

THE GRIOT: The Journal of African American Studies
Volume 36 Number 2 Fall 2017

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IN ANCIENT AFRICA...
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The Intersectionality of Black Women's Sexuality from Film to Reality TV

April D. Lundy

Abstract

American racism is reflected in the motion picture portrayal of the Black woman. Sexual myths about Black women and stereotypes have supported the American political system since the days of slavery and film has been utilized as an apparatus to psychologically transmute and disseminate racist and sexist ideologies. This paper explicates the mythic, stereotypical imagery of Black women's sexuality in film and traces the evolution of these depictions to the intersection of film and reality TV. Depictions of Black women's sexuality in reality television continue a legacy of mythical and demoralizing stereotypes that appear to be fundamental to the maintenance of a racially stratified order in America.

Keywords: Black female sexuality; Reality TV; Film; Stereotypes

As a Black woman with a voracious appetite for media and who has worked behind the scenes in film and television for over 25 years, I have consumed a plethora of moving image content, much of it relegating Black women to stereotypical depictions. I have also been a participant in the production of some of those depictions. Producing and directing independent feature films, commercials, music videos, and reality television programming has afforded me an experience that has resulted in what I consider a holistic understanding of the impact and function of moving image media. Thus, I am now acutely aware of film and television as institutions which utilize imagery as an apparatus that has historically served to maintain the status quo within the American political system.

During the latter stage of my days as a music video producer, in the 1990's, I was struck by an epiphany one day that began my awakening and changed the trajectory of my professional career. While on the set of a very urban rap music video I was producing, sitting on a vintage Chevy Impala I had secured as a prop for the video, I read more closely than usual the contract between the production company I owned and the major record label when I came across a clause that mandated I deliver, above all other elements mentioned in the music video *treatment*, "vintage cars and video girls" in the final cut of the music video. This mandate shocked me and illuminated how the label executives had relegated the girls performing in the video to merely props, equal in value to the vintage cars. Further, the implication was that the record label not only sanctioned the objectification of these girls, they mandated it. Predictably, these girls were Black.

As I sat and reflected, I had not thought much of those girls myself as a music video producer. I rarely paid them and if I did, it was miniscule. They seemed to always show up in droves to casting calls and video sets ready and eager to perform for free in hope of the opportunity to meet a rapper or to attempt to jump start an acting career. They were always willing to sit on set all day and night, most times quietly waiting for their moment to dance behind (or on) some rap artist or to serve as decoration dripping off of a male artist like a piece of his jewelry, or just to stand still like a pretty object in the backdrop of a performance setting. I wondered, had I dehumanized these women like the record label?

As a very young, Black female producer producing content through my own full service production company, I had been proud of my ability to secure commissioned film work from major record labels for popular rap and hip hop artists. However, I had been a very naive participant in the production of stereotypical and degrading depictions of my own people, more specifically young Black women. Further, I had been naive to the politics of the game. Sitting there in the midst of those rappers that day, animated as they performed inside the vintage cars, flanked by music video chicks twerking on the hoods of the cars, I was struck for the first time consciously and intellectually by the systematic objectification of the Black female body.

American racism has been reflected in depictions of Black women in film and television for centuries. Just a cursory look at the history of the image of the Black woman conjures a host of demormalized, mythical and stereotypical character types pigeonholed by phrases such as sapphire, jezebel, tragic, angry, and ratchet. Even the language in classic Black films conspired to relegate the Black woman's nature and chain her to the earth by likening her to its qualities—charcoal blossom, dusky dame, or to its animals – foxy, chick, or filly.¹

This essay traces the evolution of the mythic, stereotypical imagery of the Black woman's sexuality to the intersection of cinema and reality television revealing a continued legacy of racial determinism that is wedded to the maintenance of power within the American political system. These stereotypical depictions of Black women have historically been used as a powerful apparatus for propaganda and the maintenance of the status quo by defining Black female sexuality in White terms. The image of the Black woman discussed here is the oversexed, depreciated sex object, historically in cinema referred to a jezebel or mulatto; now currently referred to in reality television as a "thot." Since these stereotypes symbolize system sanctioned degradation, the power holders are, not only free to, but encouraged to exploit the Black woman on economic, personal and social basis, without incurring cost to their power position, status, conscience, or material well-being.²

Since the inception of cinema, the silver screen has consistently presented grossly distorted, patriarchal visions of the Black woman. From D. W. Griffith's

1915 film *Birth of A Nation*, released by the David W. Griffith Corporation, onward, the character, morals and physical stature of Black women have been maligned by cinema.³ These stereotypes continued to function hegemonically with the advent of television, resulting in the recycling of imagery and their implications of racial inferiority that today's television content has inherited.

The belief that Blacks are sexually lewd and insatiable predates American slavery. European explorers were fascinated by African sexuality when they arrived in Africa. They found the scantily clad natives and their tribal rituals proof of an uncontrolled sexual lust.⁴ Dutch Sea Captain, Willem Bosman described women on the coast of Guinea as "fiery, warm, and so much hotter than the men."⁵ From Europe to North America, the Black female body has been degraded to the status of less than cattle - from the slave block where they were publically degraded, inspected, sexually desired and sold to the highest bidder, to the plantation where they became the objects of their new master's desires.⁶ The legacy of this degradation is manifested in the mythical, oversexed stereotypical images associated with Black women in film and television that can be traced throughout history.

In the twenty-first century, the emergence of new television genres and formats give rise to even more graphic, demoralized portrayals of Black female sexuality, and the reality television genre in particular has further pigeonholed and maligned depictions of Black female sexuality. Reality television adds tremendously to a complex continuum of female racial stereotypes that are fundamental to the maintenance of the racially stratified order within the American political system which is founded on racial oppression and organized on the caste principle.

The Mythical Construction of Black Female Sexuality

The mythical construction of Black female sexuality was cemented during slavery in America. Looking at this construction over time reveals a pattern of patriarchal phases and female sexual adjustments that have no equivalent in the history of White women in the United States.⁷ Historically, White women have been depicted as the true definition of womanhood. In the mid-nineteenth century they were characterized as ladies who exercised purity of conduct and manners. Conversely, the Black slave woman was commonly referred to as "wench." She was deemed the antithesis of pure, mannerable and ladylike. She was used as a tool to strengthen the plantation economy, yet to also weaken slave family dynamics.

The White man's appropriation of the slave woman's body weakened the slave man and further undermined the community. Author of the 1965 study, *Sex and Racism in America*, sociologist Calvin Hernton contends:

It has been the Negro woman, more than anyone else, who has borne the constant agonies of racial barbarity in America, from

the very first day she was brought in chains to this soil. The Negro woman through the years has suffered (and endured) every sexual outrage (with all the psychological ramifications) that a "demoncratic" society can possibly inflict upon a human being.⁸

The "race philosophy" during slavery dictated that Black people (Africans) were wild savage creatures without souls and Black women were dehumanized in the minds of the White slave masters who forced themselves on these women for erotic sexual pleasure and to breed more slaves. Black women were forced to give up their bodies to White men at random. In *Mind of the South*, W. J. Cash writes:

The Negro woman...torn from her tribal *restraints* and *taught* an easy compliance for commerical reasons, was to be had for the taking. Boys on and about the plantation inevitably learned to use her, and having acquired the habit, often continued it into manhood and even after marriage.⁹

Racial survival during slavery meant resistance, and Black women were hung, slaughtered, beaten and burned for this resistance.

The White man's abuse of the Black woman during slavery was a symbolic blow to Black manhood. This abuse was understood as rape only in the Black community. During Reconstruction, the increase in sexual violation of Black women fully revealed its implications. The rape was a "message" to the Black man as a "reaction to the effort of the freedman to assume the role of patriarch, able to provide for and protect his family."¹⁰ This effort would also ensure that the Black man would eventually demand his full rights and equality in America, which would upset the political economic structure that had been built on the backs of the Black slaves. Racist myths continued to evolve out of these savage acts inflicted on Blacks.

The word myth signifies a belief commonly held by a large group of people. These beliefs give events and actions a particular meaning. Myths are "socially cued rather than empirically based."¹¹ This definition suggests that myths are utilized in "establishing boundaries of power."¹² Most often myths are ill-founded beliefs that uncritically support and provide for the security and stability of those who hold wealth and status. In The German Ideology Marx and Engels refer to these type of "erroneous and distorted" beliefs and ideas as "ideologies."¹³ Their contention is that ideology is caused by the mode of production, or in other words the economic structure of a society.

Myths support every political system, although some are more dominant than others, myths associated with racial identity are predominant in the United States and they give birth to a caste system."¹⁴ The caste system is synonymous with the traditional Marxist account of ideology serving purely as an economic

cause. Marxists contend that "ideology is performed most effectively by making the system seem natural, God-given, or ideal, so that the subordinate classes accept it without question."¹⁵ The caste system preserves the status and privileges of the "myth beneficiaries" and it is "designed to freeze various levels of status, opportunity and privilege in a society."¹⁶ This point is substantiated by Liston Popes's statement that "inherited inescapable biological characteristics, whether physical, mental or both are ascribed to the various castes and there is generally some notion of untouchability."¹⁷ Hence, upper level castes were able to use myths of Black sexuality and racial determinism as tools to maintain their untouchable status by disseminating and embedding their dominant ideology.

Marxist theorist Louis Althusser developed a theory of ideology in which he emphasized the existence of ideology as embodied in the structures and institutions of society. Althusser's approach to ideology reveals how moving image content such as cinema and television have the ability to operate as institutions that are fully capable of disseminating "socially motivated" beliefs and ideas, and has done so since *Birth of a Nation*. Since in this view, social structures are dependent on economic structures, the term 'socially motivated' relates ideology to economics.¹⁸

According to Althusser, "ideology has a purely economic cause and the function of ideology is the perpetuation of the socio-economic system."¹⁹ He introduced the notion of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) in which the state or any reproduction of the dominant interest, is maintained by covert force. This ideological dominance is "seen mostly in the institutions of religion, education, the parliamentary system, and the mass media."²⁰ In accordance with this position, film and television serve the function of reproducing distorted myths in the interest of the dominant class. The political implications of the mythical images of the Black woman in both film and television cannot be fully understood without noting the role that the racial caste system has played in maintaining the economic structure in America. According to Mae King in "The Politics of Sexual Stereotypes:

The racial caste system defines the role (i.e., social activities) of black women as inferior to that of white women. This definition reflects the racist norms (i.e., customs) of America, and the black female stereotypes are employed to help ensure mass conformity to these norms by all components of the caste system. Families, schools, churches, corporations, (i.e., institutions) have all institutionalized these norms.²¹

To upset the equilibrium of the socio-economic structure, i.e. ideas, customs, institutions, or social activities, would substantially disorient the racial norm and threaten the entire American system of which is based on racial determinism.

Stating the obvious, American White males have generally constituted the

ruling class or dominant ideology within the upper and lower castes. The caste order they control and serve has generated a variety of images and symbols depicting members of the lower caste both male and female as inferiors and undesirables, who of course, are harmless as long as they "stay in their place."²² The metaphorical language, such as myths and images, used by the ruling class function to simplify and give meaning to otherwise complex observations and experiences. A result of these signifying practices "the metaphors, images, and myths, false though they may be, become central in determining political values, perceptions and attitudes."²³ Myths become stereotypes, and the objective of stereotypes is "not to reflect or represent a reality but to function as a disguise or mystification, of objective social relations."²⁴ Cinema and television have been utilized as powerful tools and weapons for the dissemination of such metaphorical language.

The Politics of Black Female Sexual Stereotypes

Cinema originated as an experiment only to analyze movement. For the purpose of this discussion, the term "cinema" is synonymous with film or the filmmaking process.

The technical capabilities of film lead early filmmakers to use film as a method of political control over the masses. The power of cinema to psychologically transmute and disseminate powerful and complicated messages is explained by film theorist Jean Baudry in the 1970's. His notion was that cinema functioned as an apparatus and so he introduced the cinematic apparatus theory in which the power of film as a dream-like process derives its power from the fact that the spectator participates in the production of the gratification, pleasure and unity derived from watching the film. The idea is that within the film text, the central position of the passive film viewer is ideological.²⁵ The passive viewer cannot tell the difference between the world within the film and the real world. Further, the passive viewer is so deeply identified with the characters on screen that they become susceptible to ideological conditioning. Baudry's contention was that film functioned in much the same way that institutions such as the state and the church do. I would argue that television, due to its accessibility, digital delivery capabilities, and social appeal, supercedes film in this function. Innovation and digital technology have allowed television to become participatory in nature, thus providing the opportunity for viewers to become more than immersed than ever before in content. These institutions according to Marxism were created in favor of the dominant ideology, the superstructure, for the purposes of capitalism, which is also an American system that is concomitant to the racial caste system. Hence stereotypical portrayals can and have been utilized to impose the political values and dominant ideologies within America.

The Jezebel stereotype emerged during slavery to rationalize sexual relations between between slave masters and slaves. In Biblical history, Jezebel was a

Phoenician princess who persuaded her husband, King Ahab of Israel to abandon his worship of God. Artistic representations that predate cinema portrayed her as a lascivious and dangerous woman with sexual lure. Jezebel is depicted as wild, sultry, mysterious, erotically appealing, and openly seductive. The Jezebel archetype is the epitome of sex with an insatiable appetite for lewd acts and taking advantage of men through sex. The stereotype of the Jezebel during slavery "excused slave owners' abuse of their slaves and gave an explanation for the Jezebel's mulatto offspring."²⁶ Historically in cinema, Black actresses selected to portray the Jezebel stereotype were lighter complexioned and were also portrayed as a "tragic mulatto."

The mulatto stereotype functions as the literal and symbolic embodiment of miscegenation and the violation of racial sexual taboos as well as, historically, racial sexual violence. The stereotype was introduced in the Rex Motion Picture Company's 1912 film, *The Debt*, released by Universal Film Manufacturing Company. Shortly after, in *Birth of A Nation*, D.W. Griffith would create a legacy of this hybrid representation of the female sexual fetish in the mulatto-mistress character Lydia Brown (played in blackface by a White actress). She is the mistress to the White abolitionist, Austin Stoneman, who is determined to defeat the South. She is, as the title card informs us, "his one weakness and the cause of his downfall."²⁷

Another early classic American film that solidified the mulatto image was *Hearts in Dixie* (1929) in which the mulatto, Chick, personified the sexual taboos of the White protestant ethic and became the first Black love (sex) goddess.²⁸ She was also a Jezebel in this film. After the film *Hallelujah* in 1936, the Black Jezebel, love (sex) goddess character type "disappeared in Hollywood films and would not be resurrected until the Black exploitation films of the late sixties and early seventies" when the Jezebel would take on a darker complexion.²⁹

On a deeper, more political level, the depreciated sex image of the Black female in cinema appears to have been created with the intention of protecting and dissuading White males from momentary passion and compassion that may result from his sexual contact with her. This type of contact has the possibility of conjuring humane feelings that can sometimes lead to marriage, which in turn leads to partnership, legal obligations, respect and responsibilities. Marriage between "members of the ruling class and those whom they oppress, inevitably undermines the rationale for the basis of oppression, whether the oppressive determinant be race, religion, culture or some other such factor."³⁰ To reiterate, with the elimination of emotionalism, interracial marriage is a raw issue of power. This point is reflected in a statement made by the "Great Emancipator" of Black people, the United States President, Abraham Lincoln confessed:

I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold public office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in

addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any man aim in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race.³¹

Particularly noteworthy is the linkage that Lincoln makes between officially sanctioned social rights, such as marriage and political rights, and the right to hold public office. He infers that political rights as well as interracial marriage are equally as threatening to the superior power position in which he has assigned to the White race. This posture illuminates the need and function of malignant myths and stereotypes embedded in society to maintain the status quo.

Black Female Sexuality in Reality TV

Popular television functions as a "central cultural forum" in our society. It is also a site for the dissemination and construction of cultural codes, and along with popular music and cinema, television is also a site where meaning maps are registered and affective alliances are articulated.³² Maps of meaning are how we interpret the world. Reality television, arguably the most popular genre of television programming today, continues more so than ever, to reinscribe and perpetuate stereotypical imagery of Black female sexuality, as well as ideas and ideologies that undergird racism.

Reality television is defined by a myriad of characteristics that include unscripted programming and non-actors recorded in "real-life" situations. For the purpose of this essay, reality television is defined as any series that is unscripted and captures people as themselves as they encounter actual or staged situations and events. Reality television has become a battleground of stereotypes, respectability politics, and ratchet capitulation, and in this ever-expanding genre, Black women are playing increasing prevalent roles.³³

Traditional Jezebel and mulatto stereotypes from cinema have given way to hoochies and thots. More prevalent in urban culture and reality television is the thot. Like Jezebel, the thot is not only hypersexual and lewd, but she is also conniving and manipulative. On its website, the Urban Dictionary states, a thot is a *hoe*. She is an individual with a number of concurrent sex partners that is well above the established cultural norm. These individuals have coitus for the purpose of sexual pleasure, approval, or to fulfill an emotional void.³⁴ The term translates to the acronym "That Hoe Over There" or "Thirsty Hoe Over There," and is largely attributed to females who are sexually permissive gold diggers or opportunists who use their sexuality to obtain money, position, and status. The term is used frequently within reality television among Black women who seek to degrade one

another or demean one another's social status.

The "reality TV-Black woman nexus," devised by Kristen Warner, includes VH1's *Basketball Wives* (2010-), *Love and Hip Hop* (2011-), *Love & HipHop: Atlanta* (2012-) and Bravo's *The Real Housewives of Atlanta (RHOA)* (2008-).³⁵ This nexus of reality franchises are top-rated, successful reality shows that are wrought with portrayals of Black women as hypersexual gold diggers who lead bombastic, ratchet lives in which they are constantly navigating dysfunctional relationships. Often, these women engage in self-objectification as a form of bafoonery in order to maintain their status as cast members on these shows, while tainting their status and accomplishments within society. The show that demonstrates a myriad of problematic behavior that is most damaging to the social and political status of Black women is *The Real Housewives of Atlanta (RHOA)*, which is the most viewed series in the *The Real Housewives* franchise. Although the title of the series presents the cast as housewives, the majority of the cast members on the series are anything but housewives. Many of them are single, well-established entrepreneurs however, they perpetually allow these accomplishments to become subdued by self-objectification and the demonstration of demeaning hypersexual behavior.

Cast members Phaedra Parks, an entertainment attorney and Kenya Moore, an actress and former Miss USA, both have had well-established career success. However these women have each allowed their character and image to become maligned by demonstrating thot-like behavior on RHOA. During season 5, these ladies battled across several episodes with one another over not only who will have the most successful booty workout video, but they also battled over the attention of Phaedra's ex-convict husband, Apollo Nida. Phaedra's brand as a reality star rests on her "donkey booty," and not her legal career.

In subsequent seasons of the series, Phaedra, as well as many of the cast members of RHOA, increased the excessiveness of hypersexual behavior and hypervisibility of their sex lives with their partners. On-going storylines for former recording star and super producer, Kandi Burruss frequently focus on her sex toy line, which was introduced in season 4, and the dysfunction within her relationship with her husband, whom she married on the show. As the series has progressed, so has Kandi's lack of discretion about her insatiable sexual appetite, which leads to a bisexual encounter with castmate, Porsha Williams in season 8. This encounter is rich with accusations of sexual abuse and drugs, and ultimately leads to Kandi threatening to choke Porsha in season 9. Porsha not only compromises her own social standing on the show, but she also compromises her family's legacy. Her uncle is deceased, civil rights leader, Hosea Williams. During Porsha's tenure on the show, she has gotten divorced and gradually transformed from a dutiful former wife of a professional football player to a single, voluptuous sex goddess. In season 8 of the series, Porsha introduced the term and acronym "THOT" to the reality television vernacular lexicon in her quest to degrade and

demean castmate and supermodel, Cynthia Bailey. Although many of the ladies of *RHOA* express sexual agency as subjects and routinely strive to build their business brands, sadly their power as women is dwarfed by the power of the myths and stereotypes they perpetuate.

Conversely, on the opposite end of the reality TV-Black woman nexus, many of the *Love and Hip Hop* franchise Black female cast members glorify their sexual promiscuity and hypersexual lives. These women boast about using their sexuality as a tool to embark upon music careers and other ventures. Former strippers, Cardi B. of *Love & Hip Hop: New York* and Joseline Hernandez of *Love & Hip Hop: Atlanta*, both credit their superstardom and success in life to hypersexuality and their stints as strippers. They also both brag about using bisexual encounters with other women as an alternative sexual playground outside of their relationships with men. In many ways these television narratives and characterizations have become the template for how lives are lived, what is socially acceptable, and the meter by which to judge Black women.

Clearly, the terrain of diverse content within cinema and television is expanding. Black female and male content creators are expanding their reach. Digital delivery systems have opened the gates to accessible noncommercial and niche content. Spectatorship is becoming more interactive and participatory. Virtual reality content is going mainstream. The future of reality television is still bright. Documenting real people doing real things is fascinating and always will be however, moving image content that features Black women must become more authentic and reflective of a multiplicity of who we are as women. In "Images of Rape in African Fiction: Between the Assumed Fatality of Violence and the Cry for Justice," Augustine Asaah affirms that dominance over the African female body in creative representations continues to be framed by histories of post colonial patriarchy.³⁶ We seem to be in a cyclone of perpetual negative and stereotypical depictions of Black femal sexuality that are constantly recycled and mutating over time.

As Black women producers, we must reconsider and reimagine representations of Black women's sexuality in film and television. A shift in power relations within the America political system, as well as a shift within the power structure of the media industry, both, can begin a tranformation that could impact the representations of Black womanhood but as women, we must begin to develop a more critical gaze and alter our self-perceptions until they are devoid of the legacy of social myths and embedded stereotypes that have plagued us in society.

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35. Kristin J. Warner, "They Gon' Think You Loud Regardless: Ratchetness, Reality Television, and Black Womanhood," *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies*, 30, no.1 88 (2015), 133.
36. Augustine H. Assah, "Images of Rape in African Fiction: Between the Assumed Fatality of Violence and the Cry for Justice", *Annales Aequatoria*, 28 (2007), 333-55 (p. 340).
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The NAACP Campaign for Equal Graduate and Professional Schools and Louisiana State University Struggle to Comply

Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir

There is no such thing as "separate but equal"

Segregation itself imports inequality.

Charles Hamilton Houston

In higher education, the quest to derail the Plessy mandate began to unfold in 1929, when the NAACP received a grant of one hundred thousand dollars from the American Fund for Public Service, founded by Charles Garland. The grant; allowed the NAACP's national office to employ Nathan R. Margold, former Assistant United States Attorney from New York, to conduct an authoritative study of the legal status of black Americans. Margold completed his study and issued the 218-page Margold Report in 1931. The report recommended the NAACP focus its legal challenge on segregated education and the unequal public expenditures in segregated schools.

This presentation will examine NAACP adoption of the Margold Report and orchestration of a plan of action targeting the total abolition of racial segregation in publically supported educational institutions. The NAACP conducted three types of school desegregation suits between 1933 and 1950; salary equalization of black and white teachers, inequalities in the physical facilities at black and white elementary and secondary schools, and desegregation of higher education specifically in public, tax- supported graduate and professional schools. The legal staff chose to challenge segregation in graduate and professional schools before similar challenges to elementary and secondary education due to the blatant violation of the law as several states failed to provide graduate or professional schools for African Americans in accordance with the *Plessy* decision. In fact, many African American students experienced the financial burden of having to relocate out of state to attend all black graduate and professional schools because their respective states did not offer such educational opportunities.

Louisiana required African Americans wanting to obtain a graduate or professional degree in medicine or law to attend to a private black institution, often with a state scholarship, to avoid integrating or establishing a separate facility in the state.¹ Louisiana State University, the public flagship institution for Louisiana citizens, refused to admit blacks into its graduate and professional schools. Thus, the state of Louisiana failed to comply with the Plessy decision

and no public, tax- supported, facility existed to offer graduate or professional degrees for its African American residents.²

The Origins of the NAACP's Campaign for Equal Graduate and Professional Schools

The legal staff of the NAACP aggressively challenged states where tax-supported public colleges and universities enforced segregation. The legal staff recognized the only way to establish segregation as allowed by *Plessy* required proper funding to black schools. They focused on states like Louisiana challenging the state to either build graduate and professional schools to accommodate blacks or allow blacks to integrate the existing facilities. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) believed that the financial burden on a state to build and create graduate and professional schools for blacks would prove too costly; thus, forcing integration.

At the collegial level, Louisiana provided two publically supported schools for its African American residents, Southern University and Grambling State University; however, no law school, medical school or graduate courses existed at these institutions. White residents attended publically supported institutions including Louisiana Tech, University of Southwest Louisiana, Northwestern State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, Quachita Parish Junior College, McNeese State University and Louisiana State University (LSU), the latter of which offered a Law Center in 1904 and a School of Medicine in 1931.³ Louisiana State University School of Medicine located in New Orleans and Louisiana State University Law Center located in Baton Rouge only accepted white applicants into their medical and law programs. This blatant noncompliance of the law became the bases for multiple legal challenges, led by the NAACP and African American Attorney, Alexander P. Tureaud. The challenges eventually forced Louisiana to comply with the *Plessy* decision of the Supreme Court.

The plan for integrating Louisiana State University's (LSU) graduate and professional schools predated seminal Louisiana cases, including *Hatfield v. LSU Board of Supervisors* and *Johnson v. LSU Board of Supervisors*, filed in Louisiana courts in 1947. The NAACP actually filed a series of cases approximately ten years prior, challenging all-white publically supported institutions of higher education throughout the country. Three in particular, *Murray v. Pearson* (1935), challenging the University of Maryland, School of Law; *Gaines v. Canada* (1936), challenging the Missouri School of Law; and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1946), challenging the University of Texas Law School proved successful.⁴ *Murray*, *Gaines* and *Sweatt*, each set an important precedent thereby establishing a basis to continue challenging segregation in publically supported graduate and professional schools state by state.

The first objective in implementing an attack on segregation in higher education required identification of the right person, in the right community to present the challenge. The NAACP chose Baltimore, Maryland as the first favorable venue for a successful test due to its well organized and supportive community.⁵ Thurgood Marshall and William Gosnell, two African American attorneys from Baltimore, chose Donald Murray as the plaintiff. Murray belonged to a prominent black family in Baltimore and was a graduate of Amherst College.⁶

Murray applied for admission to the University of Maryland Law School in 1935, but received a rejection letter based solely on race. Subsequently, Marshall and Gosnell filed suit on Murray's behalf. They argued that the University of Maryland and the State of Maryland failed to provide an equally comparable and separate law school for blacks. Marshall further argued such failure violated the "separate but equal" clause mandated by *Plessy* decision. According to Marshall, Murray could not attend an out of state law school because "no law school in the country could equal the University of Maryland at teaching the laws of Baltimore and Maryland."⁷ The victory in the *Murray* case catapulted Marshall's reputation, eventually landing him a full time position on the NAACP legal staff. It also advanced the NAACP objective in setting a precedent for later battles. The victory; however, was won in a state court and not the federal courts, thus resulting in no effect outside of Maryland.⁸

The NAACP legal staff headed by Charles Hamilton Houston and its new staff member, Thurgood Marshall, decided to file a new case in a different state to challenge segregation in higher education. Houston and Marshall wanted the binding power of the U. S. Supreme Court on all fifty states; therefore, the next suit would have to take place in federal court.⁹ Searching once again for the perfect case, Houston contacted Sidney R. Redmond, an established African American attorney in St. Louis, Missouri. Houston wanted Redmond to locate a suitable person to file a similar suit as *Murray v. Person*, except this time against the University of Missouri.¹⁰

Redmond answered, and found Lloyd Gaines, a resident of Missouri, an honor graduate and class president of Lincoln University.¹¹ Gaines applied to the University of Missouri Law School at Columbia in 1936. As expected, the university's registrar S. W. Canada denied Gaines's application solely on the basis of race. The NAACP immediately filed suit against the University of Missouri's registrar. They argued in *Gaines v. Canada* that the refusal to admit Gaines into University of Missouri's Law School deprived him of his property right without due process of law, therefore violating the Fourteenth Amendment.¹² The university's attorneys argued the constitutionality of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, allowing the university to segregate the races and deny admission to blacks. The court agreed with the university's attorneys; however, the NAACP appealed and the case eventually made its way to the United States Supreme Court.

