent black abolitionists are nowhere to be found. Perhaps the creators of the film thought including a figure such as Frederick Douglass, one with such an influence on American history, would detract too much from Lincoln as the focal point and hero of the story. Though the institution of slavery plays a much lesser role in the plot of *Young Mr. Lincoln*’s, an African American presence is conspicuous in its complete absence. With over seventy years between the two works, it is disappointing that neither film satisfactorily addresses the issue of race at this crucial time in American history.

The two films’ portrayals of gender relations are similarly problematic. In *Young Mr. Lincoln*, Lincoln goes out of his way to visit the defendants’ home and take care of the women there after the two brothers are arrested. The young Lincoln chops wood and

comforts the distraught women in such a way that makes it seem as if the women could not possibly get on without his help: the help of a man. After he concludes his work, Lincoln perpetuates gender stereotypes by requesting that one of the girls prepare him dinner. The women are portrayed as dependent and delighted to serve. More than seventy years later, in *Lincoln*, women are still portrayed in an antiquated fashion. While it is true that *Lincoln* focuses on a nineteenth century legislature that traditionally barred women, it is also true that the woman most portrayed, Mary Todd, is almost exclusively portrayed as hysterical. She is shown as a burden that Lincoln must overcome and Mary Todd herself even laments the fact that history will remember her as having held him back. Both films sadly represent the women in Lincoln's life as entirely dependent upon him.

Though the two films do have their differences, it is eerie to think that they might be more similar than they are different. As a medium, film has become an increasingly viable vehicle for deriving popular histories and can have significant effects upon commonly held memories of important figures, events, and ideas. In both *Young Mr. Lincoln* and *Lincoln*, one can see the consistent dichotomy of "Honest Abe" as both human and myth, as one of the people but also a secular saint. However, through continuing this glorified memory of Lincoln, the lingering traces of both race and gender inequality remain. If films serve as representations of the times and the societies in which they were created, one must question the ways in which these films address the unglamorous histories of marginalized populations. Admittedly, these films were intended to tell the story of Lincoln—the man, the myth, the legend himself—as well as to tell the story of the vital role he played in a time of such dramatic change in the history of this nation. But that being said, one must not forget those histories that are not glorified nor ignore the implications of relegating such issues to positions of secondary importance.

Notes:

1. "Best Books (And Surprising Insights) On Lincoln." Accessed 4/19/13 11:34 am. "http://www.npr.org/2012/04/10/149871122/best-books-and-surprising-insights-on-lincoln. "Lincoln Book Tower." Accessed 4/19/13 11:35 am. <http://www.fordstheatre.org/home/explore-lincoln/lincoln-book-tower>.
2. *Lincoln*, directed by Steven Spielberg, 2012.
3. *Young Mr. Lincoln*, directed by John Ford, 1939. *Lincoln in the White House* directed by William C. McGann, 1939. *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* directed by John Cromwell, 1940.
4. Lerone, Bennett. *Forced into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream*. (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, 2000), 114.
5. For examples see: Rogier van der Weyden, *The Descent from the Cross* and Peter Paul Rubens, *The Deposition*.
6. Eyal J. Naveh. *Crown of Thorns: Political Martyrdom in American from Abraham Lincoln to Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 54.