In 1938, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Missouri had to provide its African American residents the opportunities for legal education equal to those made available to its white residents. The Supreme Court also declared Missouri's out-of-state scholarship program unconstitutional.¹³ The state was given two choices to comply with the decision, either admit Gaines to the University of Missouri Law School or build an equal facility in the state for African Americans.¹⁴ The State of Missouri decided to build a black law school at Lincoln University.¹⁵ In 1939, the NAACP wanted to challenge the equality of the newly built Lincoln Law School; however, Lloyd Gaines disappeared without a trace; thus, putting an end to the *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* litigation.¹⁶ The success of the Gaines suit allowed the NAACP to secure its first United States Supreme Court decision in segregated higher education and began the process reversing the *Plessy* decision nationally.

After the *Gaines* ruling, the issues of segregation in higher education took a back seat to the other numerous problems facing blacks in America. From 1939 until 1946, the NAACP was consumed with integrating the United States Armed forces with entry into World War II, race riots, highly publicized criminal cases, segregated housing, and transportation suits.¹⁷ However, in 1946, the NAACP resumed its legal battle against segregated public supported intuitions of higher education.

In April 1946, Thurgood Marshall called a special meeting in Atlanta with lawyers from southern states that worked with the national NAACP office on suits through their local NAACP chapters. At the meeting, Marshall and the lawyers decided to file suits in eleven southern states and the District of Columbia, simultaneously, demanding equality in all public education facilities. Among the many lawyers present included Alexander Pierre Tureaud of New Orleans, Louisiana.¹⁸ Tureaud was a 1925 graduate of Howard University Law School, and the only regularly practicing black attorney in Louisiana between 1938 - 1947.¹⁹

Louisiana State University's Challenge to Comply with Plessy

In Louisiana, African American citizens aspiring to obtain a professional degree in medicine or law had no choice but to leave the state because there were no black institutions for them to attend, public or private, after 1911. Prior to 1911, Louisiana had two black colleges that offered a professional degree to blacks, Straight College and Flint Medical College, both operated in New Orleans under the American Missionary Association. Straight College maintained a law school from 1874 through 1886.²⁰ Flint Medical College ran a medical school from 1899 until 1911, when the college lost its certification by the American Medical Association.²¹ After these two colleges closed Louisiana employed the method of offering state scholarships to black students to attend private and public black institution out of state that offered professional programs.²² The scholarships arguably allowed Louisiana to avoid integrating its graduate and professional schools or establishing separate facility for blacks.

On 10 January 1946, things began to change when World War II Veteran, Charles Hatfield, III, a resident of New Orleans, Louisiana and current Xavier University student wrote to the registrar at LSU expressing interest in LSU law school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.²³ Fourteen days later, on 24 January 1946, Hatfield received a letter from Paul M. Hebert, dean of the LSU law school, stating, "LSU does not admit colored students and that Southern University, the principal state supported college for Negroes, is authorized by statute to establish a law school for Negroes."²⁴ Dean Hebert's response provided the basis for a lawsuit against the State of Louisiana because no law school existed at Southern University. Tureaud and the NAACP filed a lawsuit on 10 October 1946.²⁵ Using the precedent of United States Supreme Court verdict in the *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* case, the State of Louisiana had a decision make. Either build a black law school or integrate LSU law school.

The Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors (LSU Board of Supervisors) sent requests strongly recommending the creation of a black law school at Southern University to the Louisiana State Board of Education. Included in the request sent by McLemore, chairman of the LSU Board of Supervisors, were the briefs of LSU attorneys stating the only way to comply with the mandate of the *Gaines* decision was creating a separate law school for African Americans. Members of the LSU Board of Supervisors supported the creation of a law school at Southern University as a way to continue the separate but equal policy established by the *Plessy* decision.²⁶

The LSU Board of Supervisors and the Louisiana State Board of Education soon began planning for the creating a law school at Southern University. While planning for the new law school the LSU Board of Supervisors and the Louisiana State Board of Education faced another challenge to LSU and Louisiana's higher education segregationist policies. This time against the medical school. Viola Johnson, a twenty-seven year old graduate of Southern University and a native of New Iberia, Louisiana challenged the policy of segregation after applying to LSU medical school. On 23 June 1946, Johnson received a letter from McLemore, chairman of the LSU Board of Supervisors, denying her admission on the basis of race. McLemore explicitly noted that the State of Louisiana maintained separate schools for white and black students.²⁷

Johnson contacted Tureaud who once again filed a lawsuit against the LSU Board of Supervisors. In the lawsuit, Tureaud stated the refusal of admitting Johnson into LSU medical school on the grounds of race placed her at a distinct disadvantage with regards to practicing medicine in the State of Louisiana.²⁸ He argued that by denying Johnson and other qualified blacks admission to LSU medical school, the board of supervisors, had systematically violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.²⁹

The two cases involving Viola Johnson and Charles Hatfield went to trial

together on 18 November 1946. G. Caldwell Herget, the presiding judge of the 19th Judicial District Court ruled on 9 April 1947 in favor of LSU. According to Judge Herget, LSU did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment rights of Hatfield and Johnson because as he interpreted the law, it was "the duty of Southern University to establish schools of law and medicine."³⁰ Viola Johnson accepted the verdict and left Louisiana to attend Meharry Medical School in Nashville, Tennessee.³¹ Charles Hatfield also accepted the verdict but decided not to attend law school in another state due to cost and relocation of his family. Instead, he accepted a teaching position at Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana.³²

Shortly after the verdict, Dean Paul M. Herbert of LSU law school wrote a concerning letter to LSU President Fred C. Frey. Herbert stated that Judge Herget's decision about the mandatory duty of Southern University to establish a medical school for blacks imposed a financial impossibility. He further wrote that Judge Herget's ruling dismissed the case in part, but gave the plaintiffs the right to comeback and that the state would have to deal with it.³³ The State of Louisiana, aware of the favorable decisions for integration or construction of suitable graduate and professional facilities around the country hurriedly and hastily developed a plan to create a law school at Southern University in advance of the 9 April 1947 verdict. Four months prior to the verdict, on 10 January 1947, the State Board of Education approved plans for a law school at Southern University.³⁴ In doing so, the State of Louisiana further validated the effectiveness of the *Gaines* decision. Either states would integrate or fully comply with the *Plessy* decision.

On 14 June, 1947, a budget of \$40,000 was allocated to establishing a law school at Southern University.³⁵ George Madison, chairman of the joint committee for establishing the new law school at Southern University proposed that the law school open during the 1947 school year. He believed the first freshman class could be started with four part-time professors, loaned from LSU. It was clear to Tureaud and the NAACP that the law school at Southern University, as proposed, failed to satisfy the equal aspect of the "separate but equal" doctrine established by *Plessy*. The establishment of a law school for blacks equal to that of LSU required more funding. LSU law school operated on a budget of approximately \$2,000,000 a year. Tureaud noted that the cost of an adequate law library, exceeded the entire \$40,000 appropriated for establishing the law school at Southern University.³⁶

In their first two attempts to desegregate LSU, Tureaud and the NAACP failed short of their goal and Louisiana remained a target. The NAACP continued assisting Tureaud in Louisiana while fighting cases in other states. The ruling in one of those cases, *Sweatt v. Painter*, against the law school of the University of Texas later aided Tureaud and the NAACP in its fight to integrate LSU. The plaintiff, Heman Sweatt, a postal worker from Houston, Texas applied to the law school of the University of Texas on 26 February 1946, but was denied admission on the basis of race. Two months later, the NAACP filed a lawsuit on behalf of Sweatt against the University of Texas. On 17 December 1946, Judge Roy Archer denied

Sweatt admission to the law school and instead ordered that the state of Texas establish a "substantially equal" law school for blacks within 6 months.³⁷ The state legislature appropriated \$2.75 million to create Texas State University for Negroes (TSUN).³⁸ In the meantime, TSUN set up Basement College, a temporary law school operating on a budget of \$100,000, in the basement of a building near the State Capital of Texas.³⁹

The NAACP was not satisfied with the creation of Basement College; thus they continued the lawsuit and on 4 April 1950 the United States Supreme Court heard arguments in the *Sweatt* case. The attorneys for the State of Texas argued its compliance with the verdict of the lower courts in establishing a black law school. This argument attempted to negate Thurgood Marshall's use of the *Gaines* precedent by arguing that black law school existed in Texas. Marshall argued instead, against the constitutionality of the *Plessy* decision, stating that a separate system of legal education could never be equal.⁴⁰ Two months later, the United States Supreme Court ordered Sweatt be admitted to the law school of the University of Texas and stated, "the school established by the state for Negro students failed to provide an equal educational opportunity for Negroes."⁴¹ The *Sweatt* decision provided clear guidance for equal educational opportunities in newly created graduate and professional programs for blacks throughout the nation. If a state decided to create or build a graduate or professional programs for blacks in compliance with the *Plessy* decision, that program had to employ esteemed faculty, have a variety of courses offered, adequate library facilities, community standing, alumni position and influence, as well as tradition and prestige.⁴²

After the impactful decision in *Sweatt* case, Tureaud tried once more to challenge Louisiana's segregation policy. Twelve black students applied for admission to LSU law school on 12 July 1950. The applicants as expected received denials of admission by LSU Board of Supervisors on 28 July 1950.⁴³ Tureaud and Marshall sued LSU on behalf of one of the twelve plaintiffs, Roy Wilson.⁴⁴ Marshall and Tureaud used the precedent established by *Sweatt* to argue that the law school at Southern University failed in comparison and equality to the law school at LSU. Marshall argued the only way the law school at Southern University, started in 1947, could be equal in prestige and rank with that of LSU, which started in 1906, required LSU to close its law school 40 years to let Southern expand.⁴⁵

The attorneys representing LSU contended that all facilities at Southern were "excellent, including the library and other features and while the school did not have a special building, the building did have air-conditioning, LSU did not."⁴⁶ Tureaud presented evidence to the court that compared LSU law school's physical plant, valued at \$34 million, to Southern University law school's physical plan, valued at \$3.5 million which clearly proved his point that no equality between LSU and Southern University law schools existed.⁴⁷ Tureaud continued to expose the inequalities of the two law schools by examining the libraries and faculty. He

produced documentation showing LSU law library contained more than 70,000 books as opposed to the 12,300 law books in the Southern University's law library. Tureaud also pointed out that the Southern University law faculty members lacked advanced degrees or previous teaching experience consistent with their counterparts on the faculty at LSU law school.⁴⁸

LSU attorneys, with nothing left to argue, stated the court had no right to grant an injunction on a question only the LSU board could decide. Marshall responded, he and Tureaud's "suit is aimed at removing from that consideration the question of race," and not to deprive the LSU board of the right to consider who shall be admitted to the law school.⁴⁹ He further stated this suit prevents LSU from putting into action the idea that regardless of qualifications, blacks should not be admitted.⁵⁰

The federal district court ordered LSU to enroll Wilson into the law school, on 7 October 1950.⁵¹ The court found the law school at Southern University failed to provide the plaintiff the same educational advancements equal to those or substantially equal to those at LSU. Wilson became the first black admitted to the law school at LSU on 1 November 1950.⁵²

LSU appealed the lower court rulings in the Wilson case until it reached the United States Supreme Court, eventually ending with the Supreme Court upholding the ruling of the lower court. While the case was under review by the United States Supreme Court, LSU conducted a background investigation into Wilson's life. The investigation, led to questions about Wilson's troubles with the authorities and students during his undergraduate studies at Grambling State University. Wilson admitted that a physical altercation with a student while in undergrad occurred resulting in his dismissal from Grambling State University. In 1941, he enrolled at Southern University, but later returned to Grambling State University in 1946. When asked about any problems at Southern University, Wilson, stated an altercation took place with his roommate, which prompted him to leave Southern University in 1942.⁵³

Following his exit from Southern University in 1942, Wilson entered the Army. The LSU investigation questioned Wilson's controversies while in the Army with insubordination. In April of 1944, the Army discharged Wilson under Section 8 "blue discharge."⁵⁴ Blue discharges resulted for either ineptitude or insubordination.⁵⁵ Wilson later admitted that he received a denial on his application for an honorable discharge before he applied to LSU law school. However, his application to the law school stated he received an honorable discharge from the Army in April of 1944.⁵⁶

On 4 January 1951, the university documented eight charges against Wilson, none of which he denied. Wilson resigned from LSU on 17 January 1951. Tureaud told the media that Wilson withdrew from LSU because of financial reasons, but Wilson stated he feared the investigation would cause LSU to remove him.⁵⁷

Tureaud and Marshall were unhappy that Wilson withdrew from LSU, but supported his decision. Tureaud noted that no one should criticize Wilson for withdrawing from LSU without knowing the facts behind his decision.⁵⁸ Despite the outcome, Tureaud declared, Wilson made admission possible for other black people with all of the necessary qualifications to seek admission into any school when eligible.⁵⁹

Tureaud's statement brought forth a new challenger to LSU's policies and tested the compliancy of the *Wilson* decision. Lutrill Payne of Natchitoches, Louisiana, applied for admission to take two graduate summer courses in agriculture. On 4 May 1951, Payne received a letter from Richard Russell, Dean of the Graduate School, denying admission and stating LSU accepted only white students in accordance with the statutes and policies governing the educational institutions of the State of Louisiana.⁶⁰ Tureaud filed suit on behalf of Payne. The case went to trial 12 June 1951. Four days later, 16 June 1951, Tureaud prevailed with his second victory against segregation in LSU graduate and professional schools. Lutrill Payne enrolled at LSU and took graduate summer courses in agriculture. In a letter to Tureaud, Payne wrote about his enjoyable experience during the summer at LSU and that he earned two "B's" in both courses.⁶¹

LSU's graduate and law schools both integrated due to successful lawsuits filed by the NAACP and Tureaud; however, LSU School of Medicine remained segregated. On 6 September 1951, Daryle Foister, applied to LSU School of Medicine.⁶² Daryle Foister, a registered nurse, served as a first lieutenant for five years in the Army Nurse Corps. At the time of her suit, she supervised nursing at Flint-Goodrich Hospital in New Orleans.⁶³ Foister received a letter denying admission to the medical school on 6 October 1951, because of her race.

The Louisiana Weekly published an editorial accusing the LSU Board of Supervisors of "violating the law and indirectly showing disrespect for it by forcing legal action each time a qualified Negro wants to enter a different school at LSU." The editorial painted the board members as "those fumbling around in the dark as to what democratic ideas really mean."⁶⁴ Tureaud, again filed suit against the medical school, and on 11 March 1952, the case went to trial. Tureaud prevailed gaining admission for Daryle Foister to LSU School of Medicine on 1 April 1952. Additionally, the ruling permanently restrained LSU from refusing admission to any qualified African American citizen of the state.⁶⁵

Louisiana's white citizens and LSU reacted differently to the integration of LSU's graduate and professional schools. LSU President, Harold Stoke, claimed the faculty and the community experienced problems with integration, however the graduate students reported none.⁶⁶ Stoke, a northerner, admitted never giving any real thought to LSU's policy of segregation when he accepted the job as president. Shortly after arrival, the realization of the problematic nature of the policy of segregation demanded his attention. Stoke observed the members of the LSU Board of Supervisors became increasingly tense and uneasy as cases filed

against LSU by the NAACP mounted. According to Stoke, the Board of Supervisors, refused to succumb as, "the first board to have to yield the racial integrity of the University."⁶⁷ In an interview by Tom Dutton, Stoke was asked what he would do if the courts ordered him to admit a black student. Stoke replied that he would not go to jail for defying an order of a federal court. He also said the campus was ready for the change. Tom Dutton replied to Stoke responses, saying, "By God, I'm afraid you're right. If these students had the guts they had when I was here, we'd have a rope around that nigger's neck before sundown!"⁶⁸ A group of white citizens and the faculty members petitioned Governor Earl Long to fire Stoke. The night of the Roy Wilson's trial, a burning cross appeared on Stokes' front lawn. The tensions leading up to Wilson's trials and eventual admission, never materialized, beyond the cross burning on Stokes' lawn. According to Stoke observations, the students treated Wilson well. Stoke's tenure as president came to an end shortly afterwards, he resigned citing a fundamental incompatibility between himself and LSU.⁶⁹

LSU Board of Supervisors refusal to integrate its programs of higher education met an aggressive and carefully planned challenge by the NAACP. Successful integration of all LSU graduate and professional schools happened by 1952. Nevertheless, LSU and its Board of Supervisors maintained staunch opposition to integrating its undergraduate programs, necessitating another suit filed against LSU. Tureaud said, "we don't want second class citizenship in any form, we know our rights, there is no force on God's green earth to stop integration."⁷⁰ The successful end of segregation in higher education paved the way for *Brown v. Board of Education* ending 58 years of sanctioned segregation in the United States.

Endnotes

1. Report of the Commission on Higher Education of Negroes to the Governor and Legislature of Maryland, 15 January 1937, The Commission in Baltimore, 1937, pp. 19-24.
2. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U. S. 537. 1896.
3. Public colleges and universities in Louisiana for whites only. Louisiana State University and A&M College, Baton Rouge established 1860 (main campus); Louisiana State University School of Medicine, New Orleans, established 1931; LSU Law Center later named Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Baton Rouge, established 1904; University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, established 1898; Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, established 1894; McNeese State University, Lake Charles, established 1939; Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, established 1884; Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, established 1925; Quachita Parish Junior College, later named University of Louisiana at Monroe, established 1931.
4. The dates listed next to each case is the date in which the suits were filled. Final judgment rendered in these cases occurred after all appeals were

made. *Murray v. Pearson*, 169 Md. 478. 1936; *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U. S. 337, 351. 1938; *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U. S. 629. 1950.

5. Larry S. Gibson, *Young Thurgood: The Making of a Supreme Court Justice*, Amherst, N.J., Prometheus Books, 2012. 231.

6. *Ibid.* 231.

7. Juan Williams, *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary*, New York, Three Rivers Press, 1998. p.77.

8. Gibson, *Young Thurgood: The Making of a Supreme Court Justice*, p. 258.

9. *Ibid.* 258.

10. Mark Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961*, Oxford University Press. 1994. P.70

11. Lucile H. Bluford, "The Lloyd Gaines Story," *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, XXXII, February, 1959. p. 243.

12. Daniel T. Kelleher, "The Case of Lloyd Gaines: The Demise of the Separate but Equal Doctrine." *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 56, No. 4, October, 1971. p. 265.

13. *Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U.S. 351. The out-of state scholarship was given to blacks who wanted to pursue a graduate or professional degree in a field not offered at state supported black colleges and universities.

14. Mark Tushnet, *The NAACP Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education, 1925- 1950*, University of North Carolina Press, 1987. p. 72.

15. "The Mysterious Case of Lloyd Gaines and the Racial Integration of Higher Education," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 5, Autumn, The JBHE Foundation, Inc., 2009. p. 20.

16. *Ibid.* 20.

17. Williams, *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary*, 174.

18. *Ibid.* 174.

19. *New Orleans Times- Picayune*, 23 January 1972.

20. Alexander, W. S., D. D. "The American Missionary Volume 0036 Issue 8 (Aug 1882)." *Journals: American Missionary (1878-1901). The Freedmen: Straight University, New Orleans*, 234-235. Accessed 17 July 2015. <http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text>

21. "The History of Flint-Goodridge Hospital of Dillard University." *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 61:6 (November 1969): 533-536.; Rhodes, Desha P. *A History of Flint Medical College, 1889-1911*. New York: Universe Inc, 2007.

22. Report of the Commission on Higher Education of Negroes to the Governor and Legislature of Maryland, 15 January 1937, The Commission in Baltimore, 1937.

p. 19-24.

23. Hatfield to Louisiana State University Registrar, Hatfield Papers, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, La.

24. Board of Supervisors Records, RG#A0003, Report of a Meeting Representatives of LSU and Representatives of the State Board of Education held at the Louisiana State Capitol on 12 August 1946, Box 7 Folder 310. Louisiana State University Archives, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

25. Evelyn L. Wilson, "Justice In Louisiana: From The Historical Perspective: Access to Justice: Charles J. Hatfield," *Louisiana Bar Journal*, August/September, 2002. The lawsuit was filed in October because the NAACP wanted Hatfield to graduate from Xavier University first.

26. Board of Supervisors Records, RG#A0003, Report of a Meeting Representatives of LSU and Representatives of the State Board of Education held at the Louisiana State Capitol on 12 August 1946, Box 7 Folder 310. Louisiana State University Archives, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

27. Louisiana Newspaper Clippings, Box 28- 308, New Orleans Branch NAACP Papers, University of New Orleans, Special Collections.

28. Ibid.

29. *Johnson v. LSU Board of Supervisors*, Tureaud Papers, Series 7, Roll 50, Amistad Research Center; Report of a Meeting of Representatives of LSU and A. &M. College and Representatives of the State Board of Education held at the Louisiana State Capitol on 12 August 1946, p. 3; LSU Board of Supervisor Records, Folder 310, Negro Education, 1946, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Collections, LSU Libraries, Louisiana State University. Prior to the Johnson case, on June 15, 1946, the Louisiana Legislature appropriated \$50,000 to the State Department of Education to provide out-of-state scholarships for blacks. Less than a month after the appropriation of funds for the out- of-state scholarships, the State Board of Education discontinued it because it did not satisfy the requirements of the Gaines decision.

30. Judge Herget's judgment on the Johnson and Hatfield case, Box 94. Folder 1747, Office of the President Records, RG# D: 53, Louisiana State University Archives, Special Collections.

31. Ibid.

32. Hatfield file, La. Series 7, Roll 50, *Hatfield to Tureaud*, Tureaud Papers, Amistad Research Center Collection.

33. Judge Herget's judgment on the Johnson and Hatfield case, Box 94. Folder 1747, Office of the President Records, RG# D: 53, Louisiana State University Archives, Special Collections.

34. Charles Vincent, *A Centennial History of Southern University, 1880-1980*. Baton Rouge, La.; The University, 1981, p. 166.

35. Evelyn L. Wilson, "Justice In Louisiana: From The Historical Perspective: Access to Justice: Charles J. Hatfield," *Louisiana Bar Journal*, August/September, 2002.
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37. Dwonna Goldstone, "Herman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law" *The journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 54, Winter, 2006/2007, p. 92.
38. *Ibid.* 93.
39. Tushnet, *NAACP Legal Strategy*, pp. 129, 131; Dwonna Goldstone, "Herman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law" *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 54, Winter, 2006/2007, p. 93
40. Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961*, p. 131.
41. Finch, *The NAACP: Its Fight for Justice*, p. 134.
42. Dwonna Goldstone, "Herman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law" *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 54, Winter, 2006/2007, p. 99; Rachel Emanuel- Wallace, "The Louisiana Weekly's Coverage of Alexander P. Tureaud, Sr., 1950-1953," Master Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1990, p. 67.
43. Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972*, The University of Georgia Press, 1995, p. 154.; "Nine Apply for Admission to LSU- Board to Act on Negro Admission at August Meeting," *Louisiana Weekly*, 15 July 1950, p. 1.; On 12 July 1950 nine students applied, subsequently three more students applied bringing the number to twelve. The applicants were Roy S. Wilson, Nephus Jefferson, Dan C. Simon, Willie C. Patterson, Charles E. Coney, Joseph H. Miller Jr., Lloyd E. Milburn, Edison G. Hogan, Lawrence A. Smith Jr., James L. Perkins, Harry A. Wilson and Anderson Williams.
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Incest and Rape, Curses, Bloodshed, and Madness: The Gothic Reality of African American Women's Late Victorian Literature

Alexis Brooks de Vita

Introduction: A Racially Specific Gothic Truth

Toni Morrison explains in "The Site of Memory" that women of African descent dehumanized in American chattel enslavement were subjected to acts that they could do little more than hint about to Puritan Victorian readers. Anglo-American Abolitionists who solicited true stories about enslavement's atrocities also tended to suppress candid descriptions of the extremity of the sexual violence experienced, predominantly by women of African descent, as the sole legislated breeders of enslaved human chattel, meaning cattle, a dehumanizing legal invention of the English colonists. Leading up to her posthumously published Victorian-era Gothic novel's denouement, Hannah Crafts hints to the reader: "Alas; those that view slavery only as it relates to physical sufferings or the wants of nature, can have no conception of its greatest evils" (Crafts 130). After vaguely describing almost every variety of sexual licentiousness practiced upon the enslaved by their captors, Harriet Jacobs writing as Linda Brent seems to figuratively throw up her hands and summarize: "few slaveholders seem to be aware of the widespread moral ruin occasioned by this wicked system. Their talk is of blighted cotton crops—not of the blight on their children's souls" (Jacobs 53). Jacobs further challenges any disbelieving reader to "go on a southern plantation, and call yourself a negro trader," promising that then "you will see and hear things that will seem to you impossible among human beings with immortal souls" (Jacobs 53). Rapes and forced incestuous liaisons that made the breeding of captives more lucrative than breeding domesticated animals remain purged from the United States' popular historical self-image, even into the twenty-first century. Historical and cultural researchers still disagree about the extent, extremity and normalcy of sexual enslavement practices, despite the wealth of indications and the reasonable extrapolations that can be drawn from them, available through close reading of such material as contemporary news accounts, court cases, letters, diaries, ledgers, biographies, autobiographies, and the memories immortalized in The Federal Writers' Project. Such material indicates that chattel enslavement produced a convoluted system of close relations between enslaved captives and their captors, chained together through financial and emotional need, resentment, suspicion, envy, and the daily habits of extreme abuse encouraged by the legislated absolute power of one aggrandized man over all the others in his household and under his authority. Through immersion in these documents, it is not a stretch of objective analytical imagination to deduce that the United States'

system of chattel enslavement produced a charged domestic atmosphere that only invasively enforced upright behavior could have possibly prevented from producing a culture of sexual abuses and perversions.

The "Editor's Note" about Eliza Parson's *The Mysterious Warning* in the Jane Austen-inspired *Complete Northanger Horrid Novel Collection* lists features of the Gothic novel as "including a female protagonist, family mysteries, incest, ghosts and castles" (np). If "mansions and plantations" replace "castles," and "disinherited heiresses" is added to this list, then this Gothic formula exemplifies the truth-reflecting tales of entrapment, persecution and degradation for which African American women writers of the Victorian era strove to find a receptive audience. It is reasonable to suppose that this bestselling Gothic formula may have appeared to Victorian-era African American women writers to offer an opportunity to expose at least some of the socially unmentionable atrocities that Abolitionist autobiographies tended to puritanically suppress. This essay argues that free and self-freed women of African descent in the Victorian era may have seized upon American Gothicism as a communicative tool. This communicative drive appears to have been motivated by a sense of community responsibility such as is demonstrated in the Gothic autobiography and Gothic novel of Brent/Jacobs and Crafts, as well as by a realistic terror of being captured and sold or returned to chattel slavery's culture of intimate assault. This essay explores literary indications that Victorian-era African American women writers attempted to use the tropes of the bestselling Gothic to find a socially acceptable way to tell lawmakers' wives and the wives of the Anglo-American males with the sole power of American enfranchisement just how horrendous America's "peculiar institution" really was.

The Segregated Gothic

This essay argues that, if European/American women's Gothics may be said to have offered their readers an opportunity to explore the nearly absolute disempowerment in which women of European descent were forced to subsist in slave societies, no matter the wealth and power of the men in their families, then African American women may have embraced the genre as an opportunity to formulaically reference the systematic dehumanization that they, their families and communities struggled to escape and deinstitutionalize. Fictional Gothic tales consumed by Europeans and Americans of European descent about persecuted virginal heroines fleeing abuse brought widespread popular attention to precisely the issues about chattel slavery and post-Reconstruction racism that African American women writers were discouraged from documenting. The development of African American women's writing trends seems to indicate that English and American tastes for Gothicism may have struck Victorian-era African American writers as a literary opportunity. However, as the nineteenth century advanced, capitalistic pseudo-scientific theories about the racial superiority of those of European descent and the need to segregate themselves from those of other ethnicities had become entrenched in law and daily practices, in the

United States. Segregation applied in non-slaveholding states before and after the end of enslavement in the United States. Therefore, only some Victorian-era African American women writers found publishers willing to present their work to the public: principally Abolitionists and, post-Emancipation, African American periodicals. The nation's racial perspectives and *de jure* segregationist practices seem to have severely limited African American texts' circulation. While African American women writers may have seen the potentially interracial, broad appeal of their themes, their nation's racialism seems to have proscribed their publishing opportunities. In the Victorian era's climate of chattel enslavement followed by post-Reconstruction lynch law and Jim Crow, it seems evident that publishers and purchasers saw authors' and protagonists' race as the primary genre, in the case of African American writers. Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859-61) seems to be a very rare text in that it seems to have escaped these limitations and been published, despite its author's race and the harrowing but probably mitigating sexless Gothicism that permeates her semi-autobiography.

From descriptions such as those provided by Olaudah Equiano's autobiography of the shipboard rape of captured girls as young as ten on the vessel that carried him to the Americas, to Mary Prince's silence about what happened when she was forced to bathe her adult male owner—which were both widely read texts in England rather than in the United States—academics are forced to extrapolate to what extent sexual assault may have been a routine money-making or spirit-breaking practice of chattel enslavement. These atrocities represent the truths of chattel enslavement, Europe's and the newly emancipated United States' most lucrative colonizing enterprise. Conversely and concurrently, however, the American Gothic consumer of Equiano's and Prince's era may have preferred being entertained by stories of hapless governesses of their own European ethnicity fleeing from distress into danger, knowing that a formulaic happy ending or moral lesson awaits the reader, instead of reading about wealthy men's daughters being raped, disinherited or sold by their prosperous fathers, as depicted in William Wells Brown's *Clotel or, The President's Daughter* (1852), Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), and one of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's lesser known poems, "The Quadroon Girl" (1842). Therefore, although it was their own and their loved ones' lives being depicted as the plight, instead, of European/American heroines in gratuitously salacious Gothic dilemmas, African American women seem to have found that racist stereotypes about females of their race excluded them from inclusion as either virginal heroines or moralizing authors in the widely distributed and popularly consumed Gothic tales of the Victorian age.

Whiteness as Incorruptibility and Blackness as Evil

African American women's Gothic novels in the late Victorian age may be argued to represent an effort not only to reclaim the moral uprightness that the European/American Gothic afforded its heroines, thereby helping to attract and influence readers from that ethnic group as well as the growing African

American bourgeoisie with leisure enough to read for entertainment, but also to persuade such socially influential readers to collectively emerge as a unified nation out of the United States' recent Gothic past. For example, Jacobs urges her readers not to condemn her for strategically choosing with whom she would share her virginity and fertility, rather than waiting helplessly to be raped by her owner and afterward see her children sold away by his wife. However, Jacobs's self-defense may furnish her biased readers' argument against her innocence. By defending her highly sagacious teenage choice of sexual partner with the claim of forethought, Jacobs thus makes herself ineligible for the European/American trope of the Gothic heroine too naïve to understand the implications of the sexual dangers she faces. But Jacobs's call to conscience and social activism is precisely the literary moralizing difference between the use of Gothicism employed by African American women writers and the same tropes fictionalized by European/Americans. African American women writers tended to offer relatively empowered women of the leisured and ruling classes voyeuristic entertainment about the very real perils faced by females of African descent in exchange for taking the opportunity to try to awaken these other women's social consciences. European/American Gothicists, instead, may have claimed to titillate in order to educate, as in the case of William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* (1789) and Hannah Foster's *The Coquette* (1797), but when the last page is read and these books are closed, there is very little that the reader is called upon to proactively do other than discuss the text with friends and wait to offer guidance to a social acquaintance victimized by seduction or gossip. The social burdens of responsibility for knowledge gained were as racially different as the degrees of reality offered by the texts. The Gothic genre in the hands of European/American writers seems to have been predominantly voyeuristic and speculative, peeking into the fantastical experiences of what could only have been a diminutive minority of their own population. In the hands of African American writers of both genders, however, if one includes such texts as Brown's *Clotel*, various degrees of Gothicism seem to have been employed to entice readers to set aside sufficient Puritanical delicacy to sympathetically experience the terrors of real-life victims of racialized persecution.

Speculative fiction seems to have been used in more genres than the Gothic to allow Europeans and Americans of European descent to experience the horrors their nations perpetrated on ethnic and racial minorities without feeling called upon to change anything. In close analysis, it would seem that speculative fictional projection into the lives of the persecuted seems to have allowed Europeans and colonists to reinforce their faith in Enlightenment-era pseudo-sciences that assured them of racial superiority. For example, science fiction may have been developed in the late nineteenth century to de-familiarize Europeans and Americans of European descent from the habits of genocide and enslavement that fueled the growth of their colonies, in an effort to make them reconsider what their capitalism was doing to other peoples. However, as current racially

exclusive trends in the genre indicate, the science fiction genre soon became the purview of European/American men's explorations of how invulnerable they were destined by God or natural selection to be, as they conquered the world with borrowed explosives and biological warfare, conversely increasing their inability and unwillingness to see the horror and immorality of their nations' colonizing practices.

Just as science fiction probably originated as a Eurocentric retelling of colonizing empires' genocidal takeover of other lands and peoples (see Brooks de Vita "Living the Transatlantic Apocalypse"), Gothic literature arguably seems to represent a Eurocentric reframing of the domestic impact of Europe's colonizing alien invasions. If science fiction retells the macro-perspective of empire destruction and reconstruction, then it is arguable that Gothic literature reframes the micro-perspective of such colonial takeover inside those communities, homes and intimate relationships, within destroyed and self destructively-reconstructed colonies. More summarily put, if in the broad genre of speculative fiction, science fiction recounts in metaphor how African and Native American nations were invaded and destroyed, then the Gothic recounts in metaphor what African girls and women suffered, within those subjugated homes and destroyed communities. However, as these speculative genres became and remained *de facto* racially exclusionary, those potentially sympathetic explorations seem to have become infused with European/American self-righteous racist justifications.

Just when, as Paula Giddings excavates in *When and Where I Enter*, the United States reinvented slavery as a system of racial subhuman categorization imposing a lifelong, inherited sentence to be passed from mother to child *ad infinitum*, the Gothic emerged as the U.S.'s first bestsellers. These early Gothic texts began to describe supernatural destructions attendant upon perpetrator, victim and offspring in the wake of sexual misconduct, seductions, abuses, hidden paternities, and incestuous liaisons. All the atrocities of American chattel slavery became popular American reading when applied to European/American women in such texts as not only Brown's *Sympathy* and Foster's *Coquette* but Susannah Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* (1794) and *Lucy Temple* (1828), as well as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *House of the Seven Gables* (1851). Just as the United States' first native-born author, Charles Brockton Brown, published *Wieland; or, The Transformation* (1798), about a man's hallucinatory killing spree of his own family, the United States government began paying for Native American scalps and ascribing to those who owned captives of African descent increasing rights of life and death over them (see, for example, Jacobs, Landau and Pell, *To Serve the Devil, Volume 1: Natives and Slaves* and Brooks de Vita, *The 1855 Murder Case of Missouri versus Celia, an Enslaved Woman*). Meanwhile, European Gothics such as Jacques Cazotte's *Le diable amoureux* (1772), Matthew G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and Anne Bronte's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) increasingly describe

misogynistic fears, appropriate feminine role models, and punitive measures of control attendant upon perceived threats of autonomous female sexuality and women's potential social and interpersonal influence.

Frederick Douglass's autobiographical *Narrative* (1845) graphically recounts extraordinary household bloodshed and forced sexual incontinence, and yet was a widely read American text. However, tales of sexualized tyranny and degradation punished by spiritual retribution appear to have met with less receptivity when linked to chattel slavery and racism by African American women authors. Perhaps these women authors knew more details about the sexual acts forced upon females than their male counterparts and were therefore capable of describing these abuses more tellingly, if they had been encouraged or permitted to do so. This dichotomy is evidenced by Jacobs's being thwarted twelve years before publishing *Incidents*, Crafts's century-and-a-half posthumous publication of *The Bondwoman's Narrative* (1855-61), and the tepid initial reception of Wilson's semiautobiographical *Our Nig*. It may be theorized that, for the Anglo-American woman reader, perhaps fantasizing victims' persecutions might have been more appealing than reading factual accounts that hypothetically gave responsibility to the reader and her community to attempt to make social changes, based on the divulged information. For example, a woman in the Free North reading *Our Nig* would have to become aware of the persecution of a girl who appears to be of wholly European descent who is kept in an attic, beaten, tortured, left shoeless and hatless to freeze and outside in the fields to darken her skin, and then denied the comforts of Christianity, all to emphasize to her that she is of African descent. It must be borne in mind that "black" is synonymous with "evil," according to the English language ever since the colonial era, when "wights" reinvented themselves as "whites" uniquely representative of God and good. Satanic influence was conversely assigned to "blacks" who were therefore supposedly undeserving of humane treatment. A reader encountering Frado's misadventures as a girl of indiscernible African descent born free in a free state might not have found Wilson's guilt-inspiring novel to be diverting, cathartic or escapist. Wilson's implicit call for social awareness and social change might have compromised the Gothic drama of her truthful tale. An Anglo-American woman protected from such experiences by social structures that distanced her from girls of African descent might have found herself in sympathy, rather, with the Anglo-American woman who exploits and abuses—but houses and feeds—the abandoned child. Even in the twenty-first century, although Wilson clearly depicts Frado, the title character, as paler than her Anglo-American tormentors, publishers continue to misrepresent Frado on their covers as being very dark in complexion. Frado is described and should be depicted on the cover as pale, barefoot, loved only by her dog, and shorn of her curls. Publishers' ongoing misrepresentative depictions of the child, rather than accurately depicting Frado's actual similarity to them in appearance, privileges her abusers' daily re-inscribing of her difference from themselves as the reason for their persecution. This inaccurate physical Othering of Frado by publishers

continues to distort and misrepresent the absolute color-blindness of American racism that Wilson's story so successfully excavates. Frado's tormentors do not care what color she is so long as they can strip her of all human rights because she is known to be of any African descent, whatsoever: the Anglo-American one-drop rule.

Ira Berlin summarizes how human rights abuses perpetrated upon the most disempowered members of a slaveholding society set a new standard for universally skewed power relations, throughout that particular society:

In societies with slaves, no one presumed the master-slave relationship to be the social exemplar.

In slave societies, by contrast, slavery stood at the center of economic production, and the master-slave relationship provided the model for all social relations: husband and wife, parent and child, employer and employee, teacher and student. From the most intimate connections between men and women to the most public ones between ruler and ruled, all relationships mimicked those of slavery. (Berlin 8)

Reflecting on Western Europe's colonizing and enslaving legacy, Audre Lorde explains further: "Western European history conditions us to see human differences in simplistic opposition to each other: dominant/subordinate, good/bad, up/down, superior/inferior," particularly because, in these societies, "the good is defined in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need" (Lorde 114). In such an institutionalized state of potential domestic tyranny, the European and American Gothic novel that dramatized the whitened woman's spiritual and social rights to protection while spelling out the increasingly rigid rules of self-protective conduct that made her worthy may have relieved her of survivor's guilt while providing her with a survival guide.

The frequency and ease with which European/American women might find themselves persecuted because of similarity to or identification with women of African descent in racist slave societies must have raised exigent questions about whitened women's rights, against which flimsy, relatively new theories of racialism must have provided scant bulwark and little comfort. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze's *Race and the Enlightenment*, a collection of Western European and American pseudo-scientific theories that became capitalistically convenient racism, provides an overview of the history-denying but convenient rationalizations that supported colonization. Living in the extreme Anglophonic racializing of class and privilege that English colonies favored in contrast to other European colonies (see James), the Anglo-American woman who lost rights to property and person in marriage may have felt that theoretical barriers between herself and enslaved women in her household were tenuous. She may not have felt different enough from

women of African descent to be safe; thus, she may have chosen to heighten everyone's perception of that insulating difference by abusing ethnic minority women, herself.

European/American women watching their own rights erode might very well have felt an exigent need to act out their difference from victimized non-European women. Jacob's *Incidents* recounts the frequency of enslaved women whose children were fathered by their owners finding those children sold away at the instigation of their owners' legal wives. Wilson's Frado finds that she is severely persecuted, to the point of being physically tortured and crippled for life, precisely because she is lighter in complexion than and racially indistinguishable from the Anglo-American women who run the household where she is entrapped. Frado, Brent and the enslaved offspring of wealthy and politically powerful owners in Brown's *Clotel* experience analogous hostile surveillance, hair-chopping, sun-burning, verbal and physical abuse, and racial denunciations by the women in the households where they are held against their will. Crafts's narrator's female owner announces that she will humiliate the enslaved woman precisely because of her indistinguishable race: "With all your pretty airs and your white face, you are nothing but a slave after all, and no better than the blackest wench. Your pride shall be broke" (Crafts 205), the mistress rants as she orders the narrator to "herd with" an overseer whose one-room cabin already contains several others of his women and children, who will apparently watch the newest addition to his collection of women being raped. Even as late as the Harlem Renaissance, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* reiterates this theme, beginning with an enslaved mother threatened by her owner's wife because her owner has just fathered the captive woman's enslaved blue-eyed daughter, Leafy. This trope of European/American women persecuting girls and women of African descent to emphasize the difference between them—and thereby demonstrate the Anglo-American woman's relative power and right to safety from analogous persecution—runs rife through Victorian-era African American literature, apparently reflecting a social experience that was not rare.

If, as Giddings explains, "acquisition was what this early multinational corporation, later called America, was about" (Giddings 35), then who had the right to acquisition was rapidly becoming limited by law and practice, affecting every American relationship. Patricia Hill Collins explains that European/American women, excluded in increasingly misogynistic as well as racist definitions of who had the right to social power and the acquisition of wealth, found themselves caught in a dichotomy in which they depended upon the sexual denigration of other women for their own relative security. "Black 'whores' make White 'virgins' possible," Collins explains: "The sexually denigrated woman, whether she was made a victim through her rape or a pet through her seduction, could be used as a yardstick against which the cult of true womanhood was measured" in a hierarchy that was financially "profitable" (Collins 145).

This dichotomy leads to questions about how nations still emerging from Christianity's multi-denominational violent splintering in Europe and its colonies were supposed to harmonize their new capitalist acquisitiveness, as practiced upon African and American continents, with their Christ's teachings of charity, love, and mercy. The Christian Godhead seems to have been replaced by the European man's global supremacy, once he was armed with Chinese gunpowder and mythical manifest destiny, and apparently oblivious to millennia-long traditions of honorable combat. But such practical atheism led to social hierarchical upheavals that threatened to undermine or disempower the bourgeoisie newly in power and determined to keep it. In this international power-hungry event horizon of European empire-building, Christianity seems to have become dragged into the service of capitalism's values. "By the early eighteenth century," Giddings explains,

Blacks constituted a permanent labor force and metaphor that were perpetuated through the Black woman's womb. And all of this was done within the context of the Church, the operating laws of capitalism, and the psychological needs of White males. (Giddings 39)

Pauline Hopkins introduces *Hagar's Daughter, A Story of Southern Caste Prejudice* (1901-2) with the condemnatory social summary that "Cotton was not merely king; it was God. Moral considerations were nothing" (Hopkins *Hagar* 4). Europe's capitalism of Christianity seems to have induced in European colonial states a mindset of megalomaniacal self-righteousness akin to that of Britain's Ranters, referenced in John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (Bunyan 16). The British Ranters theorized that their belief that God had chosen them by race and religion to be sanctified above all others obligated them to deliberately break His laws, thereby proving their faith that they were His select and unconditionally saved followers. Ranters claimed that their faith in God demanded that they break His commandments to demonstrate that they believed He had set them apart as blessed. This delusional level of colonizing self-righteousness is fictionalized in the sociopathic psychosis of the narrator in James Hogg's terrifying Gothic *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) and becomes grafted into the very words the English use to describe themselves in relation to the rest of the world, as English speakers switch their self-classification from "wight," meaning a humble creature of God, to "white" meaning pure and godly. Conversely, as with the mother who refuses to give up her daughter's dog and is therefore hanged with the dog in a linden tree in Crafts's *Narrative*, there to die cursing her owner's family, African American women's Gothics consistently portray American racism as having been its own curse against a greedy nation and those who try to profit by it.

Your God is on My Side

While analyzing Gothicism in African American women's earliest novels and

literary autobiographies, now often termed Sentimental, as in Crafts's *Narrative*, Wilson's *Nig*, Jacobs's *Incidents*, Julia C. Collins's *The Curse of Caste; or, The Slave Bride* (1865), Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's *Minnie's Sacrifice* (1869), *Sowing and Reaping* (1876), *Trial and Triumph* (1888-9), and *Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted* (1892), as well as Hopkins's "Talma Gordon" (1900), *Contending Forces* (1900), *Hagar's Daughter* (1901-2), *Winona* (1902-3), and *Of One Blood* (1903), it is necessary to acknowledge underlying subtexts such as how socialized racial stereotyping may have resulted in broad social refusal of recognition of African-descent heroines' innocence as vulnerability and potential corruptibility. Corruptible vulnerability is a requisite quality of Gothic heroines. Therefore, if blaming African American girls and women for their persecution and sexual enslavement becomes widely practiced, then these females must be held responsible for deliberate seductiveness and become popularly seen as not only sexually corruptible but inherently corrupted. African American girls and women were popularly excluded from the Gothic tale as its heroines because their real-world counterparts were held responsible for their own sexual victimization, used to fuel the United States' rapid accumulation of wealth and attendant political world power.

Referencing timelines in Giddings's *When and Where I Enter*, it becomes evident that English/American Gothic literary explorations of incest and sexual slavery became increasingly popular just as capitalist chattel slavery made such practices explosively financially profitable and therefore increasingly practiced by the propertied elite in the United States. Cross-referencing arguments of Collins's *Black Feminist Thought*, it becomes exigent to ask whether African American women who attempted to re-appropriate the Gothic trappings of their gendered ethnic group's historical sexual subjugation may have found their writing suppressed or proscribed outside their own racial community because the United States' socio-financial hierarchy was becoming firmly established upon the myth of African-descent women's willing licentiousness. In short, African American women were attempting to re-appropriate the imperiled virgin trappings of the Gothic tale as their own just as the United States had convinced its national conscience that the forced human breeding that financed American agricultural wealth had either never happened or was the fault of the victims to whom it had happened.

Even the most privileged European women in the new profit-as-power European colonial expansion found their own social and legal freedoms increasingly curtailed. This can be seen in texts ranging from pseudo-deification of the subject of a powerful man's love, represented in medieval writings such as Andreas Capellanus's *The Art of Courtly Love*, to colonial-era statuses of near helplessness in their own homes, as in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798). It may be argued that women in traditional pre-colonial African and American nations that Imperial Europe was fast wiping out of existence may have had more rights to claim property ownership and dispense with their persons and property as they saw fit, to run markets and manage their wealth, and to keep

and raise their children in case of divorce than colonizing European women were granted in their explosively expanding empires. For example, Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* (1966) and Buchi Emecheta's *Joy of Motherhood* (1979) reflect the millennia of potentially powerful African women recorded in David Sweetman's *Women Leaders in African History* and contrast Nigerian Igbo women's traditional empowerment as businesswomen, princesses and priestesses with their disempowerment under English Christian colonization. This womanist status retrospective is not only referenced in de-colonialist African literature but in American Ella Cara Deloria's Dakota Sioux tale of *Waterlily* (1942-1988).

In this state of domestic instability, the colonizing European woman's taste for Gothic literature may have represented her own unconscious need to ask herself, looking about her at her dehumanized half-sisters, nieces and servants in her newly independent American nation, neighborhood and household, "If she can be reduced to this state, why not I? Am I really so different?" European/American Gothics appear to indicate that undiluted "whiteness" and submission to patriarchal strictures promise safety or, at the very least, eventual rescue to heroines of solely European descent. However, in strong contrast, African American Gothics seem to exhort ferocious independence of spirit, autonomous self-definition in the face of unspeakable acts of degradation, and unshakeable faith in hard work and self-reliance. African American Victorian-era women writers seem to promote the idea that the god of the colonizing Europeans is rooting for egalitarianism: "Your god is on my side," African American women's Gothics seem to pronounce to their larger hostile society. African American literary women were developing a galvanizing community voice through many channels, including expanding the literary and visionary power of the trans-racial Gothic.

Harper and Hopkins published successfully and prolifically in religious community periodicals. Between Emancipation and the Harlem Renaissance, while race riots, the new trend toward mass incarceration of freed African American boys and men, and ritualistic lynching-and-burning raids followed the failures of Reconstruction (see Blackmon and Wood), African American Victorian women writers seem to have found that the Gothicism that described their persecution was equally suited to framing their message of uplift. According to African American women's Gothics, federal abandonment and an overwhelming lack of resources could not become community excuses for despair, stagnation or defeatism. Giddings summarizes that, "Moral superiority came through struggle, Harper told her audience" (Giddings 89). Harper and Hopkins, late Victorian African American women writers who framed tales of enslaved, freed and born-free heroines in the Gothicism popular among United States readers of their eras, were limited by post-Civil War social segregation to African American readerships. But while their employment of Gothicism may have been to entertain, thrill and thereby engage their readers, these authors simultaneously chose to inspire community uplift by excavating historical and contemporary problems and exploring potential

solutions. African American women Gothic writers used their tales of peril, terror and tragedy to bring their persecuted African American readership to see almost limitless potential for success through determined efforts at self-empowerment, teaching through entertainment that, as Collins summarizes, "wisdom is essential to the survival of the subordinate" (Collins 257). However, "It was through the Black struggle," Giddings explains, "that White women could engage the kind of issue appropriate to their own struggle. But they failed to transcend their racism and classism" (89). Had Anglo-American women exhorted each other to share their fears about their own disenfranchisement and increasing disempowerment with African American women activists rather than too frequently resorting to bullying African American women under their power or distancing themselves from African American women who were not, they might have improved their own fighting chance to gain political strength. This distancing kept African American women's Gothics—and their messages about uplift—limited both in opportunities for publication and in social influence, circulating principally in their own religious communities, which alone benefited from the texts' positive messages and these women's uniquely proactive use of the Gothic genre.

Gothic Stress Relief

As an educator, to help students contextualize the potentially stress-relieving practice in colonizing European cultures of projecting oneself into the role of the persecuted via Gothic literature, I have summarized studies about deep sleep (Rapid Eye Movement) deprivation and its relation to symptoms of psychosis, including hallucinations and paranoia (see Cohen *et al* and Petrovsky *et al*). Not only is this conversation intended as a reminder that adequate sleep aids maximum scholarly performance, but it also serves as an introduction to how I wish my students to understand otherwise puzzling similarities between supernatural European/American literature and the historical experiences of chattel enslaved African and other persecuted peoples. If regularly releasing the brain to explore frightening or unspeakable experiences and thoughts in deep sleep may prevent or minimize psychosis, then may not Europe's explosion of interest in supernatural literature in the age of colonialist expansionism, with its attempted genocide of invaded cultures and increasingly rigidly structured echelons of socio-economic power, be perceived as the REM sleep of capitalism's profit-producing activities? The Gothic tale, like science fiction, may have served to relieve racist guilt by cathartically allowing the beneficiaries of genocide and enslavement to experience such suffering in manageable fantasy doses.

Women who may have felt themselves implicated in the destruction of other women's wellbeing might have pictured themselves in those other women's lives with both titillated curiosity about what was taboo and frightening and the desire to reassure themselves that racial privilege would protect them, if they acted appropriately. The Gothic novel, in this situation, would play a role similar to— if less punitive than—hypnotic projection into the deaths of his victims used to

punish the serial killer in Novella Serena's "My Bogey Man" (2014). In this Gothic short story, a serial killer, rather than being put to death, is hypnotically regressed to experience the terror he has inflicted on his victims as he stalks and kills each of them. European and American women who distanced themselves from the powerlessness of women of African descent in their colonies by persecuting them might very well have explored their own fears and relieved their own guilt by immersing themselves in racially segregated Gothics that allowed them to imagine themselves, briefly and harmlessly, in their victims' place.

Medusa in the Mirror

While I worked as a new assistant professor at a racially under-integrated women's college in the first years of the twenty-first century, it came to my attention that one significant way the goals and concerns of millennial American women differed from those of mid-twentieth century feminists regarded sexual liberation. When relatively privileged women students discussed their responses to multicultural women's literature in the context of other feminist courses and their own ongoing social concerns, they often expressed impatience with reading about a woman's right to have sex with whomever she wants. Millennial women of every race were concerned about sexual coercion and rape, both on campus and among their friends and family at home. Millennial college women across racial definitions expressed a desire not to feel socially pressured to submit to unwanted sexual activity, unknowingly echoing Victorian African American women's Gothics. This sense of being pressured to socialize via sexual activity may be considered an African American women's fight of long standing, brought about by the U.S.'s racially selective stripping of protection from rape. African American Civil Rights activist Anne Moody describes herself facing this same social persecution one hundred years after the end of chattel slavery and decades before millennial college students were born in *Coming of Age in Mississippi*. Moody wishes to support the Civil Rights movement when she is in college in Tougaloo, Mississippi but does not wish to be fondled on a public bench by her organization's campus leader. My women students expressed a desire to feel loved without succumbing to sexual demands, a recurrent Gothic paradigm: distinguishing love from sexual compromise that foreshadows, leads to or symbolizes degradation. This theme is repetitively treated not only in earlier works such as Jacobs's *Incidents* and Crafts's *Narrative* but African American women's Gothics up to and through the Harlem Renaissance.

When I later began to teach literature in a traditionally African American university in the early twenty-first century, not only did African American women students respond emphatically to the issue of wishing to feel loved without feeling physically compromised in both African American and Gothic women's literatures, but they were additionally concerned about social opposition to acknowledging the existence of African American girls' and women's sexual innocence. This comparative difference in breadth of perspective represents a culturally

indoctrinated difference of perception: African American women students had no trouble discerning, identifying and independently analyzing similarities between European/American Gothic exploration of corrupted domestic relations and real-life horrors of the Transatlantic Human Trade. African American women students were consistently and enthusiastically willing to theorize potential racial occlusions back into texts whitewashed during the era of chattel enslavement. So thought-provoking were these students' speculations about Gothic secretiveness that they twice presented a panel of papers to peers and faculty about their ideas.

Like the African American Victorian women Gothicists, my twenty-first-century African American women students had no trouble writing the mysteriously opaque African presence into prominence in the literature of the era of the Transatlantic Human Trade. "The Victorian Nightmare: Representations of the Atlantic Slave Trade in Traditional Gothic Literature" proposed Catherine's father in *Wuthering Heights* as Heathcliff's biological rather than his foster father, explaining why the put-upon patriarch would have introduced the supposedly parentless and "dark almost as if it came from the devil" (Bronte 57) Heathcliff into his home as a brother to his legitimate children. This explained why Heathcliff soon became father Earnshaw's favorite son. The students were quick to agree with my proposal that father Earnshaw's behavior is so mysterious that the only thorough explanation is that perhaps he fathered Heathcliff on an enslaved or prostituted African woman and, upon her death or sale, brought Heathcliff home rather than leave him abandoned on the streets of Liverpool. This explanation also clarifies why Catherine's brother may have fought so hard to belittle and distance Heathcliff and never let the unknowing half-brother marry their shared sister, Catherine, for fear of adding incest to the Earnshaw family's roster of sins. The African American students further expanded upon my proposal that the grown Heathcliff may have gone off to make his sudden fortune in the Transatlantic Human Trade that had once brought his mother to Liverpool. Warming to their themes of reintroducing occluded material to the monochromatic European/American Victorian Gothic, African American students saw the cobbled-together, degenerating body of Frankenstein's monster paralleling the cobbled-together degenerating mind and spirit of Richard Wright's *Native Son*. They analyzed the fearful allusions of the heroine of *Mansfield Park* to the Caribbean slavery that fuels her cousins' wealth and keeps her own family alive on their charity.

These comparisons of perspective are offered to introduce the difficulty of inducing readers to see what their societies may have indoctrinated them against seeing, as if having convinced them that social survival depends upon blindness to the Medusa in the mirror. The millennial French Gothic film *La Plage* demonstrates the ongoing colonial-era teaching of girls and women to protect themselves from misogynistic violence by not acknowledging it. The camera pans various interactive clusters of people at a public beach as they train young

women to condone the gang rape of the beach's only lone teen girl. Concurrently, as backdrop and undercurrent to scenes of pressure on each girl and woman to cooperate and conform, the off-camera gang rape escalates with the rapists' taunts about penetration and fellatio. The beach's girls and young women each indicate that they have noticed the ongoing assault, pausing and frowning before their attentions are snapped back to the quotidian business at hand, as though rape deserves privacy. One of *La Plage's* achievements is its exposure of how misogynistic violence is perpetrated and ignored in plain sight and hearing, as if it is neither a crime nor a violation of a human being's right to protection in her own society, and her right to expect corrective consequences for those who breach those protections. *La Plage's* leveling of rape and consensual sexual intercourse repositions the female member of a wealthy slave society as having no right to choose what will be done on the most intimate levels to her body and psyche, once a male or group of males has chosen her for persecution.

This spreading of licentiousness from slavery throughout slave societies is precisely what Jacobs warns America against in *Incidents*. In "Eye to Eye," Lorde concludes that, "we have each learned to be at home with cruelty because we have survived so much of it" (Lorde 146). The girls and women of *La Plage* are still being taught that only certain members of their society have the right to choose what will be done to others, and those powerful members are boys or men of European descent. The American colonies' designated sexual victim, the woman of African descent, has long used her autobiographical and fictional writing to plead with women of all races to resist specifically sexual oppression visited upon any of their gender and to resist projecting self-hatred onto other women. Lorde takes up this tradition as she exhorts women to "recognize the despair oppression plants" within them and to "fight that inserted piece of self-destruction" that "makes us turn upon ourselves in each other" (Lorde 142). If learning to resist misogyny is to be successful, Lorde quotes Kalamu ya Salaam's statement that, "Only women revolting and men made conscious of their responsibility to fight sexism can collectively stop rape" (Lorde 120). But women cannot revolt who have been taught over generations not to see an act as sexual oppression as long as it is not directed personally against them.

This eroding of social moral strata is why acts once confined to enslaved Africans and indigenous Natives during European colonial invasion and industrial expansion eventually may have become more widely practiced against formerly protected European/American women. While Equiano, Brown and Douglass all affirm that acts of heinous sexual aggression against girls and women of African descent were perpetrated by European/American men, it may be argued that the sexual assault of female Africans in the European colonies as described by male former captives pales in comparison to assaults that lesser-known women writers of African descent attempted to bring to the public's attention, themselves. Crafts's unpublished *Narrative* walks the reader through increasingly

disturbing sexual subjugations and the punishments of those who try to escape or protect girls and women. Would-be saviors, like captives, are driven out of their homes, minds or both. A male slave-trader counsels in *Narrative* that in slavery, as, evidently, in Victorian marriage, the captive woman, similarly to her owner's wife, "must have no mind, no desire, no purpose of your own" (Crafts 108). Crafts and Jacobs both assert that there is more than the revelations in their own lives and books that needs to be told, but they fear offending the sensibilities of the privileged women whose sympathies they seek, those protected women who have possibly learned like the women and girls in *La Plage* neither to see nor to oppose sexualized oppression against the designated female target.

Gothics of Egalitarianism

The solution to these dilemmas of persecution universally proposed by both positive examples for implementation and negative consequences for continued negligence in African American women's Gothics is uncompromising social egalitarianism. Introducing Harper's radical, how-to, step-by-step, democratizing creation of a functionally utopian society from the wasteland of American chattel slavery and Civil War in *Iola Leroy*, the author states that slavery "so warped the consciences of men, that they failed to read aright the legible transcript of Divine retribution" (Harper *Leroy* 13). Into this tempest of spiritual outrage tumbles Leroy, the heroine, like a female Icarus, the privileged daughter of a slaveholder who dies suddenly and whose ne'er-do-well brother inherits all that the patriarch once possessed, including the family he created with an enslaved woman. Leroy is brought home from boarding school to dwell in her father's mansion as the property of her uncle, who apparently submits her to such indignities that, when the reader meets her liberated from chattel slavery, she reintroduces herself as "a wonder to myself" (Harper *Leroy* 88). When she thought she was of purely European descent, Leroy vociferously defended chattel slavery as inducing happiness and contentment in its captives. Her privileged roommate is moved to allude to such historical personages as Margaret Garner, memorialized in Virginia Hamilton's "A Mother's Despair" and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, and President Jefferson's sold and suicidal daughter in Brown's *Clotel* (Harper *Leroy* 77). However, post-slavery, Leroy now explains that, "Thoughts and purposes have come to me in the shadow I should never have learned in the sunshine. I am constantly rousing myself up to suffer and be strong" (Harper *Leroy* 87-88). Harper uses Leroy's allusions to sexual subjugation to argue assignment of blame and culpability to the perpetrators of misogynistic violence rather than its targets, thus dismantling her raped heroine's "cruel indignities" and "outrages" (Harper *Leroy* 87). Leroy asserts that, "I was abased, but the men who trampled on me were the degraded ones" (Harper *Leroy* 88), thereby reassigning the right of judgment to the victim of legalized sexual depredations and placing the legally disenfranchised and dehumanized in a position of moral authority above her corrupt government. Harper skirts the details of Leroy's sexualized sufferings as

if to steer the reader's Victorian socialization away from prurient dalliance upon these violations. It seems that Harper subdues some overtly Gothic elements of her heroine's misadventures, details probably well known by her predominantly African American and female readership that was, after all, only one generation away from the threat or memory of chattel enslavement. Harper thus uplifts each reader's sense of identity and self-empowerment by making her an authority on her community's and her own historical and personal abuses. One hundred years after publication of *Iola Leroy*, Lorde urges women to seek out their inner survivor and relieve her of social shame and the need to compensate by soothing wounds she has already sustained. Lorde exhorts women to learn to be gentle by "giving more to the brave bruised girlchild within each of us, by expecting a little less from her gargantuan efforts to excel" (Lorde 175). As if claiming and personally addressing Leroy's Gothic sufferings in each woman, Lorde asks women to "love her in the light as well as in the darkness, quiet her frenzy toward perfection and encourage her attentions toward fulfillment" (Lorde 175).

Gothic Prescriptions for Healing

In her Introduction to *The Magazine Novels of Pauline Hopkins*, Hazel Carby states that in Hopkins' work, "The social and moral order of American society is revealed to be incest," representing "Hopkins's vision of a hell in which 'the laws of changeless justice bind Oppressor and oppressed'" (Carby xlvii). Hopkins' dramatic works may read as conversations with Harper's more seemingly restrained literature. If Harper may be imagined as the prototype for the socially awkward idealist heroines of *Trial and Triumph* and *Sowing and Reaping*, then her fictional works about enslaved women (Harper being born free and never enslaved), *Minnie's Sacrifice* and *Iola Leroy*, may represent her striving to depict the utopian potential of the U.S.'s annihilated society post-Civil War. Not at all upholding the analytical theory that utopias are little more than travelogues, Harper's works present detailed descriptions of the kinds of necessary decisions to be made, steps to be taken, and egalitarian social uplift to be undertaken on behalf of all U.S. citizens, if the newly reassembled United States would choose to keep its promise to its progeny and meet its democratic potential. Considered from this perspective, Harper's and Hopkins's works both promote the personal healing and community uplift guidelines and goals of the historic Negro women's clubs and literature of racially sensitive social philosophy spanning the decades between Anna Julia Cooper's *Womanhood a Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race*, as collected in *A Voice from the South by a Black Woman of the South*, and Lillian B. Horace's *Angie Brown* and *Diary with her 32 "duties"* (Horace Diary 71). African American women's turn-of-the-twentieth-century Gothics may therefore seem more closely aligned with European women's feminist utopias, from Christine de Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies* to Monique Wittig's visionary *Les Guérillères*, than with European/American Gothics. For example, in Harper's and Hopkins's texts, each woman must rise above her persecution to decide to contribute

to the daily, fluid formation of personal and social egalitarianism, bearing little resemblance to late Victorian racially segregated Gothics in which the heroine must await rescue by a man or by a socially masculinized woman, as in Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860) and Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell's "The Grey Woman" (1865). Harper's heroines argue, among other points, for the granting of the right to vote to all citizens, regardless of race or sex; for marriage across lines of race and color despite indoctrinated dehumanization, mistrust and division; for abstinence from intoxicants; and for the educating of women's minds to make them independent thinkers and fully functional members of society, rather than the grooming of their bodies to attract potentially degrading but socially advantageous marriages. Both Harper and Hopkins indicate but deemphasize the specifically sexually degrading abuses that earlier African American women writers struggled to make United States citizens recognize as wrong, including the ignorance, nudity, rape, and incest forced upon captives in chattel slavery, such as North Carolinian Mattie Curtis chooses to reveal when autobiographically interviewed for the Federal Writers' Project. "I seen him whip my mammy with all the clothes off her back. He'd buck her down on a barrel and beat the blood out of her," Curtis recalls of her owner. Then, "Speaking about clothes, I went as naked as your hand till I was about fourteen years old. I was naked like that when my nature [menstruation] come to me" (Curtis 35, 36) she states. In rare candor about sexual misconduct, Curtis explains:

Mr. Mordicia had his yeller ["yellow" or pale] gals in one quarter to theirselves [sic], and these gals belong to the Mordicia men, their friends, and the overseers. When a baby was born in that quarter, they'd send it over to the black quarter at birth. They do say that some of these gal babies got grown, and after going back to the yeller quarter had more babies for their own daddy or brother. (Curtis 37)

For students incapable of visualizing America's chattel slavery traditions, the film *The Journey of August King* depicts a slave-owning father whose bounty hunters help track his African-descent daughter through North Carolina as she flees his legal right to incestuous rape. The daughter escapes, an outcome as fictionally felicitous as that of Crafts's narrator, who flees captivity before she can be raped. However, in the same way that the woman writing as Crafts did not escape rape but brought four children with her when she fled, Curtis recalls young women giving birth to generations of incestuously conceived, mentally disabled children. Curtis explains to her interviewer that children of incest are congenitally unsound of mind; chattel slavery's Gothicism is rife with insanity brought on by incest and terror. Crafts, Hopkins and Harper all feature characters who are driven insane by learning that they or their loved ones are of African descent and are therefore not protected from rape and being sold.

Perhaps because the extremity of United States segregation post-Civil

War ensured that Harper's and Hopkins's fictional works would be read almost exclusively by African Americans, these writers were freer than the unpublished Crafts to retrospectively reinsert suggestions of the Gothic elements actually experienced in chattel enslavement. Secondary women characters in these tales who discover that they are of African descent and therefore enslaved and/or disinherited usually degenerate into suicidal melancholy, frenzy or murderous rage. Such psycho-emotional degeneration happens to the title character of Collins's *Slave Bride* as well as to secondary characters in Crafts's *Narrative*, though each story's featured heroine has the potential stalwart character of Harper's Leroy. Conversely, Hopkins's quick-thinking women of visibly African descent tend to undermine stereotyping even as the author caricatures it. Similarly to Leroy's dark-skinned, well-loved sister-in-law, dark-skinned women in African American women's Gothics often portray independence of spirit, courage, loyalty, and penetrating intelligence as they sabotage the machinations of racist antagonists by using their prejudices to trick them. These admirable characteristics are signature trademarks of African America's premiere woman detective, Venus Johnson in Hopkins's *Hagar's Daughter*.

Hopkins's works re-appropriate authentic historic trappings of the Gothic as experienced by women of African descent. When she focuses on concerns of African American men in the lynch era, Hopkins reconstitutes the threats perhaps initiated during captivity but increasingly employed in the Jim Crow United States to keep African American men terrorized. Hopkins's increased breadth expands Harper's predominant focus on links between segregation, bigotry, joblessness, and substance abuse. For example, in *Winona*, the reader witnesses the castration of an African American prisoner, while in *Of One Blood*, the hero must come to terms with the personal meaning of never having been educated about pride-inspiring African history. In both Harper's and Hopkins's works, conscience, opportunity and personal ethics determine each character's choices and the concomitant burdens or rewards of self-image, regardless of race, skin color, gender, social disadvantages, ambition, or degrees of suffering and desperation.

Conclusion: The Gothic Utopia

African American women's Victorian Gothics have historically attempted to re-appropriate ownership of their uniquely racist sexual oppression in the United States. Their works engage the reader in each protagonist's contention against seemingly insurmountable odds to achieve a projected utopian possibility of international egalitarianism. African American women as Gothic characters must carve out by dint of harsh experience a world in which they are free to marry based on love rather than race or social positioning, become ethical enough to give back education to the communities that nurtured them, and dedicated enough to embody the highest ideals of honor despite having had to survive a society that persecuted their forebears and continuously strives to keep them subjugated. African American women Gothic authors provide their readers with at

least one character per text who, no matter how beleaguered, will model the self-uplift earned by repeatedly making hard ethical choices. These authors present stories in which, no matter how delicate of health or emotionally fragile, each girl or woman of any African descent whatsoever must choose autonomy and self-improvement and urge habits of morality and uplift on family and friends. Without this leadership, the main heroine and those who love her will be dragged down by the customs of racism and attendant denial of their rights.

Hopkins's characters pick up the gauntlet cast down by Harper's forging a potential United States of Utopia out of a Civil War hell, demonstrating that racialism and its mythologies are explosive pseudo-scientific fallacies, not inherent truths. Hopkins's heroines, like Harper's, refuse to allow fear of their violent U.S. society and its impact on their loved ones' lives to dictate their choices and determine the outcomes of their endeavors. Following the portrayal of obligations toward personal healing and community uplift featured in African American Victorian women's Gothics, it next falls to Harlem Renaissance African American women writers to turn the Gothic into explorations of intra-community and international racist sexism that traps naïve heroines in their own efforts at self-healing and community uplift, as portrayed in such works as Zora Neale Hurston's "Sweat" and Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* and *Passing*.

This study has argued that, most probably inspired as well as influenced by the popular success of English/American Gothic novels such as *The Power of Sympathy*, the *Temple* romances, *Coquette*, and *Wieland*, late Victorian African American women writers appropriated Gothicism to describe collective experiences of gendered racist persecution, with racially segregated success. Their flaunting of European/American Gothic tropes such as the heroine's need to be rescued by masculine or masculinized agency, thereby developing a heroine's self-sufficiency, combined with readership segregation from 1860-1930 resulted in the limited circulation of these works. Such social silencing of the revolutionary potential of the Gothic was more successfully navigated by Anglo-American women writers such as Louisa May Alcott, who may have chosen to suppress their sensationalist writings in order to be financially profitably published.

Rescued from obscurity and republished, or published for the first time in a racially desegregated American academic arena in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, African American women's autodidactic Gothic texts have been accorded recognition in the genre of Sentimentality. However, the realities informing the Gothicism of African American heroines' stories, as potential prototypes for the seduction, incest, entrapment, abuse, violence, debauchery, and abandonment associated with the genre when applied to European/American heroines, merits further analytical excavation and study. African American women's Victorian Gothic texts also deserve closer analytical attention to their positivist messaging about obligations to heal self and community, which transforms African American women's Gothics into treatises on the mechanics of

creating egalitarian social systems.

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Poetry

Antoinette Ellis-Williams

Resistance Poem For My Daughter

My dearest daughter,

Everyone talking about freedom a'int really free.
Everyone talking about heaven a'int gonna get there either.

What does resistance look like you ask?
Well daughter, let's start with what it's not.

Resistance isn't safety pins on Burberry lapels.

Isn't not chatting about what's good about Booker T. Washington, Ben Carson or Christette Michelle and how far black people have come, eating crudités at the Weekend's concert.

Isn't not trying to make white people comfortable, every time we meet making sure we smile just enough but don't look directly in their eyes for fear of being perceived as too angry. And make sure we don't criticize defenseless Taylor Swift or down-to-earth Adele knowing that their awards are dripping in racist gold plating.

It's not spending more time on
Your visual representation
Than building your mind.
Trust me the rest will follow.

It isn't voting for the lesser of 2 evils and
Just opting out.
It isn't sitting in the PTA meeting never speaking up.

Resistance is showing up when you don't feel like it.
Resistance is doing your homework

And it's occasionally gazing at the moon
Tracing the stars
And counting them one by one,
Every once in a while.

It's music lessons, learning to swim because your daddy & his granddaddy were prevented from swimming during Jim Crow.

Resistance is making choices &
Having choices.
Resistance is poems written with chalk on sidewalks that wash away after the
rain
Then writing new lyrics
Metered just so
It's Graffiti on the A train. Putting your name, your tag for all to see
It's telling your story
Over and over again
So you remember
And they never forget
Your name.

Resistance is telling your own people the truth. It's tough love and deep love and
everlasting love.
Resistance is waiting on the bus in the cold to get to your job on time.

Resistance is cooking whatever you can
That's healthy to nourish your soul. Don't spend lots of money/ create in your
pots and pans soulful art/ every time you can.
Resistance is praying
Not just on your knees
It's praying with your soul
Whispering
It's every moment of each and every
day
It's praying in our hearts
It's talking to God deep inside
Of you.

Dearest daughter,
Resistance is sometimes
Letting go
Letting go to the idea of perfection
Of hurt
Of guilt
Letting go of what could have been
Letting go of what makes you uncomfortable
It's disrupting what you thought
You knew and moving to what you now
Know to be true

Poetry

Resistance, baby, doesn't have sick
Days or holiday sales
It's saying no to capitalism and unbalanced scales
While saying yes to fair wages
Opportunities and raises

Yes it's saying no and it's saying yes/
And knowing the difference between the
Two.

Resistance is breathing
In the face of death
It's defying the eviction letter on your
Door
The death notice
Given to your man when he walks the streets
Paved in black blood
It's standing when you
Are falling
It's sitting when they want
You to stand

Dearest daughter,
Resistance it's memory
It's never forgetting what is necessary
And forgetting what is necessary

Today resist
Where you can
In small ways
Opening doors
Closing windows
Writing letters
Signing petitions
Making phone calls
Humming hymns
Texting heart emojis

Dearest daughter,
Resist
Resist
Resist

When We Was Cool

I remember when black people was cool
When we wore picks in our 'fro
Tube socks, hot pants on roller skates
Gliding and stridin'
When double Dutch
Fast jumping
Missing the ropes
Cool was us

I remember when black people was real cool
Bopping down the street
Feeling the rhythm of the beats
Singing out loud
Snapping fingers
Rocking and locking

I remember when black people was cool
Sitting on stoops
With hair grease
Greasing scalps, perfect parts
Plaiting, corn rowing
Twisting, setting and gelin'
While gossiping about this and that

I remember when black people was cool
Playing bid wiz, counting books
Drinking, acting the fool
Type of cool

I remember when we was cool
Psychedelic, dashikis, wedge heels
Bamboo gold plated earrings, Dapper Dan colorful
Blazing style setting, cool as the breeze
Fly stepping real cool
I remember when we was cool
Basketball got next/ black top
No net dunking, three on three
Hood ball cool

I remember when we was
Soul Train line cool.

Poetry

Dancing, gliding, floating
Like butterflies on air cool

I remembered when we
Was marching, protesting singing
We shall overcome cool
When your Billy clubs and dogs
Biting our legs cool
When Jim Crow made us
Sit in the back of the bus
Don't sit there, drink here
Don't say nothing
But we still sang and prayed
Cool.

When everyone wanted our style cool
When they couldn't get enough
Of us so they mimicked us cool
When they wanted to be us
So they took R&B for themselves
And created a category called
Contemporary Urban for us
Cool

When they thought we was so cool
Too cool
So they locked our brothers up
Pushed them on sidewalks
So they couldn't breath
Hands up, wearing hoodie cool
Skittles and ice tea cool
When they said to our
Women, you can't stand your ground
So they locked us up
For firing warning shots/
Shots fired cool

When they thought we were so cool
They injected viruses with syphilis
Plagued our communities with heroine
Crack, smack, rocks- a liquor store
On every block cool

When we was so cool

We forgave and forgave them
after
assassinating Martin, Medgar
Malcolm, Huey, we forgave when Dylan Roof
After he walked into Mother Emmanuel
Shot 9 of our brothers and sisters
After they prayed together
Touched & agreed together
Cool

You took that murderer out for a meal
'Cause we cool
We forgave, and forgave
cool

I remember when we was
Real cool we voted
For Obama cool
And left him out to dry
For eight years cool
Didn't rally or support him
on his grind
Cool.

We paid no attention when he kept
Guantanamo Bay open cool
Dropped drones killing babies
Deported more undocumented
folks than any other president before
But we cool.

When we liked Barak and Michelle's
Bold beautiful booty smack
Fist bump
black love cool
But didn't show them no love
In the white house cool
It's a complicated love
But we
cool

We so cool
Many of you'll
Didn't vote this time

Poetry

But we cool you
Took a Kaepernick knee cool

We so cool that when
You knitted your pink pussy hats
Asked us to march
Failing to recognize
The intersectional colonized
Privileged pussy you occupy
'cause most of you voted for
Him/DT45
But we still real cool

I remember when we was so
Cool
But we still cool
Right

We a'int never gonna
Go out of style
Cause we are
Black Africa
Mother earth
Freedom fighters
How I Got over
Kinda' of Cool

I remember when was
So cool
'cause
That was last night
And
Damn straight
We is still real
Cool

Mingle Moore

Conjoined Siblings: A Carmen Figuratum

Three entities existing on their
own Somehow tend to inhabit the same
zone Through connections these three must
aim, To be all in one and one in the
same
While Earth spins on rotations
spun
And makes its way towards
the sun, Its sister planet, the Moon floats by like a lustrous white orb in the
sky. And
while they differ, both Moon and Earth their direction continues like south
and north,
As humans rush, swing, advance, and turn, the sun, on its own,
continues to
burn. So with a telescope that's
used to see the gorgeous stars staring
to back at thee the Earth is filled with
at life trees with no aliens, just you
and
and me. Assumptions made, but vision knows
to hone the eyes for what astral light
has shown towards our honor we must
truly claim that connection truly is the
name of the game.

Baba Zayid Muhammad
'bro. zayid'

killing her song
(for Adhimu aka Lawrence Hamm and Sheila Reid *)

"The government has failed you!..."

Malcolm X, The Ballot or The Bullet

"I'm gonna stay on the battlefield..."

"I'm gonna stay on the battlefield..."

*"I'm gonna stay on the battlefield,
Until I die..."*

–Freedom Song

this is not rocket science...
no experts need be empaneled
to further milk this cow of genocide...
You say that 'all lives matter'
but this is not happening to
Pete, or Heather or Bob...
it is our sons getting shot
with their hands up
it is our sons getting shot
with only their cellphones in hand
it is our sons getting shot
with their hands in their pockets
or with their hands behind their heads
or with their hands cuffed behind their backs...
and it is our daughters
being pummeled into highway asphalt
our daughters
getting body slammed into their windshields
face first in midsentence
just trying to answer their questions
it is our daughters
being found throatless in putrid jail cells
after minor traffic violations
as if they have no names...
and we are the ones whom death is shooting apart
surrounded by squad cars amp'd up
to enjoy feasts of state massacres...
this is just not happening to Bob, Heather or Pete...
and it doesn't even seem to matter
that it is now happening to us on videotape!
grand juries

let it go
local courts
let it go
state courts
let it go
even the justice department
lets it go and explains to us
why we have to accept it all
and accept what they
won't do...
why? why?! why?!!
insulting the saltburned flooded eyes
of the growing litany of mothers burying children
over and over and over and over and over again...
even the leaves the grass and the soil
are offended by the volume of our earthburning tears...
the universe yelps
at the outrage
of the bleeding imbalance of injustice...
their warning whispers of the lethal consequences
of the violent lunacy of white supremacy
continue to be ignored...
there is more to whats wrong in Milwaukee
than the beer and the cheese going bad...
so when the fat lady's toxic bloated belly
bursts
into an indiscriminate lava of blood
soaking the streets of our cities
ruining your gentrifying grand plans
you will have no one to blame
but yourselves
for killing
her song...

*Lawrence Hamm is the founding chairman of the People's Organization for Progress(P.O.P.)...He has put more foot soldiers on the streets of New Jersey over the scourge of police brutality over several decades than any other so-called 'leader' or 'leaders' combined...He is currently directing a Justice Mondays campaign where P.O.P. rallies at the Justice Dept's Newark office every Monday... Sheila Reid is the mother of Jerame Reid who was shot by Bridgeton police officers with his hands up on videotape on December 30th, 2014. On August 22, 2016, the Justice Department said that they would not charge these officers for that spectacle killing. This poem is a response to that decision...

**around the corner
(for prof. clement alexander price, 1945-2014 in memoriam)**

"In that great gittin up mornin
fare thee well! fare thee well!
"In that great gittin up mornin
fare thee well! fare thee well!..."

in that great getting up mornin
in that transition to ancestral ascension
in the sky piercing power of this moment
this man
this man who we love
this man who we respect to the utmost
this man who taught so many of us
about our humanity
from his excavating
the dust and ashes and rivers and blood
of a harrowing
and heroic material past
this man who we cherish
he will be received by his mother and father
who lit the candle of the touch and sound and place
of history in his young mind as if it was
'just around the corner' as he often said...
they will receive him on his right side...
and his brothers in excavation and exposition,
Giles Wright and Lee Hagan
will receive him
on his left side...
they will wrap the glistening garb
of tradition and royalty around him
so he can be received in royal tradition
by so many honored to receive him
honored to welcome him
to the eternal ranks of the ancestors
like his mentor Jeannette Cascone
who will announce him
like the dean of black scholarship John Hope Franklin
like legendary world historian John Henrik Clarke
like segregation sacker Kenneth Clark
like bone culler John Blassingame
like legacy-lyricist Vincent Harding

like Benjamin Quarles like Chancellor Williams
like Leon Higginbotham like Derrick Bell
like the marvel of Amiri Baraka
like the bluesfingered Albert Murray
like the fathers Carter G Woodson
and George Washington Williams
the fathers of a tradition they forged for us
out of the screams the whipscars the rape
the butchering torture
the necksnapping terror
and the song sullen resistance to it all
forged a tradition from a residual
west African memory
and its tall taste of excellence
for all of us now permanently situated
in this beleaguering brave 'new world'
like Dubois
the pan africanist alchemist of critical thinking
who wed this tradition
to the western tradition of social science
and them together to the grand tradition of our struggle
like Marian Thompson Wright¹
whose legacy he personally resurrected
from the death of a racist and sexist obscurity
with honor depth and the grand manner of tradition..
escorted by William Ashby²
she will crown the new entrant
and curtsy in gratitude for the son she never had...
and in this rapture of appreciation
yg warrior ancestors
sacrificed in the resistance without names
will hoist him up on his stool
and the procession will begin
and the air will be fragrant with cinnamon
kissing all eyes
and voices will be heard singing
male voices,
blue black male voices
will be heard singing

"fare thee well! fare thee well!

voices led by Dolores Collins Benjamin³ herself
shadowed by Robeson's smiling

Poetry

embracing baritone echo
strong blue black male voices singing

"fare thee well! fare thee well..."

and they will take him
around the corner
where a centuries wide ring shout circle of ancestors
will have just begun .
A centuries wide ring shout circle of ancestors
whose freedom and drum were taken.
A centuries wide ring shout of ancestors
harvesting a spirit
they would not let genocide have.
A centuries wide ring shout of ancestors
whose chided unheard voices
he sought to place on our ears and our eyes
from the written page...
those ancestors
that history...
and the regents for this ceremony...
his mother his mentor and Dr Marian Wright...
they will each touch his wide
smiling face
and whisper in his ear
'that history that was
once upon a time
just around the corner
has come, son...
'that history
breathing in the musical
echo of forever

is here'...

"In that great gittin up mornin
fare thee well! fare thee well!
"In that great gittin up mornin
fare thee well! fare thee well!..."

1.Marian Thompson Wright, pioneering Black Newark
Historian. Legacy obscured due to race and gender. Price named annual African-
American history symposium to honor her...

2. William Ashby, Newark civil rights pioneer. Founded Newark's Urban League. A personal hero of Price. Lived to be 101...

3. Dolores Collins Benjamin, pioneering Newark music legend. Founder and longtime musical director of the North Jersey Philharmonic Glee Club, of which Price once was a performing member...www.njpgc.com...

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(for the late august wilson)

he was a man who could see
backward and forward
10 years to a hundred years
at a time...

a steel town
cool
conjure man
who could see
clear
past the leaders
past the celebrities
past the headlines
waaay past the obvious...
well-deep
in the ordinary
where black people are
real blue...
in their folly
in their troubles
in their conflicts
in their dreams
be they battered and dilapidated
in their quests
in their styles
in their rage
in their songs
even in their confusion...
on a front porch
in a backyard
by an ol' piano

with witnessing faces
in a biscuit-baking
warm kitchen
on a bandstand
barking for harmony...
with eyes anchored
heavy with memory
fertile green brown rooted eyes
eyes that could see backward and forward
10 years to a hundred years
at a time...
I say

**I am love, starring me
(for the late Brea Blackberry Molassez Knight *)**

"Somebody's knockin at my door
"Somebody's ringin my bell...
"Somebody's knockin at my door
"Somebody's ringin my bell...
"Do me a favor,
open the door
and let'em in..."

Let'em In, Billy Paul(1976)

don't ask me about givin love
I am love
molasses
blackstrapped
thick with love!...
even here in this place,
in this cesspool of contradictions.
In this dizzying den
of the haves and the have nots.
In this galaxy gateway corridor of promises
and broken promises.
In this spectacle landscape of cherry blossoms
soaked in our dead childrens' blood.
In this place where we are still not wanted
where we are stuck by circumstances
we never asked for
this place of prostituted public education

of riverfront privilege for white males only
this place where police became world famous
for cracking black skulls
practicing on real live black skulls
in this place laced with bitemarks
from prudential abscesses
swollen bleeding and poisoned with emptiness
all along our major thruways
of empty unfinished 2 families
of shuttered gated failed black businesses
and of lead corroded schools...
all so the devils and their parents
and their fans and their 'klans'
can all come and enjoy the American dream of access
right here!
right on by our childrens' empty eyes
right on by our elders shattered segregated memories
right on by us...
flying from the airport
up from where 1&9, 22 and 78 kiss
right on by us
cruising rt on by us
on Lyons av on central av
on springfield av on Sussex av
on raymond blvd on macarter hwy...
safely securely...
well endowed well protected
well insured well invested
contract cocky...
right on by us...
right
on
by us...
to a booming new downtown
booming with newly rehabbed office bldgs
booming with new corporate hdqtrs
booming with new eateries
newly rehabbed lofts, luxury apts and condos...
right on by us and our big booming beats...
and u can count on yr fingers
the handful of black and brown men and women
working on these booming new worksites
standing out like aliens in their own city!...
and you say you wanna bring back the good ol' days

good for who?
for batwielding white men
who broke those bats on our black asses
all up and down Bloomfield Av
in front of the same police world famous
for cracking black skulls?
Where were u there back then?
Were you there back then?
be careful what you ask for
You just might get it...
so don't just stand there asking me for love
when i'm stuck in this right here with you
in the dark shadows of those manicured cherry blossoms
haunted by our dead childrens' screaming blood...
ask them who still hate Amiri Baraka
even though Amiri showed them how to
renaissance the city by resurrecting our culture
in spite of them and their greedy bleary eyes
blinded by privilege profit motive and profit margin obsessions...
ask them for some democracy right here where we live!...
ask them to let us be apart of this redevelopment
to be the development on lyons on central
on springfield on sussex
on raymond blvd on macarter hwy...
let us be the ones who replace and repair
the lead corrosion in our childrens' schools
at living wages
so we can buy and fill those empty 2 families...
ask them to stop pushing us aside
and outta hospital beds meant for someone else...
in this gangsters paradise for real gangsters
corporate gangsters county machine gangsters...
petty gangsters from the hood need not apply...
in this bloodied blue place
where we still live and still dance
from swingdancing to breakdancing
even though we are still made to feel
like we are in the way...
here in this bloodied brick city
that we still manage to love
even though they got us bricked in
between the rock of prudential
and the hardplace of gentrification...
don't ask me for love

who just handstitched original crowned glory
in your hair at a discount
from my chair...
and your dumbass still think you got 'bad hair'?...
really?
don't ask me for love who limps to open
every door I can for everyone I can...
who doesn't wait on grants for paint with colors.
I am molasses
blackstrapped thick with love
and I know that I am color!
from my own painted crowned glory
from my freshpainted blazers and blouses
from my skirts inked and starred with my own designs
right down to my painted sneaker on my good foot
and my graph on the boot of my bad foot...
all starring me...
and I always answer calls for help
I always get up
on a limp that won't go away
and open the door for you...
I am always giving always sharing
always trying always loving...
and I still can't figure out why your dumbass
won't try to look thru this shit
so we can figure out how to get past this shit
past the contradictions
past the hypocrisy
past this divide of opulence and oppression
past this pained space that we love
that has us pinned between the rock of prudential
and the hardplace of gentrification
so we can see again
be again
live again, love again
breathe again...

"Somebody's knockin at my door
"Somebody's ringin my bell...
"Somebody's knockin at my door
"Somebody's ringin my bell...
"Do me a favor,
open the door
and let'em in..."

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*Brea Blackberry Molassez Knight (1986-2016)...A survivor of the hard knock life on the streets of Newark. initiated at the house of Baraka, as in Amiri and Amina Baraka, an emerging voice and force in the arts, for our youth and for social justice for her generation in the greater Newark community...

Poet, Rapper, Designer, Graphic artist, Loctitian, Entrepreneur, Activist...She was taken from us by complications from diabetes on August 14th,2016, something she valiantly struggled with for years...She was loved by many beyond words...

red star (for Fidel)

*"The Cuban Revolution! That's a revolution!
They overturned the system!..."*

Malcolm X-Message to the Grassroots

"People/ make the/ world go 'round..."

People Make The World Go 'Round, The Stylistics (1973)

Comandante Fidel has decided that it was time
that he left us...
after showing an impoverished
but pretty people
how the wealth and power
of unity and principle
courage and creativity
collective work and solidarity
can transform their lives...
after refusing to say 'uncle'
to that bully of empire that is 'uncle sam'...
after the turning Cold War pawns of the Cuban people
into Carlotta knighted warriors
checkmating Apartheid in their own blood in battle...
into rumba rocking raging rooks
and agents of change...
after nine decades of defiance and dignity...
nine decades...nine decades!...
Comandante Fidel has decided that it was time
that he left us...
And so he did...

on wings whirlwind wide
lifted by lyrics of Guillen of Neruda
of corretjer, or matos paoli,
of Baraka, of cortez...
of his Colombian companero
Gabriel Garcia marquez...
the man with the beard tall eyes and long lungs
has left us...
on wings whirlwind wide
flying high with a gallant green-fatigued stride
guided by that white dove
seeking that ultimate love from up above...
in pursuit of a place
pain free disease free
exploitation and strife free...
a place well beyond the cia sinister dead presidents
and soon to be dead presidents
a place beyond casualties
and the trauma of war...
a cane sugar sweet place...
a place of peace
an eternal harvest and feast...
a place where he is now
a cherished new red star
blazin bold in a liberated blue sky...
he has left us...
for a place of memory
and the kiss and taste of eternal justice and victory
to meet and kneel before Maceo and Marti
to reunite with Che'
and to be received with an ovation
by a column of martyrs and the revolutionary departed...
he has left us
for that place that chiseled him into a cherished
brand new red star
forever burning bright in a liberated blue sky...
so in this moment
as we wring our eyes of the truth of his new absence
as we face these clear and present dangers
as familiar and as sinister as ever
we remember what we have done
together
with our own hands and hearts while he was with us...
what we did together

no matter the obstacles or hostilities
and we say 'yo soy Fidel' * ... 'I am Fidel'
and we continue...
against the tyranny and tantrum
that is this backwards blockade
we continue and we say
'yo soy Fidel' ...'I am Fidel!...
against the evil of poverty and treatable disease
we snap the wrists of this order of exploitation
responsible for that needless suffering
and we say 'yo soy Fidel'...' I am Fidel!
against the rot of racism
that engenders hate, torture, mass suffering,
genocide and death...
against the sickness of sexism
that barbarically violates women and girls
deforming and stunting all human development
we continue and we say
'yo soy Fidel'...'I am Fidel!...
against the gloating of the global pharmaceutical complex
taunting the suffering with their high prices and flippancy
against the seductive mischiefmaking of the marketeers
against the handshaking deceit of the vampires of capital
we continue and we say
'yo soy Fidel' ...'I am Fidel'!...
so now that he has left us with our history and heritage
of hope
full in our hands
we continue
continue to provide sanctuary from the empire's persecuted...
continue to build and fight for human development
to meet human needs wherever there is suffering
continue to share everything we have
no matter how meager as a matter of principle...
as the profiteers
cringe
at our refusal to capitulate
as we sing dance train and fight
to their dismay
to our delight
we continue...
with the light of Che' In our eyes
inspired by f
Fidel's blazing brand new red star

shining in a liberated blue sky
we continue!...
and we say
'yo soy Fidel'... 'I am Fidel!
from our oldest and most battle borne
to our youngest between school and play
from our hotel workers patient with the petty of tourists
to compesinos proudly working their land
from lovers strolling the malecon
to our most advanced itchings of science...
from the singing sierra mountains
to the muscular cuddle of the countryside...
we continue and we say
'yo soy Fidel
'yo soy Fidel
'yo soy Fidel!...
'I am Fidel
'I am Fidel
'I am Fidel!
and we continue!...

"but that's what makes the world go round
the up and down the carousel...
"changing people's heads around
go underground, young man!...
"people make the world go round!..."

'Yo soy Fidel' (trans. 'I am Fidel')
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Leonard A. Slade, Jr.

Fifty Years of Matrimony

You accepted my brave telephone calls
when I tried to court you for marriage.
We flew kites together and rode bicycles
and you stopped to kiss me to
tell me "I love you."
Your black hair was long
when I used my nervous hands to comb it.
Your eyes met mine like stars
yielding to the bloody moon.
We would have good times
and bad times living and loving
producing a precious Princess
who would cemet the three of us.
She had her cross to bear
at an early age but
God kept her close to Him
while He healed you of
your breast cancer and brain tumor.
You kept driving your red car
to your good church where
your pastor prayed for your
continued healing.
I suffered later not
knowing whether I would live
or die. God intervened
and healed me, too,
to be with you a bit
longer. He was our miracle doctor.
Princess stood by us
both as she directed children's
music at her school reminding
us all that love
conquers pain
and sorrow and suffering.
We sat together yearly at South Beach
at Martha's Vineyard,
where twenty-five years
of visits replenished
our spirits and sustained

us and healed us.
Our love for fifty years conquered all.

What Some College Students Told Me

That I was too hard as a professor.
That they did not know why
 they should know grammar.
That they do not read newspapers.
That it is better to cheat
 than to repeat.
That I should have been a preacher.
That I loved to hear myself talk.
That I graded too hard.
That some students were afraid of me.
That I was one of the meanest
 professors they've ever had.
That some students were stabbing
 me in the back.
That some faculty members
 were jealous of me.
That some administrators see
 me as a threat.
That they wish they had a
 husband like me.
That I should have been
 a college president.
That I was no John Keats
 as a writer.
That I use the power of
 the pen to get my enemies.
That I know how to forgive
 but I do not forgive.
That I am more loyal
 to people than they are to me.
That I work too hard.
That I am generous to a fault
That I want more
 for my students than
 they want for themselves.
That I love teaching.

Joseph Jenkins

We profited that this brilliant professor
By his love of students (undergraduates and graduates)
Brought out the best in them personally and professionally,
Tickled their intellect with critical skills and deep thinking,
Refused to permit anyone to treat primer subjects
But insisted on depth and breadth and power of discussion,
Demonstrating his Phi Beta Kappa training
And Harvard University graduate degree.
He pushed and pushed students to their limit
To be their best producing master's and Ph.D. students
Who became distinguished professors and chief administrators
In the public and private sectors with lucrative salaries.
There worked the scholar; his voracious reading,
There he labored in the academy daily and on weekends, too,
Teaching and preaching the power and beauty of language.
Souls have toiled, inspired by his pure teaching
And love of learning for joy and peace and hope,
Yes with fire and fervor and passion for scholarship,
He baptized his disciples with cold water
Indifferent to maudlin feelings or personal sentimentality
But objectifying philosophical and literary ideas
Making them relevant for the real world
Preparing solid citizens for the bad and the ugly
As well as the good and the beautiful and the light;
Though he is gone now to be with celestial stars,
We live through him from old days to new
Building earth and heaven
Committed to becoming him,
We work, we think, we move the world.

Carl M. Hill

He prepared himself with learning
And living and worshiping ideals
That defied anyone's description.
Suave and urbane, erudite and patient,
He loved excellence and built colleges
By hiring the best minds
With whole hearts
Who could assist him with his cause.
Ivy League trained from Cornell
He was secure being one of the top

Inimitable chemists in the United States
and Canada. Here was an
Administrator, here was a scholar
Who made colleges powerful universities
For the structuring of a better America.
For the triumph of a Holy Spirit.

Question to a Teenager

I had to bite my
tongue when you disrespected
your mother with venom spewing

and I vomited when I saw you
lick out your nasty tongues at her
and later shouted abscentities

and your mother cried uncontrollably
when you yelled and then left for the beach
on your black motorcycle on Sunday.

How did you drown, neighbor?

Albany, New York

They lived and worked in Albany,
New York, where the Roosevelts
and Cuomos had been
governor, where William
Kennedy and Toni Morrison
had taught literature, where Herman
Melville had published masterpieces,
where Presidents Truman,
Clinton, and Obama had
visited, where regional colleges and
universities ranked high,
where health quality
was excellent,
where Bishops and
a U.S. President
were buried,
where citizens remain models for emulation,
and where good triumphs over evil.

First Love

He loved his teenage friend
more than any girl he
thought he would ever love
until she told him that
she did not love him.
He confided in his dad
that he was heartbroken.
His dad told him that a new
girlfriend would find him
and keep him forever.
So it happened.
He married his new girlfriend
at the cemetery
and lived with her in three states for
sixty years. He died suddenly
two days before she
succumbed.
They returned to the cemetery happy.

Unwinding After Fifty Years in the Classroom

The fiftieth year of teaching
I reflected on the joyous days
and the sad days I succeeded
and failed during the short years
and long years determined to
rebuild a troubled world
by imparting my modicum of
knowledge with students and
inspiring them to become scholars
and leaders and builders
pushing them to give their best
before they visit Bacchus
for wine to celebrate the
love of learning.
We shared a toast after their commencement
before my benediction.

Toys

By Leonard A. Slade, Jr.
Children love looking
under Christmas trees
for doll babies,
BB guns, tricycles,
and make them laugh
and cry with happiness.

Barbara Jordan

She studied at Boston University
Where she mastered legal analysis
And perfect debating skills.
She would serve people well
In the Lone Star State
Where her voice boomed
For respect and action.
Even world leaders yielded
To her oratory skills abroad and
In the Congress of the United States.
She frequently quotes The Constitution.
Here was a scholar,
Here was a force who wielded power
And helped oust
A President of the United States.

Mendacity

He told us that he did not
Send out holiday cards in December.
When he was thanked for his
Card by his college president
Friend a year later,
When others heard the conversation,
He was embarrassed that
He had engaged in mendacity.
"Don't forget to send us a card
Next year," we politely requested.
He licked out his tongue
And drove his Mercedes Benz
To the liquor store for wine.
Before getting in bed
He fell on his knees,

Asking God to forgive him
For all his iniquities
And to teach him how
To pray and live the Word.

Driving in the Dark

The car moved slowly
Cutting through darkness
Bathing itself with heavy fog.
Red and orange lights
Blinked as warning signals
That danger waited ahead.
The driver prayed for
Bright lights for visibility.
He kept moving slowly
Feeling his way home.

The Red Bicycle

I want to ride
 my red bicycle
so I can exercise
 for longevity.
What good am I
 dead
when I can delay
 peddling
my way
 to Heaven?

I Pause Observing Jealous Adversaries

to see their frowns. No matter where they
go, I am still a man.
I'll always anger them with published books.
I shine for my personal God
who wants my good works visible.
Nothing can keep them from cursing me out.
I'll absorb the pain.
And for the future there's a
grave waiting for them
but for now
There's a heaven waiting for me
right here on earth where

I'll savor living experiences and
smell adversaries rotting
in their graves.

Lesson Remembered

I learned how to pray
from my religious father.
He prayed passionately from
his heart at annual revivals until he died at 93.
"The communication is between
you and God," he taught me.

He sang in the choir behind
the pulpit until he volunteered
prayer at one annual revival.
During the revival the preacher rose
to tell him after his prayer that he did not know
how to pray and critiqued him.
"I was not talking to the Lord,"
he said loudly and repeatedly
until the preacher's criticism ceased.
The preacher left church with
his ass whipped and his sermon forgotten.

My poems! All painful memories, tears and sorrow!

My poems! All painful memories, tears and sorrow!
And somehow they keep me writing
About possible beauty somewhere in the world
Maybe in the woods where deer roam.
This walk – I wish I could find flowers
In winter, or any season
To rescue me from self pity
Yet I know better than
To weep as if I did not have God
In my life to guide me daily.
I am his child – and I
Depend on Him for strength
To keep taking my journeys
In life where He leads me.
O Darling my words have you
I dare not complain anymore.

Be Careful

Be careful how you treat your neighbor
In meetings or on the street,
For who knows when the mind may snap
And the victim may pull a weapon
To shoot the verbally abusive destroyer.
Assulting one personally can
Prove to be devastating
For families and communities
And the criminal justice system.
Be careful how you treat your neighbor,
For death can end it all.

Favoritism

Some preachers show favoritism in church;
Some teachers show favoritism in schools;
Some doctors show favoritism in offices;
Some employers show favoritism in the workplace;
When all of this happens;
Morale hits rock bottom
And anger builds up.
God loves the righteous
And forgives all inequities.
He favors us all.

What Black Parents Named Us
By Leonard A. Slade, Jr.
From slavery until the present,
Our names have been secular
and sacred:
From David to Jezebel,
Moody Askew to Aunt Lizzie Pearl,
Miss Addy to Mr. Leander,
Aunt Melissie to Uncle Zechariah,
Peachick to Zebedee,
Miss Doshie to Uncle Thaddeus,
Walter Nathaniel to Henrietta Bonaparte,
Uncle "Nut" to Uncle "Pecan,"
Aunt Queenie to Aunt Snuke,
"C" to June "Bug,"
"Boo" to Vergie Mae,

Aunt Malinda to Aunt Martha,
Grandpa Cola to Grandma Meather,
Grandpa Will to Grandma Claudia,
Jamal to Sesquita Zaleika.
What's in a name?
A history and culture
Rich in love
Indomitable in spirit.

Peace

Peace
In our homes
In our workplace
In our schools
In our communities
In our states
In our country
In our world.

When We

When we begin treating one another
the way we wish to be treated;
When we begin burying bullets, belligerency,
hatred, jealousy, arrogance, and hypocrisy;
When we begin eradicating racism, sexism, and classism;
When we begin tearing down walls that divide us;
When we begin building bridges that unite us globally;
When we cease getting "inebriated with the exuberance of our own verbosity";
When we begin practicing what we teach and preach;
When we begin loving our neighbors as we love ourselves;
When we begin loving God with all our hearts and soul,
mind and strength;
When we begin giving God all the glory and thanks;
When we begin doing everything for Him rather than for the
aggrandizement of ourselves;
Then we shall know the true meaning of Christmas.

The Double Consciousness Dilemma in film The First Commandment

Thomas Wayne Edison

"Sin is Negro as virtue is white" (Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 139).

The film *Cosmic Slop* (1994) is relatively unknown. Its title comes from the 1973 hit song by *The Funkadelic*. It is hosted and narrated by singer and music producer George Clinton. In the tradition of *The Twilight Zone*, this post-modern, thought-provoking HBO TV trio of film shorts addresses the state of marginalized groups of African ancestry within the United States. The collection combines fantasy, topical, social and spiritual issues that populations of color face. Among the three short films, the film titled "Space Traders" has received the most critical attention because of its science fiction elements. The plot revolves around an alien race that visits Earth and gives the United States five days to decide if it will trade its Black population in exchange for solutions to all the nation's problems. The third short movie, "Tang," takes place in the apartment of a poor African-American couple, an abusive boyfriend and his indecisive and unhappy girlfriend. They receive a mysterious package containing a gun, ammunition, and a note reading "learn your weapon and wait for the revolution." The focus of this study is the second short film titled *The First Commandment*. The movie was written and directed by acclaimed African-American film maker Warrington Hudlin, who is best known for producing the urban box-office comedies *Boomerang* (1992) and *House Party* (1990).

The title of the film *The First Commandment* (1994) refers to the first of the Ten Commandments recorded in the Bible: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). The movie focuses on the internal struggle of a young Nuyorican Catholic priest, named Father Carlos (Nicholas Turturro). He is torn between two worlds: the white world of Catholicism and the cultural legacy of African-inspired spirituality in the vestige of Santería. The Priest acknowledges being a descendant of Africans, but he has been educated to ignore his rich cultural heritage and position himself within the world of Catholicism. Despite his religious training, he is still viewed as an outsider by the paternalistic Cardinal, a man who blames him for the actions of his congregants. The disappearance of the image of the Blessed Virgin of Charity, forces Father Carlos to question his faith as two distinct worlds come into conflict. *The First Commandment* was produced one year after the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah*, which granted practitioners of Santería a constitutional right to sacrifice animals in connection with their traditional rituals. Today there are practitioners of these faith practices spread around the world. There are currently about 100

million practitioners in the U.S. and Latin America alone (Mary Ann Clark 2).

One of the notable elements of the film is how it presents Afro-Caribbean spirituality and Puerto Ricans in the United States in a respectful manner. Before the 1980s, many American films presented African-influenced spiritual traditions as negative or in a gruesome manner to incite fear in North American viewing public. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam highlight this in their book *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*: "The media often reproduce Eurocentric views of African spirit religions, for example, by regarding them as superstitious cults rather than as legitimate belief-systems, prejudices enshrined in the patronizing vocabulary ('animism,' 'ancestor worship,' 'magic') used to discuss the religions" (202). In the same manner that African-descended spiritual practices have been frowned upon in film, the image of the Puerto Ricans in general has been relatively negative, especially when connected with Afro-Caribbean spirituality in films such as *The Possession of Joel Delaney* (1972) and *I Like it Like That* (1994). Both films projected a negative image of Afro-Caribbean spirituality paired with Puerto Ricans. "The First Commandment" effectively represents elements of Santería and acknowledges the hostility that practitioners of the faith practice face from "Christians" that believe they alone know the one "true" pathway to God.

The focus of this paper is to illustrate the manner in which the Puerto Rican priest's internal struggle mirrors double consciousness, a concept popularized by African-American sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois in *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903). Du Bois places the concept of double consciousness within the African-American psyche because it is this sector that must struggle to exist between two worlds: one black and the other white. This study will highlight the important role that the Blessed Virgin of Charity (Virgen de Caridad de Cobre) and her syncretic Lucumí counterpart Oshún, goddess of love, beauty and maternity plays in the Caribbean. Focus will be placed on Cuba and the role that the Virgin has historically played on the island. The point of departure of any discussion of scholarship on Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices must begin with Cuban intellectual Fernando Ortiz.

Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz was the first scholar to produce detailed scholarship on elements of Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices. He was inspired to begin his research with the hope of using his background in criminology to help to scientifically explain the cause of high crime rates within the island's black community. He was motivated to write his first book *Los Negros Brujo* (1906) during a period when the nation was concerned with the dangers presented by the island's black community. Santera and scholar, Mary Anne Clark describes the atmosphere on the island in 1906 when the disappearance of a toddler named Zoila Días was blamed on three members of the *Cabildo Congos Real*¹. The community

1 Cabildos were cultural fraternities that developed in Cuba in the late 16th century. This community / cultural center was brought to the island by the Spanish. These centers allowed distinct African-descended ethnic groups to support one another and share their cultural traditions.

believed that members of the cabildo wanted to use the child's blood and body parts for sacrificial or curative purposes. Clark notes that this and similar cases began a twenty-year period of repression and persecution of practitioners of all African-based religious groups in Cuba: "During this period, Cubans became obsessed with the idea that the white civilized population must defend itself against the barbarianism and savagery of its black and mixed-race lower classes" (21). These negative attitudes about Afro-Cuban spirituality were fueled, in part, by racist attitudes against blacks. Years later, driven by his negative attitudes toward African-inspired spiritual practices, as a congressman, Fernando Ortiz led attacks in the form of legislation outlawing superstitious practices deemed antisocial during the 1919 *brujo craze* (Torre 844). In time, Ortiz had a change of thinking and became a proponent of the island's distinct African-inspired faith traditions. Ortiz's research opened the door for others to accept and understand Cubans, especially black and brown sectors of the island's population. His research focused on rituals, spiritual sub groups and transcultural manifestations of orishas or saints. One orisha that has been especially important for Cubans is Oshún, known in Spanish as the Virgin of Charity (Virgen de la Caridad).

Santería, like most African-inspired spiritual traditions, has historically been viewed as malevolent, partly because, like other African-inspired faith traditions, these functioned as a "weapon" to counter colonial oppression. One of the parallels that unite communities of African ancestry is their stigmatization by the upper class sectors on the island, a factor that is noted by Miguel A. de La Torre: "Cuban whites legitimated their religious practices by labeling Christianity a religion while disqualifying the black Other's beliefs as syncretistic and superstitious, if not demonic" (Torre 841). Such negative attitudes against African-descended faith practices is common in all parts of the African Diaspora. De la Torres notes there is a tight connection, even if it is not acknowledged: "Because of racism Santería has historically been alien to many white Cubans; yet, paradoxically, it is part of, if not central to, the Cuban identity as a whole" (Torre 838). Regardless of their physical appearance and social status elements of African spirituality have survived countless generations of Africans in the Americas. This shame of African-influenced spiritual expression can be seen in Nicolás Guillén's 1930 poem, "Canción del bongó" ("Song of the Bongo"). The work underscores the transcultural heritage among "white" and black Cubans by using the image of the drum.

There is a tight connection between Afro-Caribbean spirituality and Christianity. African religions have employed countless Christian objects and symbols in religious ceremonies. In modern Afro-Caribbean religious ceremonies, alongside traditional African symbols, there are numerous items representing Western religious beliefs, such as Christian icons, pictures of Catholic saints, the crucifix, and the Bible. The saints venerated by the Roman Catholic Church easily corresponded with the structure of the pantheonic orishas in Santería. Many orishas also carry the name of Catholic saints. The word "Santería" itself derives

from the Spanish word "*santo*" borrowed from Catholicism, meaning the veneration of saints. Santería adopted the terminology of the Catholic Church institution such as relationship of *compadrazgo*, thus making congregants "*ajihadados*" and "*ajihadadas*" of the primary orisha. In this capacity, the believers are the godchildren of the santeros, the priest, or intermediaries who spiritually protect and guide them. It was in these practices that Lucumí culture developed with the support of the Catholic Church. Despite Christian elements that have transculturally taken root in Santería, it is feared and a cause of shame "the Santería-orisha pathway has been paved with Spanish Catholic hagiography, sacred images used to facilitate the orisha worship of the African Yoruba" (Murrell 101) Despite parallels with Christianity, practitioners have traditionally received the cold shoulder from the Catholic leadership.

The Virgin of Charity [La Virgen de la Caridad] is a miraculous figure in the Caribbean. She was first encountered in the Cuban copper mining town of El Cobre, located outside of Santiago. It is believed that one day in 1608, two Indians and a slave boy were gathering salt on the coast when they saw a small statue of the Virgin Mary, carrying the Christ child and a gold cross floated by an a board stating her identity. Over time, according to Miguel de la Torre, the indigenous man in the boat became white, i.e Spanish: "One of the Amerindian brothers, Rodrigo, was transfigured into a white Spaniard named Juan, creating los Tres Juanes (the three Johns)-one white, one black, and one Amerindian" (Torre 850). The three men reflect the three ethnic groups that make up Cuban identity. Miguel A. de La Torre notes that "In 1926 the Catholic Church, officially recognized la virgensita as the patron saint of Cuba. Yet this same image is venerated by the practitioners of Santería, the repressed religion of Cuba, as Ochún" (Torre 838). In the Caribbean, the transcultural visual and spiritual paring of the two views of the Virgin did not compromise in any way their belief system of practitioners of Santería because its amorphous nature incorporated valid elements from other faith traditions if they helped practitioners to improve their lives. Oshún is the guardian of rivers, love, marriage, maternity and seduction. September 8 is recognized as the official feast day for this saint, affectionately known by Cubans as "Cachita." The colors associated with this orisha are yellow and gold and her number is five. She wears the traditional outfit associated with the virgin, a white dress, a gold crown, a blue veil, and a gold sash around her waist.

Oshún is viewed in the same manner in Puerto Rico. Islanders have historically faced cultural, social and political oppression for their allegiance to African-inspired faith practices. Attitudes against African-influenced spiritual practices was, and is, so intense that frequently when individuals of African ancestry enter the white world, they discover that their spiritual beliefs put their social status in question. These two worlds are divided by what Du Bois calls the Veil. He defines this barrier in the following manner: "Leaving, then, the white world, I have stepped within the Veil, raising it that you may view faintly its deeper recesses,—

the meaning of its religion, the passion of its human sorrow, and the struggle of its greater souls" (6). Lynn England and W. Keith Warner describe this barrier in the following manner: "At the societal level, the Veil is a schism creating two separate, interacting systems: one is the potent, privileged white system and the other is the disempowered and devalued nonwhite system" (England 964). Within the film *The First Commandment*, there is a clear boundary between Santeria and Christianity.

Europeans have always considered their traditional spiritual practices as the only legitimate form of religious expression. A common attitude held by white Christians followed the thinking that God has always acted on behalf of a chosen people. Early twentieth-century historian, Forrest G. Wood describes this attitude in the following manner:

It does not require a particularly careful examination to discover that, underneath all the political shibboleths and economic realizations, Manifest Destiny was, in the final analysis, a *religious* concept that was exalted by Americans of all social levels and had been an essential element in the adventures of every European colonial power. In fact, it is difficult to imagine Manifest Destiny without its Christian credo. (Wood 216)

Manifest Destiny was a nineteenth-century doctrine that the expansion of the US throughout the American continents was both justified and an inevitable result of being a superior race. This attitude serves as a justification for many policies that supported white superiority.

Du Bois notes that for the individual of African ancestry, different forms of African spiritual practices allowed them to survive a life-altering situation that they viewed as the most severe punishment by their God. This passage is interesting because of the loaded words used to reflect the attitudes of whites during the period:

Slavery, then, was to him (the individual of African ancestry) the dark triumph of Evil over him. All the hateful powers of the Underworld were striving against him, and a spirit of revolt and revenge filled his heart. He called up all the resources of heathenism to aid,—exorcism and witchcraft, the mysterious Obi worship with its barbarous rites, spells, and blood-sacrifice even, now and then, of human victims. Weird midnight orgies and mystic conjurations were invoked, the witch-woman and the voodoo-priest became the centre of Negro group life, and that vein of vague superstition which characterizes the unlettered Negro even today was deepened and strengthened. (142)

The passage reflects the tight connection between the black individual and spirituality but it also uses descriptive words such *heathenism* and *barbarous* rites to underscore attitudes of whites and upward-mobile blacks towards practices associated with uneducated blacks.

Despite the two spiritual worlds that revolve around blacks, according to Du Bois, the individual of African descent is fortunate by being gifted with the ability to better recognize the two worlds and the pressures that each imposes. In the film *The First Commandment*, the Puerto Rican priest is unable to understand the origin of the stress that he must endure because of his cultural identity while the santero cognitively understands the two worlds that exist around him. Puerto Rican ethnicity consists of a mixture of Taino, African and European ancestry. Many acknowledge their African heritage even though they may appear to be mestizo or "white." Du Bois's theory regarding the double consciousness of the black man also applies to the Nuyorican Priest. From a discussion between the priest and a local santero, the audience learns that both men grew up in families that respected Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices of their ancestors. Despite the priest's familiarity with Santería, he has chosen to identify with Catholicism.

As the movie begins, the audience is thrust into an Afro-Caribbean drumming and dancing ceremony, known as a *bembé*². The participants, dressed in white, dance to the beat of drums and wear beaded necklaces known as *elekes*. The women have their heads covered, according to tradition. They sing a Lucumí song in honor of Oshún "Omi, Omi Yeye, Omi Yeye ma sara wa o" [Water, Mother's water, yes, we are satisfied with Great Mother's water]" (*Divine Utterances* 107).

When the audience first meets the Catholic priest Father Carlos, he is sitting in on a meeting between a local museum representative named Mr. Spiley (J. Kenneth Campbell) and the Cardinal of the archdiocese (Richard Herd). The museum wants to acquire the image of the Blessed Virgin of Charity to display among their collection, because of its artistic richness. The representative of the museum explains that the statue of the Virgin is a beautiful work of art that the public "as a whole" should be able to appreciate. The Virgin is housed in Father Carlos's church, therefore he does not agree with the decision to move the image. He suggests that the museum's patrons come to the Bronx to the church if they would like to see the statue. The representative responds by stating that they would come, if the stature were "a little more accessible," meaning located in safer and more appealing part of the city.

The arrogant Cardinal serves as a symbol of arrogance.³ He seeks economic

2 According to African tradition, the Santería bembé is a festive drumming ritual complete with abundance of food, drumming, and ritualistic dancing performed as a form of thanksgiving to honor the orishas or as a form of repayment, supplication, or redemption to the orishas. (Murrell 133)

3 Another level of the Cardinal's arrogance is revealed as Mr. Spiley is about

gain for the Catholic Church while also punishing the Latino priest's congregants because of their belief in Santería. The Cardinal agrees to donate the image to the downtown museum with the promise that the museum would be willing to make a generous donation to the archdiocese's Capital Building Fund to make repairs to churches with the greatest need. When the priest asks if the money will support needed repairs to *his* church, the Cardinal responds by firmly restating that the money would go to "the Capital Building Fund and will be allocated to where there are the greatest need." This reveals that he does not intend to commit any of the money to the church from where the statue will be removed. The representative of the museum repeats that by housing the statue at the museum, the interest of the "larger community" would be served. This coded statement reveals that Mr. Spiley believes that the white community should be able to enjoy the Blessed Virgin in their chosen setting as opposed going to see her at the church in the Bronx. The museum wants to have the image for secular purposes while the congregants want it for spiritual reasons.

After the departure of museum's representative, the Cardinal repeats what Mr. Spiley said about moving the statue of the Blessed Virgin "to serve the interests of the larger community." This statement is a coded message to describe a circle of elite white wealthy museum patrons that would feel uncomfortable coming to the Bronx to see the work of art. Father Carlos asks the Cardinal how he could take the statue away from so many devoted Catholics. The Cardinal looks at him and asks a pivotal question that reveals that he questions the sincerity of Priest's congregants's devotion to the Catholic Church: "Are you sure they are all Catholics?" Father Carlos understands the history of Santería and uses this as a teachable moment to educate the Cardinal about the faith tradition by stating: "It (Santería) can be traced back to, Puerto Rico and Cuba the Yoruba people of ancient Africa as far back as before the time of Christ." The Cardinal interrupts, countering by stating "And that is why our Holy Lord sent down his only Son to save their heathen souls." This exchange illustrates a very deep level of judgmental intolerance on the part of the Cardinal toward the practitioners of Santería. The Cardinal reminds Father Carlos that in the past he had spoken with him about his failure to speak against practicing "pagan religions" in sermons to his congregants.

The Cardinal's attitude toward the priest underscores the marginalized position in which the spiritual leader must function in a Manichean system as envisioned by Du Bois when he describes the shadow: "Men call the shadow prejudice, and

to leave, he walks to the Cardinal to greet him and instinctively the Cardinal holds out his left hand to allow the man to kiss it but the man looks at him and then the Cardinal offers him his right hand to shake. This action illustrates the Cardinal's need to be respected for his elevated status in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. It also reveals that Mr. Spiley does not respect the Cardinal's rank in the Catholic Church and sees the statue for its artistic value rather than its religious value.

learnedly explain it as the natural defense of culture against barbarism, learning against ignorance, purity against crime, the 'higher' against the 'lower' races" (13). Father Carlos attempts to remove the shadow by explaining to the Cardinal that, for his parishioners, there is no conflict in combining the Saints with their own orishas in Santería but he notes that there is a high level of intolerance towards these spiritual practices. The Cardinal demands that the parishioners decide if they are pagan or Catholic. During this segment, Father Carlos must maintain a submissive posture as a way to show respect to his superior and avoid conflict. Such submission to white authority is highlighted by Du Bois when he notes that a successful young black man in the south must conceal his true identity and thus

cannot be frank and outspoken, honest and self-assertive, but rather he is daily tempted to be silent and wary, politic and sly; he must flatter and be pleasant, endure petty insults with a smile, shut his eyes to wrong; in too many cases he sees positive personal advantage in deception and lying. His real thoughts, his real aspirations, must be guarded in whispers; he must not criticise, he must not complain. Patience, humility, and adroitness must, in these growing black youth, replace impulse, manliness, and courage. (147)

Father Carlos, obviously, is not a black male living in the American South at the beginning of the twentieth century. But as a Puerto Rican, a group that has historically been marginalized, he is in a position that is parallel to the struggle outlined by Du Bois nine decades earlier.

The Puerto Rican clergyman's inability to confront his superior adds to the schism between the two worlds. The result is profound confusion within the psyche of the Nuyorican, which causes him the same distress as described by Du Bois: "But the facing of so vast a prejudice could not but bring the inevitable self-questioning, self-disparagement, and lowering of ideals which ever accompany repression and breed in an atmosphere of contempt and hate" (13). This self-doubt is part of the legacy of double consciousness. The priest steps into another world, one built on the beliefs of his ancestors, when he encounters the santero.

As Father Carlos walks down the street after his meeting with the Cardinal, he passes a Botánica⁴ and is greeted by a local santero (Efrain Figueroa). The santero invites him into the shop and asks the priest if he is going to allow "them" to take "our statue of Oshún?" Father Carlos corrects him by calling her the Blessed Virgin of Charity. This correction reflects that the priest chooses not to acknowledge the dualistic nature of the Virgin as a way to distance himself from the African-descended spiritual practice. He reveals himself to be a person that is unable to make major decisions regardless whether he agrees with them or not. He notes

4 *Botánicas* are shops located in larger cities that sell items that are used in African-inspired religious traditions.

that he made a vow of obedience to the Church and must honor it.

As an attempt to connect with the priest, the santero speaks in Spanish and asks why Catholics cannot accept the orishas while practitioners of Santería have accepted Catholic saints. He attempts to awaken Father Carlos's cultural identity by asking him where he grew up and where his parents grew up. Both men share the same background – raised in the Bronx with parents from the island. He reminds the priest of their shared African cultural and spiritual identity when he says: "You are a priest and a Puerto Rican. Your blood goes back to Africa." The priest posits that there is only one true religion when he states that "there is one true God." The santero retorts by asking him "So what is his name?" By focusing on a specific name for God, the existence of two worlds becomes more evident. If he calls the virgin Oshún, he is then looking at her through a spiritual lens that is different from his training as a Catholic priest. Despite his training, his connection with his African ancestors will soon play a role in removing the Veil that separates his two opposing worlds.

In the next scene, as the priest prays, he hears the sounds of a mob outside as a moving truck arrives to take away the statue of the Blessed Virgin. The two African-American movers are met by angry parishioners with placards bearing slogans such as "Believe in Miracles," "Art vs. Religion" and "Es nuestro Santo" [It's our Saint]. Father Carlos, in his role as their spiritual shepherd, pleads to them to move aside and allow the men to do their job. As the men walk into the church in astonishment, they look at the larger-than-life statue of the Virgin. At the end of the scene, Father Carlos comforts a female parishioner, as the truck pulls away. On the other side of the street, the Puerto Rican santero stands looking with eight people all dressed in white.

In the following scene, a *bembé* or dancing ceremony takes place with dancers dressed in white and drummers playing the song "Omi Omi ye ye" dedicated to Oshún.⁵ A woman dressed in yellow begins to stumble as she becomes mounted, or possessed, by the divine spirit of the orisha. She is led away and returns dressed in an iridescent gold blouse and a gold crown. A woman and a man escort her to the throne as the man fans her with an elegant yellow Japanese fan. The fan is associated with Oshún and her divine elegance. (*Living Santería* 145, note 44) In the tradition of such ceremonies, as a form of respect, she prostrates herself on the ground. She receives a blessing when she is raised by the santero. He asks her to answer the central question that is on all of their minds: "Why have you allowed them to take our Virgin?" The scene ends before she answers the question, thus leaving the film viewer in suspense.

When the moving truck arrives at the museum, the excited museum director is accompanied by two other formally-dressed white men. Mr. Spiley is very

5 "Omi, Omi Yeye, Omi Yeye ma sara wa o." [Water, Mother's water, yes, we are satisfied with Great Mother's water]" (*Divine Utterances*, 107).

anxious to see the new addition to the museum's collection. He is so excited that he is dismissive towards the African-American men that have moved the figure. As they open the back door of the truck, they all are astonished to find the space completely empty.

The next scene takes place in the Cardinal's office; an African-American police detective is providing an update on the case of the missing statue. The museum director paces the room, trying to understand what happened to *his* statue. He mentions two possibilities –criminal activity or fraud–; Father Carlos quietly sits in the corner. As the museum director departs, the Cardinal's greed surfaces when as he asks him "Will this change of events affect the museum's donation to the archdiocese?" Mr. Spiley simply looks at him -saying nothing- and walks away in disgust. This ill-timed question underscores that the Cardinal does not care about the statue for its spiritual value but only the monetary value it promises. The young priest sees the Cardinal's negative attitude toward his congregants and his focus on financial gain.

After the museum director departs, the Cardinal blames Father Carlos for failing to preach sermons against practicing pagan religions. The Cardinal predicts that if the police do not link the missing statue to organized crime, he predicts that officials will "probably trace it to some Puerto Rican in the South Bronx who cannot tell the difference between the Blessed Virgin and some mumbo jumbo idol." His description of the statue as "a mumbo jumbo idol", illustrates the Cardinal's inability to acknowledge Santería and one of its major orishas, Oshún. In the Cardinal's worldview there is no spiritual syncretism and he sees Catholicism as the only true path to God.

Following the discussion with the Cardinal, the priest feels pulled between the two worlds again when he returns to the santero's Botánica. The santero greets him with a cheerful demeanor, but this attitude dramatically changes after the priest accuses him of stealing the image. This action so deeply offends the santero that he asks Father Carlos to leave his shop. He tells the priest that he has nothing to do with the statue's disappearance and also lets the priest know that he understands the pressures that he is under. He attempts to help the priest by asking him: "Whose puppet are you? Where you sent down here to accuse me by the white Irish Cardinal?" The santero's reference to the Cardinal's Irish heritage underscores the fact that the European church leader comes from a different cultural group, therefore he cannot understand Puerto Rican beliefs and practices. This also underscores a level of racism demonstrated as the white authority figure is dismissive toward a person of color; especially one in a subordinate position.

Understanding the hierarchal nature of the Catholic Church, the santero is very aware of the actions of the Cardinal. He intuitively understands that the young priest is being blamed for events because of his defensive posture and disrespectful attitude. This is echoed when the santero tells him "I know when the pressure hits, shit

rolls downhill." The santero attempts to raise the Veil between the two worlds as the priest is about to exit the shop. He advises the priest to remember three things, the next time the Cardinal tries to put him in the middle between Santería and Catholicism: "*Primero* who you are, *segundo* what you are and, *tercero y más importante que nada*, where you came from, because you can be sure those are the three things that the Cardinal never forgets." The code switching between English and Spanish underscores the use of *Spanglish*, thus reflecting an important language pattern commonly found in New York's Puerto Rican community.

The movie moves to the realm of the marvelous real when the missing statue comes to life. In the middle of the night, the living Virgin walks down the dark streets in the South Bronx. An angry pimp is beating up a crack whore for failing to give him all the money for drugs that she was to have sold. He slaps her to the ground and she runs and falls at the feet of the divine Blessed Virgin of Charity. The pimp approaches the woman and puts his gun to her head. His hand begins to shake and he finally drops the gun because he is unable to pull the trigger. He flees the area as the woman continues to pray at the feet of the Blessed Virgin. When the woman looks up, the figure has vanished.

This divine figure later appears in front of three African-American vagrants as they warm their hands over a fifty-gallon drum spouting flames. She asks the men why they do not seek shelter in an abandoned building and points to a nearby edifice. One man says "You must be from Jerusalem, that's a crack house, if you are not coming to buy crack, stay away." She does not heed his advice and heads toward the building as the men attempt to stop her. She enters the building and as she ascends the steps, profanity in Spanish and English can be heard and people in the corners have crack pipes in their hands. Once individuals see her in the hallway, angelic choral music is heard playing in the background and they slowly begin to follow her. From this scene, one can see that music plays an important role in underscoring the shift from Christianity to a sacred space blessed by her divine energy. She smiles serenely and sits on a chair in front to a graffiti-covered wall.

The santero visits Father Carlos to tell him that they found the statue of the Virgin. Together they go to the crack house which has a long a line of people patiently waiting to enter the building to see her. Father Carlos asks a couple of people leaving the building what is going on, but they are in a trance-like state and oblivious to his presence. Finally, when he approaches a woman, who is one of his parishioners, she tells him that the Saint from the Church, is alive, and blessed her. She concludes by saying "She's so human and she is so kind." The santero tells the priest that if he wants to know what is going on, he would have to enter the building to see for himself.

The setting becomes carnivalesque as individuals outside the community such as police, news reporters, and news cameras arrive. One reporter announces to

his TV audience that "A Saint is dispensing blessings at a local crack house in South Bronx." The police are prepared and in place, in case a raid is required during the frenzy of activity. The Cardinal arrives and, in his typical eurocentric style, attempts to control the situation and orders Father Carlos to enter the building and to "Tell the person to cease and desist this charade." He tells the hesitant priest that if he does not enter the building, the police will. The Priest tells the Cardinal that sending the police in is not a good idea because there is no danger to the public since the people are coming out blessed. When the santero asks the Cardinal, "What if she really is a Saint?" the Cardinal asks the santero "Who are you? The spiritual leader responds with "You can call me Padrino" and the Cardinal retorts by curtly responding "I think not." The Cardinal's refusal to even acknowledge the santero and his title reflects a level of arrogance. This reflects the world of the Cardinal that prevents him from expressing respect for other faith traditions. Judith R. Blau and Eric Brown note that "...whites do not have the burdens associated with the *Veil*, but neither do they possess the agency blacks do in taking it on and off" (Blau 221). The santero can recognize aspects of Catholicism, while the Cardinal cannot even recognize him by calling him *Padrino*. The *Veil* is important because once the individual of African ancestry is able to perceive it, (s)he is better able to function as a balanced individual.

The Cardinal calls this unique occurrence an example of "mass hysteria" and tells the priest that if he believes that the person is a Saint, he has his permission to negotiate, provided that she exits the building immediately. This, once again, places the priest between two worlds. The Cardinal's idea of negotiating with the Virgin reflects a deep lack of faith that a powerful God could make such a miracle take place. The Cardinal also tells him to ask her where the statue is located. The santero's decision to remind the priest to ask about her identity reveals that the leader is cognizant of the importance of the divine manifestation to reveal her true identity to him.

Father Carlos enters the building and passes a long line of people, some holding flowers, waiting to have an audience with the Blessed Virgin. It is important to note that the individuals with flowers in hand are important because this illustrates that they believe that such gifts to an orisha will bring them divine blessings.⁶ When he enters the room, he is taken aback and makes the sign of the cross when he sees the beautiful woman seated before him in an arm chair. He tells her what his mission when he says: "Holy Mother, I have been sent to ask what you want." She responds by forcing him to reveal from which world he is coming when she states: "If you want to know what I want, you must address me by my true name."

6 This is clearly explained by Johan Wedel: "For the followers of Santería, sickness can be avoided and health achieved through rituals and initiations, and by offerings and sacrifices to the Santería divinities. In this way, humans are empowered in their daily life and protected against supernatural forces" (*Santería Healing*, 2)

When he pretends that he does not know her true name, she tells him "Yes you do. I am Oshún." At this moment, the Catholic saint becomes the image of Oshún wearing a gold head covering with gold beads covering her face. This is a pivotal moment because Father Carlos confronts the Veil between the two worlds and is pulled back into the black world.

This transformation is so overpowering for him that he staggers from the building and declares that she says her name is Oshún. The santero adds "She is also known as Our Blessed Virgin of Charity." The santero's recognition of the *orisha's* Catholic name underscores that he can see beyond the Veil and recognizes that she is one spirit known by two names. Scholar Judith Blau posits that Du Bois suggests that whites have limited understanding of black people while the black community must be able to understand both worlds (Blau 221). This encounter has so overwhelmed the priest that he collapses outside the crack house. This lack of understanding is based on the priest's European philosophical foundation which does not acknowledge other belief systems, especially those of African origins.

Father Carlos awakens in a hospital bed with the Cardinal reciting Our Father and Hail Mary. He tells the Cardinal about what he witnessed and the Cardinal tells him that he must hold onto his faith, i.e. the Catholic faith. The priest retorts by positing the following: "This is a sign from the orisha, a sign from the Ancestors." The Cardinal tells him that many mysteries cannot be understood and advises him not to be distracted. The young priest has briefly seen the Virgin from the perspective of his African ancestors, but his superior metaphorically pulls him back into the logocentric world of Catholicism when the Cardinal equates this with the story of Jesus when he was tested in the desert described in the Biblical books of Luke 4 and Matthew 4:1-11. When Father Carlos asks the Cardinal if the event was a miracle, the Cardinal tells him "You must sometimes look away from miracles, so that you can keep your eyes on God." This ironic statement reflects that the Cardinal separates miraculous acts from their powerful source and refuses to acknowledge that such events could take place as result of God's divine inspiration.

The Veil between the two worlds is removed near the end of film when Father Carlos makes the final preparations before mass. The santero visits him and says that the case is closed since the statue is now at the museum. He also tells the priest that he now has an obligation since the living Saint revealed herself to him. The priest retorts that the time has come for the santero to make a choice. The santero counters with: "You don't understand, there are circumstances when the orisha makes the choice for us." The santero concludes by telling him that "The gate is now open." His comment alludes to the fact that the orisha has made a connection with him because she has selected him to become one of her messengers despite the Priest's resistance. The Veil is lifted between the two worlds as Oshún uses a divine power to make him her divine agents despite his

hesitation.

In the final scene of the film, the priest is in his crowded Church preparing to administer the sacraments to his parishioners. This event is underscored with the sound of serene music from the church's pipe organ. As he raises the host, he looks up to see the empty space where the statue once stood. As he holds up the chalice of the "blood" of Christ, he looks up at the empty space and suddenly sees a manifestation of Oshún dancing, as the sound of an Afro-Caribbean song dedicated to Oshún with heavy percussion is heard. The image disappears and the organ music is restored.

As Father Carlos begins to give communion to his congregants, the Virgin makes her presence known. When he gives communion to the third woman, with her head covered and dressed in yellow, she begins to have convulsions as she is mounted by the spirit of Oshún and she moves aside. Again the Afro-Caribbean song dedicated to Oshún drowns out the organ music. As he gives the host to the next woman, also dressed in yellow, with her head covered, she also begins to shake with the Holy Spirit. Now many members of the congregation are becoming mounted by the spirit of Oshún. An overwhelmed Father Carlos backs away in amazement and the scene ends with the camera focusing on the empty space where the statue of the Virgin of Charity once stood. Now the image of a dancing Oshún appears and slowly disappears leaving the space empty again. The ending of the film implies that Father Carlos has been chosen by Oshún, The Blessed Virgin of Charity to become a Santero. Despite his training within the Catholic Church, the orisha has chosen him to lead others to the African-influenced faith tradition of his ancestors. The audience is left to determine how he will move forward in the future now that he has been chosen by Oshún.

This short film is very powerful in its respectful presentation of African-influenced spirituality, Puerto Ricans and the orisha Oshún. It counters the traditional image of Puerto Ricans by showing them following the spiritual tradition that has been an important part of the island's culture. Despite the lack of respect that Santería receives from Christians, like the Cardinal, who feel that their religion is the only true faith. The Cardinal's attitude shows a deep level of hostility toward a spiritual tradition that parallels Catholicism. He also reflects greed, envy and a closed-mindedness of a religious leader in the Catholic Church. He is so upset that he opts to sell the image of the Virgin of Charity as a way to punish those that respect her and make money for the archdiocese. While the statue was removed by the Cardinal as a way to force the congregants to abandon their faith in Santería practices, the Virgin blesses the priest with her ashé, or divine creative energy, to allow him to connect others with Afro-Caribbean spirituality.

In the early decades of the twentieth-first century, during a period in which there has been a questioning of ideas that counter Eurocentric ideals, one understands the role that Christians play in imposing their faith practices on others, especially

people of color. By applying W.E.B. DuBois's theory of double consciousness to the young Puerto Rican priest, Father Carlos, one can easily understand the deep level of resistance that Afro-Caribbean individuals face when they come to the United States. The syncretic image of The Blessed Virgin of Charity and Oshún serve as markers of the two worlds that pull the priest until Oshún chooses him to serve as a spiritual leader. In this way, the film *The First Commandment*, serves as an important shift in the presentation of Puerto Rican and African-inspired faith practices.

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A Legacy of Hate and Popular Sovereignty: Debating the Constitutionality of the Public Display of Confederate Monuments and Flags¹– A Debate Inspired by the 2015 Murderous Actions of Dylann Storm Roof in Charleston, South Carolina

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There is no constitutional provision restricting the public display of Confederate monuments or Confederate flags. Indeed, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits Congress from abridging the freedom of speech of the citizenry. However, let us be clear, for what is under consideration in this paper is whether or not taxpayer dollars should be utilized to publicly display the national flags of or monuments glorifying the Confederate States of America (CSA). The quick answer is that this is a question left up to the citizenry of each state and its elected representatives in each respective state legislature. In sum, this is a normative question which begs us to determine whether or not it is morally right to publicly fund the public display of Confederate monuments, flags, and other symbols of this nineteenth-century rebellion. However, this is a quick and simple explanation. For a deeper understanding of whether or not taxpayer dollars should be utilized to publicly display the national flags of or monuments glorifying the Confederate States of America, we need to examine some of the history associated with this issue before the question of morality can be answered.

Background

What motivates a young 21-year-old man to orchestrate a mass shooting of nine parishioners of a long-established African-American church in an historic southern United States city? Though a potential tenth victim survived this Wednesday, June 17, 2015 massacre at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina, outrage was palpable, especially following the confession two days later by the arrested shooter, Dylann Storm Roof, when he announced that his intention was to start a race war. At his bond hearing two days after the horrendous murder, a local newspaper, *The Post and Courier*, the South's oldest daily newspaper, reported:

Roof also could not see beyond the courtroom, where Charleston has been transformed by tragedy into a ground zero for the racial strife reignited in recent years by a call of "black lives matter." He faces nine murder charges in the attack that some say exposed

an underbelly of the Deep South that bubbled to the surface in a bloody way around 9 p.m. Wednesday at 110 Calhoun St.²

The Confederate battle flag still flies on the Statehouse grounds, despite calls from critics nationwide to take it down. And some pointed to the bond judge who faced Roof as another example of deep-rooted problems here. The judge, who has been reprimanded for using the N-word in the past, called Roof's family members victims, too (Knapp, June 19, 2015).

Dylann Roof's Manifesto

What were the motivations behind this brutal mass murder? What caused 21-year-old Dylann Storm Roof to destroy the lives of nine people and severely injuring a tenth inside of a church? If we read over his justification for action, as declared in his alleged manifesto³, Dylann Roof claims that he was not reared in a racist home or environment; albeit, he admits, "living in the South, almost every White⁴ person has a small amount of racial awareness" which he attributes to "the number of negroes in this part of the country" (Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto, 2015).⁵ The 2012 murder of Trayvon Martin⁶, he claims, is what triggered his awakening to 'racial awareness'. As for Martin's killer, George Zimmerman, Roof concludes: "It was obvious that Zimmerman was in the right." Furthermore, by alleging that the "real problem" in the country, and in Europe, is "black on White crime," Roof has thus focused in on, objectified, and crystalized the presumed cause of his unrest and unhappiness. He began researching "black on White murders" and claims he "found out about the Jewish problem and other issues facing our race," and, from then on, he states: "I can say today that I am completely racially aware." To Roof, the biggest problem for American whites are blacks, as he utilizes the possessive "our race" to announce his identification with "whites". He states:

[Blacks] are stupid and violent. At the same time they have the capacity to be very slick. Black people view everything through a racial lense. Thats what racial awareness is, its viewing everything that happens through a racial lense. They are always thinking about the fact that they are black. This is part of the reason they get offended so easily, and think that some thing are intended to be racist towards them, even when a White person wouldnt be thinking about race. The other reason is the Jewish agitation of the black race (Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto, 2015).⁷

Roof concludes from his etiology of the alleged problem that whites need to be as conscious about race as blacks are. "Modern history classes," he argues, "instill a subconscious White superiority complex in Whites and an inferiority complex in blacks." Roof says that he does not deny that whites are superior. Psychically

constructing a master-slave⁸ narrative, Roof's consciousness of 'self' here begins to relegate all thinking in regards to blacks as 'inferior' while attributing superior qualities to all of his internal thoughts regarding whites.

Next, Roof addresses what this author recognizes⁹ as a class contradiction Dylann is facing. He is apparently upset that all whites are blamed for slavery, even though only a small percentage of White ancestry owned slaves. "Yet," he laments, "every White person is treated as if they had a slave owning ancestor." "This," he continues, "applies to in [sic] the states where slavery never existed, as well as [to] people whose families immigrated after slavery was abolished." Conscious that he is not of, nor a descendant of, the patrician class of planters who owned slaves [or so he believes], Roof is forced to confront existential questions of identity. He does understand, as indicated by his comments, that the original planter patrician class and their descendants are directly responsible for slavery, and he suggests that the non-slave-owning class should not incur blame for this institution. But while class categories are present in his thinking, we will see that this avenue of analysis does not develop beyond several contradictions which he points out in his Manifesto.

Roof then remarks on the good nature of some slave owners, on the positive aspects of segregation, and on the negative aspects of integration. Segregation, he says, "not only did it protect us [apparently referencing whites] from having to interact with them [immediately prior, "them" is used to reference "negroes"], and from being physically harmed by them, but it protected us from being brought down to their level. Integration has done nothing but bring Whites down to level of brute animals. The best example of this is obviously our school system." As a consequence of integration, whites are "forced to move to the suburbs to send their children to 'good schools,'" academic institutions which, in Roof's mind, "corresponds to how White it is" (Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto, 2015). Roof says he hates that whites are running scared away from the cities. This is a sign of weakness and a lack of a will to fight, he writes. He then returns to the class problem, for he asks: "But what about the White people that are left behind? What about the White children who, because of school zoning laws, are forced to go to a school that is 90 percent black?" The lingering class question is once again referenced by Roof's uncertain economic circumstance which once relegated him, and other whites like him, to transfer to or remain in the inner cities, unable to relocate and join the 'white flight' to the suburbs, forcing him to attend predominantly black or minority inner-city schools. Does he remain aligned with a racial categorization, i.e. the undifferentiated grouping of all whites, or can he begin to clearly see the differing impact of integration according to one's social class situation? What he refers to as "weakness" on the part of whites who flee to the suburbs is, in actuality, the result of differentiated class circumstances, material conditions which destroy his myopic racialized perceptions through which he has constructed the amalgam or perceived unity of his racial categorization,

viz. "whites".

It should be noted that in his early years Roof "attended solidly middle-class, racially integrated schools, grew up with black friends and came from a respected family, his grandfather a well-known local lawyer" (Robles and Stewart, July 16, 2015). In fact, his father is a contractor who owns a construction business (Ellis and Cahill, June 27, 2015). Divorce records, however, paint a picture of a family that had undergone significant economic and social trauma during the 2008-9 recession, just as Dylann was entering his teenage years. "[C]ourt records suggest that his divorced parents struggled with finances when he was a teenager, with his mother being evicted from her home in 2009 and his father's once-successful business renovating historic homes falling into debt and closing a few years later." In her divorce filing, the second Mrs. Roof stated that she had "a car that cost \$700 a month, a 3,000-square-foot, custom-built home in Earlewood [Columbia, SC] and four other properties, including two homes in the Florida Keys"¹⁰ — evidence of a solid middle-class life (Robles and Stewart, July 16, 2015). The breakup of the family occurred as Dylann was entering the ninth grade in 2009, a formidable period in most children's development. Indeed, as *The Atlantic* magazine notes: "Educators are increasingly focusing on the ninth grade as the year that determines whether a young person will move on or drop out of school" (Willens, November 1, 2013). Dylann Roof's family's economic situation underwent a significant freefall during this period along with millions of other Americans who fast saw their livelihoods slip away in what economists now refer to as the Great Recession, which the International Monetary Fund labeled as "'the largest financial shock since the Great Depression'" (Verick and Islam, May 2010; Stewart, April 9, 2008).

Whether Dylann Roof is speaking from personal experience or from what other students have conferred to him, he rhetorically asks: "Do we really think that that [a] White kid will be able to go one day without being picked on for being White, or called a 'white boy'? And who is fighting for him? Who is fighting for these White people forced by economic circumstances to live among negroes?" His answer is definite. He says it clearly: "No one, but someone has to." Here, Roof remarks that it is "economic circumstances" which force some whites to "live among negroes." However, rather than pursue the cause of this class division, due to varying economic circumstances, his defensive mechanisms subordinate this question in order to focus on the immediate and perceived necessity to fight back against the alleged enemy. Just as he maintains his allegiance to an all-white mental categorization, so, too, does he see all blacks as a monolithic and undifferentiated unity.

Jews represent a puzzling anomaly to Roof, though he does hold them responsible for "agitation of the black race." The problem, as he sees it, is "that jews look White, and in many cases are White, yet they see themselves as minorities." "Most jews," he writes, "are always thinking about the fact that they are jewish. The other issue is that they network. If we could somehow turn every jew blue

for 24 hours, I think there would be a mass awakening, because people would be able to see plainly what is going on." He concludes: "I don't pretend to understand why Jews do what they do. They are enigma." Constricted by his racial framework, the only way Roof can apparently make sense of Jewish people is to imagine them as being of a different color, i.e. "blue", even while they remain a substratum of whites. Additionally puzzling to Roof is the possibility of Jewish people being white in appearance yet possessing a consciousness of their difference from other whites. While this should suggest to him that the category of race is a social construct—and one that is inadequate, by itself, to fully explain social reality, he, instead, concludes in regards to Jewish people that they are "enigma" or inscrutable, mysterious, obscure, and hard to understand. Hispanics, for Roof, are divided between "good and bad Hispanics". He writes:

I remember while watching hispanic television stations, the shows and even the commercials were more White than our own. They have respect for White beauty, and a good portion of hispanics are White. It is a well known fact that White hispanics make up the elite of most hispanics countries (Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto, 2015).

As per his division between good and bad Hispanics purportedly based upon how white they are, he remarks: "There is good White blood worth [sic] saving in Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and even Brasil. But they are still our enemies." Apparently, being white is not enough for Roof; perchance one must also speak English or simply be non-Hispanic to be a worthy ally? Or, as this author suggests, the division between good and bad Hispanics, for Roof, is one which rests subconsciously upon a class basis, one which assigns positive attributes to those with money, i.e. 'winners', and which sees those without money in a negative light, or, as 'losers'.¹¹ If this latter calculus is at work in Roof's mind, then it also may expose a negative self-image underlying his propensity for violence given his own unstable class position.

East Asians fare well in Roof's mind, because, he says, "They are by nature very racist and could be great allies of the White race. I am not opposed at all to allies with the Northeast Asian races," he writes. Fellow white racists of different geographical origins, albeit non-North American, are, in Roof's mind, acceptable as potential allies, particularly if they are "very racist". Moreover, these comments regarding East Asians as being "by nature very racist" indicate that Roof does not see race as a social construct but rather as an innate disposition varying in intensity as per the construction of Roof's racial categorization.

Next, we finally get to the idea of patriotism and the current United States flag, which Roof admits hating. He says: "People pretending like they have something to be proud while White people are being murdered daily in the streets. Many veterans believe we owe them something for 'protecting our way of life' or

'protecting our freedom'. But im not sure what way of life they are talking about. How about we protect the White race and stop fighting for the jews." United States politicians, who generally represent capitalist class interests, will invariably claim to be fighting for the interests and well-being of all Americans. Without a basic understanding of the class composition of one's society, let alone how these class stratifications are generated by the prevailing socioeconomic system, such rhetoric by designing politicians rings hollow not only to disaffected members of the working class, but, as well, to discontented sections of the petite bourgeoisie¹², who perchance have experienced social and economic dislocations that have disturbed a prior sense of stability, leaving them, like the millions in the working class, who, in a capitalist social formation, are not the intended recipients of the advantages of political power, feeling adrift, unmoored, and abandoned. Lacking a class perspective and armed with only a racial outlook, Roof thus concludes:

I have no choice. I am not in the position to, alone, go into the ghetto and fight. I chose Charleston because it is [the] most historic city in my state, and at one time had the highest ratio of blacks to Whites in the country. We have no skinheads, no real KKK, no one doing anything but talking on the internet. Well someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me (Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto, 2015).

Broken Home, Broken Dreams

There are several issues at work here which have impacted Roof's life and which have influenced him to undertake this racially motivated mass murder. Dylann Storm Roof was born April 3, 1994, to a carpenter father and a bartender mother, the marriage ending in divorce by the time of Dylann's birth. His father subsequently remarried five years after Dylann's birth, but then he divorced his second wife after ten years of marriage, as the father was allegedly physically and verbally abusive towards the second wife. In 2005, the family moved from South Carolina to the Florida Keys for three years after which they returned, separately, to South Carolina in 2008. In the year of his father's divorce from his second wife, 2009, the family's economic fortunes plummeted significantly as noted earlier. In nine years, Dylann Roof attended nine schools in two South Carolina counties, repeating the ninth grade in a different school.¹³ He stopped attending school in 2010 and commenced spending his time playing video games and taking illegal drugs. After his parent's divorce, Roof lived alternatively in either his maternal uncle's house or with his father but was mostly reared by his second mother. In short, Dylann Roof came from a home broken by economic dislocation, multiple marriages, physical and verbal abuse, drug abuse, lack of stability, multiple homes, multiple schools, and other obstacles to a stable life. With such a contorted life, is it any wonder that Dylann Roof was grasping for something to hold on to, something stable? And he found it in the Old Confederacy, in the battle flags and monuments glorifying that nineteenth century rebellion, in the ideas of white

supremacy—in other words, what every white person in the South is, still to this day, taught to be their 'God-given heritage' (cf. Hague, April 8, 2015 or Stout, March 2008). And, yet, here too, he found that this legacy of white supremacy was also fast slipping away.

Dylann Roof is a victim of a class-divided society, one which pits rich against poor, one which utilizes divisions, some natural, some created, like race—which is a societal construct—in order to maintain white elite dominance. Pitting poor whites against blacks has historically been utilized time and again in this country to maintain and reinforce white supremacy in the interests of class domination by the wealthy. One may point to the lessons learned by the early white American planters who crushed the multiracial rebellion of Nathaniel Bacon in 1676, the latter who united mostly impoverished Caucasian indentured servants and enslaved Africans around their common bond-servitude, to challenge the ruling class in the nascent Virginia colony, as the original template for racial division within the United States. The unification of poor white and black folk was too much for the white ruling class to bear. As a consequence of this rebellion:

Stricter slave codes emerged in Virginia after Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, when wealthy planters decided to abolish indentured servitude and establish permanent slavery for Africans, fearing that class conflict would undermine their tobacco plantation holdings. They gradually eliminated the importation of indentured servants from England in favor of enslaved Africans. Though many of Virginia's slave codes addressed specific conflicts—one law enacted in 1701 offered a bounty for killing a runaway named Billy, who was alleged to have robbed and destroyed crops—most were designed to aggressively curb the movements and activities of slaves. Social and cultural separation of blacks and whites was started when Virginia planters began establishing laws based on the assumption that Africans were an inferior race ("Government: 1600-1775, Colonial Authority").

In order to curtail subsequent multiracial worker uprisings, the planter class pushed through the Virginia House of Burgesses the Virginia Slave Codes of 1705 which not only stripped blacks of any previously-held rights, but, as well, enacted a racial divide as a legal mandate. This racial "color line"—a term originally used by nineteenth-century antislavery leader Frederick Douglass and later popularized by the eminent scholar W.E.B. Du Bois—subsequently became the primary method for obfuscating and controlling class divisions within the United States (Douglass, 1881; Du Bois, 1903). As pointed out by Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, in her keynote speech to the 2016 Democratic National Convention:

"Divide and Conquer" is an old story in America. Dr. Martin Luther King knew it. After his march from Selma to Montgomery, he

spoke of how segregation was created to keep people divided. Instead of higher wages for workers, Dr. King described how poor whites in the South were fed Jim Crow, which told a poor white worker that, "No matter how bad off he was, at least he was a white man, better than the black man." Racial hatred was part of keeping the powerful on top (Warren, July 25, 2016).

Dylann Roof is only one of the latest victims of this tactic. Devoid of class consciousness, poor whites and disaffected middle class whites, like Dylann Roof, align themselves with the dominant white power structure, for they have been told, either directly or indirectly from the time of their birth, that at least they are not black. In fact, the fact that some whites are rich while the majority are poor is not seen as an impediment to their advancement but rather as a blessing, as the wealthy whites are presumed to be looking out for and, ultimately, protecting all whites, rich and poor alike. Informed by this framework of benign paternalism, a critical differentiation amongst whites along class lines becomes problematic and is subordinated to the racial mental categorization. Hence, defense and preservation of the race becomes a top priority, for one's existential identity is presumed to be at stake.

Though sociologically a victim of a segmented society, intentionally divided internally along social class and other divisions, Dylann Roof's murderous actions are reprehensible and unforgiveable. Many will be tempted to direct their ire and hatred on either this one killer or, in addition, generalize their wrath towards "the white race". Such a reaction plays into the game plan of the puppet masters of the capitalist system who continually utilize wedge issues to obfuscate their class domination and hegemonic control of society by dividing workers along a variety of separate acts of injustice directed at specific groups but not at the structure of society in general. By escaping responsibility for instilling a culture of racism, these purveyors of class division thus enable the capitalist system to chug along incessantly and relentlessly. Consequently, the problem is explained away by apologists of the capitalist system as merely a cultural artifact, one that will require time and education in order to overcome long-instilled attitudes of racial antagonism. What is called for by supporters of the system is a change in hearts and minds and not a change in structures or material relationships.

State sovereignty: "a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force"

With the necessity to utilize wedge issues to obfuscate the necessary class divisions demanded by capitalist socioeconomic relations, particularly between those who own and control means of production and those who are forced by their economic circumstances to sell their labor-power in order to live, how are other social divisions, e.g. those based upon the societal construct of 'race' (though historically capitalists have utilized a plethora of societal divisions including gender, age, language, national origin, physical ability, along with others), to be

utilized and maintained without compromising the legitimacy necessary for the maintenance of the existing class rule? Such an inquiry requires a theoretical understanding of modern state formation and, in particular, reference to what was offered by this country's preeminent state theorist, James Madison.

Comparative political scientists Orvis and Drogus list four critical characteristics that modern states share: territory, sovereignty, legitimacy, and bureaucracy. From a jurisprudential perspective, sovereignty is the full right and power of a political body to govern itself without interference from any outside sources or bodies. From a political perspective, it connotes supreme authority over some polity or designated area of the earth along with its population and resources. Sovereignty is the basic principle underlying the dominant Westphalian model of state foundation since 1648.¹⁴ Just as modern states strive for external sovereignty, so too, they argue: "Modern states...strive for internal sovereignty—that is, to be the sole authority within a territory capable of making and enforcing laws and policies." Thus, in other words, while sovereignty is a basic principle of modern state organization, it is not a given. States must be ever vigilant in protecting their claims. Modern states, remark Orvis and Drogus:

must defend their internal sovereignty against domestic groups that challenge it, just as they must defend it externally. Internal challenges typically take the form of a declaration of independence from some part of the state's territory and perhaps even civil war. States rarely are willing to accept such an act of defiance (2014, p. 39).

States try to enforce their sovereignty by claiming, in the words of German sociologist Max Weber, "the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (1919). The state, therefore, is the only entity that has the right to force people to do something. Liberal democracies, in theory, observe strict guidelines under which the use of force is permissible. However, all states reserve the right to utilize force to preserve and protect their territorial integrity and sovereignty. States, however, must be judicious in their use of force, for legitimacy is also a key factor, along with force, in the maintenance of a state.

As the Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci argued, ruling classes maintain their historical unity not simply on juridical or political bases—though these are important—but, more fundamentally, it "results from the organic relations between 1) State or political society and 2) civil society, or, in other words, "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (*Prison Notebooks*, 1929-1935/1971/1987, p. 263). Civil society is seen as the space where civil consent is formed. Civil society is the framework of volunteer organizations. Thus, for Gramsci, force and consent are the two overlapping and interconnected spheres undergirding the state apparatus. In the context of the modern state, therefore, to better secure the legitimacy of state policies, one should prioritize consent as

the preferred manner of their application. With the willful consent of all affected parties, the use of force becomes basically unnecessary, though it remains an essential tool should one violate established procedures.

Societal divisions, by this understanding, are to be maintained through the usage of a calculus that while protecting the holders of political power does not trumpet the basis upon which their political power rests. Both natural and artificial characteristics of the population are emphasized, as needed, to sew divisions and, hence, buttress the legitimacy of the system. This problem was addressed directly by James Madison in *Federalist No. 10* when he came up with the following solution to counter the possibility that a majority of the population might push for such "improper or wicked" projects such as demanding the usage of "paper money" to pay off debts, or, even "an abolition of debts" or, far more worrisome to Madison, calling for "an equal division of property". To counter such developments, Madison lists the possible remedies to be utilized as follows:

Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression (Madison, James. "The Federalist No. 10: The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection (continued)." In Hamilton, et al., 1787/2003).

The Causes of the United States Civil War

In the presidential campaign of 1860, the Republican Party platform argued against the expansion of slavery into the territories of the United States. Presaging the impending rupture of the Union, the Democratic Party ended up holding three different conventions, one in Charleston, South Carolina—which adjourned due to its inability to reconcile the Supreme Court's 1857 Dred Scott decision, which declared that the Constitution protected slavery in all United States territories, with the more moderate position of presidential candidate Stephen A. Douglas who had advocated in the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act his doctrine of "popular sovereignty" allowing settlers in each territory to decide whether to allow slavery or not. A pro-slavery southern delegation walked out of the Convention when the party refused to include in its platform a plank stipulating that no government had the power to outlaw slavery in the territories. Douglas ended up garnering the presidential nomination in the reconvened Democratic Convention further north in Baltimore, Maryland three weeks later only to have the more pro-slavery delegates bolt from this second convention and meet in a third Democratic Convention, also in Baltimore, to put forward the presidential candidacy of John C. Breckinridge while proclaiming in its platform to defend the right of United States citizens "to settle with their property" in United States territories,

"without their rights, either of person or property, being destroyed or impaired by Congressional or Territorial legislation" (Peters and Woolley, "Democratic Party Platform [Breckinridge Faction] of 1860").

Thus while the continuation or abolishment of slavery stood at the apex of the national debate in the 1860 presidential campaign, Abraham Lincoln rode to the office of the Presidency by proclaiming to preserve the Union. Not until August of 1862 when *New-York Tribune* Editor Horace Greeley openly challenged then-President Lincoln's resolve in ending slavery did the sitting president respond directly to Greeley by stating:

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored; the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union, unless they could at the same time *save* slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *destroy* slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed *personal* wish that all men every where could be free (Lincoln, August 22, 1862).

From the outbreak of war on April 12, 1861 until the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, the United States' declared reason for prosecuting the war was "to preserve the Union." With the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, however, President Abraham Lincoln added the moral imperative of "freeing the slaves" to the litany of purported reasons for pursuing the civil war amongst the states. That slavery was the cause of the war remained unspoken by a number of observers as if a household secret not to be uttered aloud.

Karl Marx, then in 1861 an overseas writer for the *New-York Daily Tribune*, rebuked British capitalists who denied that the American civil war was being

waged to abolish slavery by reminding his readers that it was the South, and not the legitimate United States government in the North, who commenced the war. He argued:

Now, in the first instance, the premiss must be conceded. The war has not been undertaken with a view to put down Slavery, and the United States authorities themselves have taken the greatest pains to protest against any such idea. But then, it ought to be remembered that it was not the North, but the South, which undertook this war; the former acting only on the defense. If it be true that the North, after long hesitations, and an exhibition of forbearance unknown in the annals of European history, drew at last the sword, not for crushing Slavery, but for saving the Union, the South, on its part, inaugurated the war by loudly proclaiming "the peculiar institution" as the only and main end of the rebellion. It confessed to fight for the liberty of enslaving other people, a liberty which, despite the Northern protests, it asserted to be put in danger by the victory of the Republican party and the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidential chair. The Confederate Congress boasted that its new-fangled constitution, as distinguished from the Constitution of the Washingtons, Jeffersons, and Adams's, had recognized for the first time Slavery as a thing good in itself, a bulwark of civilization, and a divine institution. If the North professed to fight but for the Union, the South gloried in rebellion for the supremacy of Slavery. If Anti-Slavery and idealistic England felt not attracted by the profession of the North, how came it to pass that it was not violently repulsed by the cynical confessions of the South? (Marx, October 11, 1861).

Just as the necessity of a class-divided society goes largely unmentioned in popular American culture today, so too did the sources of ruling class wealth remain obscured at the outbreak of the Civil War. The reason for this silence is telling, for the war was to pit two conflicting socioeconomic systems—one based upon slave labor and the other upon wage labor—against each other. And, as Marx and Engels have pointed out, two conflicting socioeconomic systems can never survive long within the same political system; sooner or later, one—the more efficient—will come to prevail (cf. Marx & Engels, 1848 & Marx, 1857-61/1939-41).

The United States' second Constitution, negotiated in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787, set the stage for the subsequent civil war of 1861-65 when it allowed the international slave trade to continue until 1808, did not restrict the domestic slave trade at all, and established the infamous "three-fifths compromise" which designated blacks, for purposes of taxation and representation in the House of Representatives, to count as three-fifths of a white person (cf. Federalist No. 54 in Hamilton, Madison, and Jay. 1787/2003; Applestein, February 12, 2013).

Following this failure to address the asymmetrical role inhabitants of the new nation would play was added the Missouri Compromise of 1820. This 1820 Compromise, so-called, maintained the balance between free and slave states by drawing an imaginary line (at latitude 36°30') across the former Louisiana Territory, a line which held sway until it was negated by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854.

Designed by Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas, in order to once again avoid confronting the slave issue directly, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, in effect, repealed the Missouri Compromise by allowing white male settlers in western territories to determine through "popular sovereignty" whether they would allow slavery or not. "Bleeding Kansas" was the result, pitting anti-slavery Free-Staters against pro-slavery elements in the Kansas Territory and in neighboring towns in the state of Missouri between 1854 and 1861.

Finally, in 1857, Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney wrote the majority opinion in the infamous case of *Dred Scott v. Sandford* arguing that African Americans, whether enslaved or free, were not American citizens, could never be American citizens, and thus had no legal standing in an American court of law (Taney, March 6, 1857).¹⁵ Moreover, Taney went further and declared that Congress had no right to enact the Missouri Compromise of 1820, as it could not regulate slavery in federal territories, for this was a violation of the Fifth Amendment's protection of private property. The *Dred Scott* decision was only the second time, up to that date, that the U.S. Supreme Court had declared an Act of Congress to be unconstitutional.¹⁶

Seven southern states¹⁷ had seceded from the Union forming the Confederate States of America prior to the outbreak of civil war on February 8, 1861. Following the Battle of Fort Sumter from April 12-14, 1861, four additional states seceded and joined the Confederate States of America. The rupture of the United States was thus the result of an unwillingness of the country's founders to directly confront the issue of slavery, instead preferring to allow the issue to fester, boil, and, ultimately, erupt into open violence and warfare. As Laccarino notes: "Although many of the Founding Fathers acknowledged that slavery violated the core American Revolutionary ideal of liberty, their simultaneous commitment to private property rights, principles of limited government, and intersectional harmony prevented them from making a bold move against slavery" (Laccarino, July 28, 2016). But the Constitution they forged in 1789 was clear, as the Georgia secessionist legislature indicated in 1861: "The Constitution declares that persons charged with crimes in one State and fleeing to another shall be delivered up on the demand of the executive authority of the State from which they may flee, to be tried in the jurisdiction where the crime was committed. It would appear difficult to employ language freer from ambiguity," they noted. Similarly, the secessionist statement by the State of South Carolina notes that the problem with the federal compact commenced from "an increasing hostility on the part

of the non-slaveholding States to the institution of slavery, [which] has led to a disregard of their obligations, and the laws of the General Government have ceased to effect the objects of the Constitution." As several northern states passed laws which negated the fugitive slave requirements of the Constitution, the South Carolina legislature proclaimed: "Thus the constituted compact has been deliberately broken and disregarded by the non-slaveholding States, and the consequence follows that South Carolina is released from her obligation." The Virginia legislature, in its secessionist statement, pointedly blamed the Federal Government for "having perverted said powers, *not only to the injury of the people of Virginia, but to the oppression of the Southern Slaveholding States*" ("The Declaration of Causes of Seceding States," 1860-61).

When General Robert E. Lee surrendered his 28,000 Confederate forces to General Ulysses S. Grant in the village of Appomattox Court House, not far from Lynchburg, Virginia, on April 9, 1865, what had been decided was that capitalism, based upon wage labor, would be the prevailing socioeconomic system of the post-war country. And because capitalism is a class-divided socioeconomic system, northern politicians did not want to push the "freedom argument" too far and thus undermine the class system in the South. As General Ulysses S. Grant stated after General Robert E. Lee signed the term of surrender that day: "The war is over. The Rebels are our countrymen again" (Grant quoted in "April 9 – This Day in History: 1865 Robert E. Lee surrenders").

Consequently, civil war gave way to Reconstruction which formally ended in the 1870s when Northern populaces retreated from their commitment to equality, allowing former Confederate states to be readmitted to the Union, oftentimes led by former Confederate leaders. The Compromise of 1877 witnessed the pullout of many Union troops from the South, thus leading to the subsequent disenfranchisement of blacks in the former Confederate states for nearly another 100 years, as so-called "Redeemer governments"—i.e. governments that had undergone a relatively lengthy readmission process in order to be considered as fully-functioning states, a process which included the mandatory ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution—took control of every former Confederate state and white supremacy became enforced by vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Camelia, and various White Leagues, and other white supremacist vigilante groups (cf. Mueller; Bridges).

Summation of A Legacy of Hate and Popular Sovereignty

In this post-Civil War digestion and/or gestation, a period dominated by the politics of resentment, memories of the "Old Confederacy" yearly became brighter, more brilliant, and ever more glorious in the minds of many white southerners, as aspiring politicians competed to demonstrate their loyalty to the "lost cause". It was in this context in which the construction of Confederate monuments

developed, along with their associated historical societies and memorabilia, including enforcement of the tradition of the mandatory display of Confederate battle flags, obligatory homage to White supremacy, and the whistling of the song "Dixie".

In this author's home state of Louisiana, for example, the state's biggest city, New Orleans, includes the following publicly-built and maintained Civil War monuments: a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee at the aptly named 'Lee Circle', a statue of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard, a statue of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and a 35-foot-tall obelisk commemorating the 'Battle of Liberty Place', a three-day rebellion by Confederate veterans against Reconstruction in 1874.¹⁸ And despite current New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu's attempts to have these "nuisances" removed, court challenges, court orders, intimidation, and acts of violence, have so far delayed this effort ("Another delay in efforts to remove monuments," May 30, 2016). [NOTE: See Postscript]

Do these monuments and related Confederate symbols and regalia effect the mindset and disposition of children growing up amongst such monuments? Of course they do. Upon learning of the causes of the United States Civil War, especially the attempt to maintain the inhuman institution of the slavery of Africans—a people kidnapped from their native continent, forcibly transported to the Americas, torn apart from their families, sold into slavery, and, at the lash of a whip, forced to labor in a variety of ways for their white masters—children will instinctively wonder why one side in the war wanted to maintain this institution while the other side did not. As a young child in the Americas, it is perhaps one of the first great decisions children are forced to come to terms with, viz. the decision of whether or not they personally support the institution of slavery.

And if you are a child growing up in the southern United States, it is virtually impossible to escape ever-present symbols reminding one of this momentous nineteenth-century conflict which once violently split citizens apart over the question of slavery. Less one forget this legacy of hate, one is regularly reminded of it through lynchings; bombings; police beatings, shootings, and killings; denial of access; educational, financial and employment discrimination; and verbal, physical, and mental abuse by private citizens, corporations, and societal institutions—all based upon a racial categorization designed to maintain societal divisions. Thus if one inquires into exactly what were the motivations behind this brutal mass murder and what caused 21-year-old Dylann Storm Roof to destroy the lives of nine people and severely injuring a tenth inside of a church, then it is hard to deny that racism is the proximate cause of this crime. And it is our built environment, especially in the southern states, which, with their plethora of Civil War monuments and display of Confederate flags, perpetuate and reinforce racist stereotypes or racial hierarchies, as evidenced, for example, by those monuments located in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, as noted above. And so long as the socioeconomic system of the United States remains solidly capitalistic in nature, then one can be assured

that our built environment will continue to prioritize the construction and public maintenance of symbols of undifferentiated racial categorizations devoid of a social class perspective. We should, therefore, not be surprised when the next white child from an unstable background reaches similar conclusions as Dylann Roof when reflecting on the questions of: Can a white kid "go one day without being picked on for being White, or called a 'white boy'? And who is fighting for him? Who is fighting for these White people forced by economic circumstances to live among negroes?" The heroes of white supremacy, depicted in the symbols of the built environment which they grew up in, will more times than not act as the standard bearers to emulate and honor.

Should such monuments of the Confederacy continue to be supported by taxpayer dollars? Should Confederate flags continue to be flown over southern state capitols, school houses, football stadiums and at other public gatherings? In America, this is left to the public to decide. Stephen Douglas's idea of "popular sovereignty"—which led to so much violence in Kansas and Missouri from 1854 to 1861—is the deciding factor, or at least until the Constitution is amended to say otherwise. What symbols, one may ask, if any, are worthy of mandatory taxpayer support? As the country's constitution now stands, it is up to all of us to decide how our political environment should be designed, constructed, and maintained. 'Popular sovereignty' is the prevailing law of the land.

Postscript

On April 24, 2017, the city of New Orleans under the leadership of Mayor Mitch Landrieu, and acting on a city council decision of December 17, 2015, which was upheld by a federal judge in January of 2016, began the removal of the city's four notable publicly-maintained Confederate monuments: 1) the Battle of Liberty Place statue located on Iberville Street; 2) the Robert E. Lee statue at Lee Circle; 3) the Jefferson Davis statue on Jefferson Davis Parkway; and 4) the P.G.T. Beauregard equestrian statue on Esplanade Avenue at the entrance to City Park. In an initial statement by Mayor Landrieu, he noted: "The decision to remove these statues was made after a lengthy public process that determined these statues failed to appropriately reflect the values of diversity and inclusion that make New Orleans strong today."

The first monument to be dismantled and moved to storage, beginning on April 24, 2017, was the Battle of Liberty Place or the Battle of Canal Street Obelisk, a stone pillar erected in 1891 to commemorate the Crescent City White League's failed 1874 *coup d'état* against New Orleans' immediate post-Civil War racially-integrated government. On May 11, 2017, the city removed a second Confederate monument, a statute of CSA President Jefferson Davis. On Wednesday, May 17, 2017, the horseback statue of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard was taken down. And, two days later, on Friday, May 19, 2017, the city removed the last of the four publicly-maintained Confederate monuments, the statue of Confederate

General Robert E. Lee. The four monuments, announced city spokesman Tyrone B. Walker, will be stored in a city-owned facility “until they can be moved to a new location where they can be placed in proper context” (Mele, April 24, 2017).

It should be noted that the workers who removed the four Confederate monuments donned masks, flak jackets, helmets, and scarves while proceeding with their removal work amongst protests by white vigilante groups and guarded by police snipers and undercover security personnel. One report estimates that the financial costs of the removal of the Confederate statues to be upwards of two million dollars (Adelson, June 9, 2017).

Following the removal of the four Confederate monuments, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu stated:

So before we part let us again state the truth clearly.

The Confederacy was on the wrong side of history and humanity. It sought to tear apart our nation and subjugate our fellow Americans to slavery. This is the history we should never forget and one that we should never again put on a pedestal to be revered.

As a community, we must recognize the significance of removing New Orleans' Confederate monuments. It is our acknowledgment that now is the time to take stock of, and then move past, a painful part of our history. Anything less would render generations of courageous struggle and soul-searching a truly lost cause.

Anything less would fall short of the immortal words of our greatest President Abraham Lincoln, who with an open heart and clarity of purpose calls on us today to unite as one people when he said:

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to do all which may achieve and cherish: a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

(Landrieu, May 23, 2017).

NOTE: A verbatim transcription of Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto is reprinted as an endnote to this article.¹⁹

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ENDNOTES

1 An initial draft of this paper was first presented at the 2016 SCAASI Conference in Charleston, South Carolina from February 11-13, 2016 under the title of "The Public Display of Confederate Monuments & Flag – Is It Constitutional?"

2 Calhoun Street in Charleston, South Carolina is named after John Caldwell Calhoun (1782-1850), a notorious defender of slavery; some consider his intellectual arguments in defense of southern slavery as one of the proximate causes of the United States Civil War (1861-1865).

3 Roof's website domain, "lastrhodesian.com", was registered to him, according to the FBI, on February 9, 2015. A law enforcement official said the material on Roof's website "was last modified late Wednesday afternoon (i.e. June 17, 2015), just hours before Roof allegedly attacked the Bible study group at the church. In its penultimate paragraph, the manifesto states: 'Unfortunately at the time of writing I am in a great hurry and some of my best thoughts, actually many of them, have been... left out and lost forever.' The last line apologizes for typos" (Wren and Purdue, June 20, 2015; Bernstein, Horwitz, Holley, June 20, 2015). Conspiracy theorists, like Scott Creighton, suggests that Dylann Storm Roof is a "sheep dipped asset" who was set up by a government psychological operations team to help get the Confederate flag removed from the South Carolina statehouse grounds. "It would appear to me that the entire issue surrounding the confederate flag and currently inflaming the already tense situation in South Carolina is nothing more than a target of opportunity psyop." Roof's confession is part of a larger conspiracy writes Creighton: "The most recent addition to his 'yeah I did it' gallery just happens to include pics of him [i.e. Roof] holding a confederate flag. Now as we all know, ObamaGod (his imperial lordship as the fake 'progressives' still call him) had put forward a demand that the state of South Carolina take down the confederate flag they fly over their state capitol. They refused knowing full well it would incite anger in a certain demographic of their voting constituency. So

lo-and-behold, out comes this new discovery of the Dylann Storm Roof 'confession website' which just happens to include a number of pictures of the enemy de jour holding a little confederate flag. What a fucking coincidence, huh? What timing" (Creighton, June 21, 2015). Another conspiracy theorist, Lilly Dane, argues: "Whether or not Roof is a sheep-dipped patsy or is truly a lone-wolf racist with an evil agenda, one thing is for sure: the Obama administration is not going to let this tragedy go to waste. They are already using a template straight out of Saul Alinsky's Rules for Radicals playbook..." (Dane, June 25, 2015).

4 References to 'whites' or 'blacks' will be lowercased throughout the text, except when quoting directly from Dylann Roof's Manifesto. Roof usually capitalizes the 'w' in 'White' and uses a lowercase 'b' when referencing 'blacks'. His preferences for these two terms are quoted as appearing in his alleged Manifesto. However, his usage of the derogatory "n" word for blacks will be changed to "blacks" or "Blacks" throughout depending on its location in a sentence.

5 All subsequent quotations in this subsection are taken directly from 'Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto'.

6 Trayvon Benjamin Martin was a 17-year-old African American from Miami Gardens, Florida, who, on February 26, 2012 was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch volunteer, in Sanford, Florida.

7 Grammatical errors are left as found on "Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto" website in every Dylann Roof quotation utilized in this article; the opening racial epithet has been replaced by "Blacks" by this author here and wherever it is referenced in this paper.

8 The 'master-slave' concept referenced here was introduced by Hegel in his Phenomenology of Spirit (1807/1977).

9 In this article, the analysis of Roof's motivations are based upon this author's understanding of Marx's methodology as follows: "Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production" (Marx, 1859/1975).

10 "The [Florida] Keys house was later lost to foreclosure as the elder Mr. Roof's construction business collapsed and he defaulted on a business loan, court records show" (Robles and Stewart, July 16, 2015).

11 Arguably a cultural byproduct of the anthem "We Are the Champions" released by the British rock band Queen in 1977, the song's refrain repeats: "We

are the champions, my friends, And we'll keep on fighting 'til the end. We are the champions. We are the champions. No time for losers 'Cause we are the champions of the world" (Queen, 1977). This "winners" and "losers" dichotomy has been reemphasized in the United States cultural milieu within the last two years (i.e. 2015-2016), as the 2016 United States Republican presidential candidate, Donald J. Trump, consistently repeated this dichotomy in his campaign speeches to the extent that late-night television host Jimmy Kimmel parodied Trump by ghost-writing a children's rhyming book entitled *Winners Aren't Losers*, published under the presidential candidate's name, and read it to Trump on the Wednesday, December 16, 2015 airing of *Jimmy Kimmel Live* (Blistein, December 17, 2015).

12 In Marxian theory, the *petite bourgeoisie* refers to a subset of the bourgeoisie, the latter who own and control the major means of production. For Marx, the *petite bourgeoisie* are a transitional class between the proletariat (workers, or those who must sell their labour power in order to live) and the bourgeoisie. The interests of the *petite bourgeoisie* are divided and fluctuate according to their social situation. Small shop-keepers and small business owners and those who act as managers or supervisors of the commodity production/distribution/exchange process comprise this class.

13 Roof left White Knoll High School in Lexington, South Carolina midway while repeating the ninth grade and enrolled in Dreher High School in downtown Columbia, one of the oldest public schools in the state with a minority enrollment of 64% (Ellis and Cahill, June 27, 2015 and "Best High...", 2016).

14 As Blanton and Kegley note: "As a network of relationships among independent territorial units, the modern state system was not born until the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) in Europe. Thereafter, rulers refused to recognize the secular authority of the Roman Catholic Church, replacing the system of papal governance in the Middle Ages with geographically and politically separate states that recognized no superior authority. The newly independent states all gave to rulers the same legal rights: territory under their sole control, unrestricted control of their domestic affairs, and the freedom to conduct foreign relations and negotiate treaties with other states. The concept of state sovereignty—that no other actor is above the state—still captures these legal rights and identifies the state as the primary actor today" (Blanton & Kegley, 2017, p. 12).

15 Wrote Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney in the 7-2 majority opinion in the Supreme Court case of *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857):

The language of the Declaration of Independence is equally conclusive:

It begins by declaring that, 'when in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have

connected them with another, and to [60 U.S. 393, 410] assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.'

It then proceeds to say: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among them is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.'

The general words above quoted would seem to embrace the whole human family, and if they were used in a similar instrument at this day would be so understood. But it is too clear for dispute, that the enslaved African race were not intended to be included, and formed no part of the people who framed and adopted this declaration; for if the language, as understood in that day, would embrace them, the conduct of the distinguished men who framed the Declaration of Independence would have been utterly and flagrantly inconsistent with the principles they asserted; and instead of the sympathy of mankind, to which they so confidently appealed, they would have deserved and received universal rebuke and reprobation.

Yet the men who framed this declaration were great men-high in literary acquirements-high in their sense of honor, and incapable of asserting principles inconsistent with those on which they were acting. They perfectly understood the meaning of the language they used, and how it would be understood by others; and they knew that it would not in any part of the civilized world be supposed to embrace the negro race, which, by common consent, had been excluded from civilized Governments and the family of nations, and doomed to slavery. They spoke and acted according to the then established doctrines and principles, and in the ordinary language of the day, and no one misunderstood them. The unhappy black race were separated from the white by indelible marks, and laws long before established, and were never thought of or spoken of except as property, and when the claims of the owner or the profit of the trader were supposed to need protection.

This state of public opinion had undergone no change when the Constitution was adopted, as is equally evident from its provisions and language (<http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/60/393.html>).

16 The case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) was the first time the U.S. Supreme Court had declared an Act of Congress to be unconstitutional.

17 South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas

were the initial seven states to secede prior to the Battle of Fort Sumter from April 12-14, 1861. Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee followed within the next three months.

18 New Orleans also has at least two city streets named to honor Confederate leaders: Jefferson Davis Parkway and Robert E. Lee Blvd.

19

Verbatim Transcription of Dylann Roof's Racist Manifesto

I was not raised in a racist home or environment. Living in the South, almost every White person has a small amount of racial awareness, simply because of the numbers of negroes in this part of the country. But it is a superficial awareness. Growing up, in school, the White and black kids would make racial jokes toward each other, but all they were were jokes. Me and White friends would sometimes would watch things that would make us think that "blacks were the real racists" and other elementary thoughts like this, but there was no real understanding behind it.

The event that truly awakened me was the Trayvon Martin case. I kept hearing and seeing his name, and eventually I decided to look him up. I read the Wikipedia article and right away I was unable to understand what the big deal was. It was obvious that Zimmerman was in the right. But more importantly this prompted me to type in the words "black on White crime" into Google, and I have never been the same since that day. The first website I came to was the Council of Conservative Citizens. There were pages upon pages of these brutal black on White murders. I was in disbelief. At this moment I realized that something was very wrong. How could the news be blowing up the Trayvon Martin case while hundreds of these black on White murders got ignored?

From this point I researched deeper and found out what was happening in Europe. I saw that the same things were happening in England and France, and in all the other Western European countries. Again I found myself in disbelief. As an American we are taught to accept living in the melting pot, and black and other minorities have just as much right to be here as we do, since we are all immigrants. But Europe is the homeland of White people, and in many ways the situation is even worse there. From here I found out about the Jewish problem and other issues facing our race, and I can say today that I am completely racially aware.

Blacks

I think it is fitting to start off with the group I have the most real life experience with, and the group that is the biggest problem for Americans.

Niggers are stupid and violent. At the same time they have the capacity to be

very slick. Black people view everything through a racial lens. That's what racial awareness is, it's viewing everything that happens through a racial lens. They are always thinking about the fact that they are black. This is part of the reason they get offended so easily, and think that some things are intended to be racist towards them, even when a White person wouldn't be thinking about race. The other reason is the Jewish agitation of the black race.

Black people are racially aware almost from birth, but White people on average don't think about race in their daily lives. And this is our problem. We need to and have to.

Say you were to witness a dog being beat by a man. You are almost surely going to feel very sorry for that dog. But then say you were to witness a dog biting a man. You will most likely not feel the same pity you felt for the dog for the man. Why? Because dogs are lower than men.

This same analogy applies to black and White relations. Even today, blacks are subconsciously viewed by White people as lower beings. They are held to a lower standard in general. This is why they are able to get away with things like obnoxious behavior in public. Because it is expected of them.

Modern history classes instill a subconscious White superiority complex in Whites and an inferiority complex in blacks. This White superiority complex that comes from learning of how we dominated other peoples is also part of the problem I have just mentioned. But of course I don't deny that we are in fact superior.

I wish with a passion that niggers were treated terribly throughout history by Whites, that every White person had an ancestor who owned slaves, that segregation was an evil and oppressive institution, and so on. Because if it was all true, it would make it so much easier for me to accept our current situation. But it isn't true. None of it is. We are told to accept what is happening to us because of ancestors' wrong doing, but it is all based on historical lies, exaggerations and myths. I have tried endlessly to think of reasons we deserve this, and I have only come back more irritated because there are no reasons.

Only a fourth to a third of people in the South owned even one slave. Yet every White person is treated as if they had a slave-owning ancestor. This applies to in the states where slavery never existed, as well as people whose families immigrated after slavery was abolished. I have read hundreds of slaves' narratives from my state. And almost all of them were positive. One sticks out in my mind where an old ex-slave recounted how the day his mistress died was one of the saddest days of his life. And in many of these narratives the slaves told of how their masters didn't even allow whipping on his plantation.

Segregation was not a bad thing. It was a defensive measure. Segregation did not exist to hold back negroes. It existed to protect us from them. And I mean that in multiple ways. Not only did it protect us from having to interact with them, and from being physically harmed by them, but it protected us from being brought down to their level. Integration has done nothing but bring Whites down to level of brute animals. The best example of this is obviously our school system.

Now White parents are forced to move to the suburbs to send their children to "good schools". But what constitutes a "good school"? The fact is that how good a school is considered directly corresponds to how White it is. I hate with a passion the whole idea of the suburbs. To me it represents nothing but scared White people running. Running because they are too weak, scared, and brainwashed to fight. Why should we have to flee the cities we created for the security of the suburbs? Why are the suburbs secure in the first place? Because they are White. The pathetic part is that these White people don't even admit to themselves why they are moving. They tell themselves it is for better schools or simply to live in a nicer neighborhood. But it is honestly just a way to escape niggers and other minorities.

But what about the White people that are left behind? What about the White children who, because of school zoning laws, are forced to go to a school that is 90 percent black? Do we really think that that White kid will be able to go one day without being picked on for being White, or called a "white boy"? And who is fighting for him? Who is fighting for these White people forced by economic circumstances to live among negroes? No one, but someone has to.

Here I would also like to touch on the idea of a Northwest Front. I think this idea is beyond stupid. Why should I for example, give up the beauty and history of my state to go to the Northwest? To me the whole idea just parallels the concept of White people running to the suburbs. The whole idea is pathetic and just another way to run from the problem without facing it.

Some people feel as though the South is beyond saving, that we have too many blacks here. To this I say look at history. The South had a higher ratio of blacks when we were holding them as slaves. Look at South Africa, and how such a small minority held the black in apartheid for years and years. Speaking of South Africa, if anyone thinks that think will eventually just change for the better, consider how in South Africa they have affirmative action for the black population that makes up 80 percent of the population.

It is far from being too late for America or Europe. I believe that even if we made up only 30 percent of the population we could take it back completely. But by no means should we wait any longer to take drastic action.

Anyone who thinks that White and black people look as different as we do on

the outside, but are somehow magically the same on the inside, is delusional. How could our faces, skin, hair, and body structure all be different, but our brains be exactly the same? This is the nonsense we are led to believe.

Negroes have lower IQs, lower impulse control, and higher testosterone levels in general. These three things alone are a recipe for violent behavior. If a scientist publishes a paper on the differences between the races in Western Europe or Americans, he can expect to lose his job. There are personality traits within human families, and within different breeds of cats or dogs, so why not within the races?

A horse and a donkey can breed and make a mule, but they are still two completely different animals. Just because we can breed with the other races doesn't make us the same.

In a modern history class it is always emphasized that, when talking about "bad" things Whites have done in history, they were White. But when we learn about the numerous, almost countless wonderful things Whites have done, it is never pointed out that these people were White. Yet when we learn about anything important done by a black person in history, it is always pointed out repeatedly that they were black. For example when we learn about how George Washington Carver was the first nigger smart enough to open a peanut.

On another subject I want to say this. Many White people feel as though they don't have a unique culture. The reason for this is that White culture is world culture. I don't mean that our culture is made up of other cultures, I mean that our culture has been adopted by everyone in the world. This makes us feel as though our culture isn't special or unique. Say for example that every business man in the world wore a kimono, that every skyscraper was in the shape of a pagoda, that every door was a sliding one, and that everyone ate every meal with chopsticks. This would probably make a Japanese man feel as though he had no unique traditional culture.

I have noticed a great disdain for race mixing White women within the White nationalists community, bordering on insanity it. These women are victims, and they can be saved. Stop.

Jews

Unlike many White nationalists, I am of the opinion that the majority of American and European Jews are White. In my opinion the issues with Jews is not their blood, but their identity. I think that if we could somehow destroy the Jewish identity, then they wouldn't cause much of a problem. The problem is that Jews look White, and in many cases are White, yet they see themselves as minorities. Just like niggers, most Jews are always thinking about the fact that they are Jewish. The other issue is that they network. If we could somehow turn every Jew

blue for 24 hours, I think there would be a mass awakening, because people would be able to see plainly what is going on.

I dont pretend to understand why jews do what they do. They are enigma.

Hispanics

Hispanics are obviously a huge problem for Americans. But there are good hispanics and bad hispanics. I remember while watching hispanic television stations, the shows and even the commercials were more White than our own. They have respect for White beauty, and a good portion of hispanics are White. It is a well known fact that White hispanics make up the elite of most hispanics countries. There is good White blood worht saving in Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and even Brasil.

But they are still our enemies.

East Asians

I have great respent for the East Asian races. Even if we were to go extinct they could carry something on. They are by nature very racist and could be great allies of the White race. I am not opposed at all to allies with the Northeast Asian races.

Patriotism

I hate the sight of the American flag. Modern American patriotism is an absolute joke. People pretending like they have something to be proud while White people are being murdered daily in the streets. Many veterans believe we owe them something for "protecting our way of life" or "protecting our freedom". But im not sure what way of life they are talking about. How about we protect the White race and stop fighting for the jews. I will say this though, I myself would have rather lived in 1940's American than Nazi Germany, and no this is not ignorance speaking, it is just my opinion. So I dont blame the veterans of any wars up until after Vietnam, because at least they had an American to be proud of and fight for.

An Explanation

To take a saying from a film, "I see all this stuff going on, and I dont see anyone doing anything about it. And it pisses me off.". To take a saying from my favorite film, "Even if my life is worth less than a speck of dirt, I want to use it for the good of society.".

I have no choice. I am not in the position to, alone, go into the ghetto and fight. I chose Charleston because it is most historic city in my state, and at one time had the highest ratio of blacks to Whites in the country. We have no skinheads, no real

KKK, no one doing anything but talking on the internet. Well someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me.

Unfortunately at the time of writing I am in a great hurry and some of my best thoughts, actually many of them have been to be left out and lost forever. But I believe enough great White minds are out there already.

Please forgive any typos, I didnt have time to check it.

Book Reviews

Pryor, Elizabeth Stordeur. *Colored Travelers: Mobility and the Fight for Citizenship before the Civil War*. [John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture] Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016. 240 pages. \$34.95, cloth. ISBN: 978-1-4696-2857-8.

Reviewer: Robert Cassanello

Since 2000, there has been an increasing interest in the history of Jim Crow segregation on public transportation. There was a brief examination of the topic in the late 1960s and 1970s with authors such as August Meier and Elliott Rudwick concluding, famously, that these early streetcar protests at the dawn of the twentieth century amounted to a futile attempt at confronting the inevitability of racial segregation. This thesis quieted researchers until the 1990s when the New African American Urban History emerged and historians like Robin D. G. Kelley and Kenneth W. Goings questioned the role of *infrapolitics* disguised (or not!) in everyday social exchanges between blacks and whites in the Jim Crow urban South. These historians reinterpreted the African American Nadir as one of contestation and resistance rather than acquiesces and accommodation. Soon after, historians took another pass at the protests surrounding Jim Crow segregation and concluded that these activists were not unsuccessful but were in fact progenitors to the bus boycotts made famous in the 1950s in Montgomery, Alabama and Tallahassee, Florida. These histories, starting in the 2000s, were important in helping to cement the modes and models of civil rights activism before the twentieth century. Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor's book, *Colored Travelers*, represents this new direction.

Pryor situates her research within some well-established debates and offers readers new frames of references for the familiar stories illustrated in the book. The most obvious debate she chimes in on is the Long History thesis to the Civil Rights Movement. In her introduction and conclusion, she plainly states the idea that these early antebellum protest of racial segregation on public transportation are connected to "Ida B. Wells's 1884 fight against a railroad company in Tennessee, to Homer Plessy's 1892 protest against the Separate Car Act of Louisiana, to Rosa Parks" (158). Pryor and other historians who have become interested in antebellum civil rights activism have pointed to these early court cases and protests as forerunners to those later during the era of the modern Civil Rights Movement. The debate over the Long History hinges on a materialist approach as scholars who dispute the notion of the Long History demand evidence of a continuity in organization, activism and institutional structures. While Pryor and others believe the Long History exists in the form of rhetoric, legal arguments and discourses on citizenship. Although this debate has become less important to historians of the Civil Rights Movement recently, Pryor's greatest contribution is what original ideas she adds to this increasingly familiar history of antebellum

protest.

What readers will find most fascinating is the author's use of mobility as text, text that clothes African Americans in discrimination, racializes them and casts them as non-citizens or at best second class citizens. Pryor initially uses a broad scope to understand how mobility can be read and uses this idea to re-contextualize Dred Scott, slave patrols, and slave laws to demonstrate how this tradition of controlling the movement of African Americans was part of a broader American understanding and how that tradition found itself embedded on the first systems of public transportation to connect travelers in the urban North. According to Pryor, confronting this attempt to control black bodies on public transportation is really what drove black civil rights activists in the 1840s and 1850s. Additionally she brings the theory of citizenship into focus to help the reader understand that these protests in the form of editorials, speeches, court cases and physical confrontations were debates about the nature and place of black citizens within a country founded on and committed to protecting the institution of slavery. Infusing this history with the idea of citizenship is a similar approach taken by Blair L. M. Kelley in her book *Right to Ride* (2010), however missing in both these works is the delineation or friction between urban citizenship and state citizenship (by way of the federal government). These protests as well as those of education and the workplace over racial discrimination flowered in the tension between urban and state citizenship, which helps to explain why much of this activism throughout this time was city based. This does not take away from *Colored Travelers*, Pryor's thesis or her remarkable accomplishments but instead she is pointing scholars to further explore the intersection of civil rights and citizenship rights in nineteenth century America. Finally, Pryor examines these African American activists and protesters within a transnational lens, their ideas and constructions of themselves were shaped not only by traveling on US systems of public transportation, but also international travel. They connected themselves to the world and they were themselves connected to the world in the same way abolitionists were as many recent scholars are documenting. Although there have been plenty of books and articles that have come out in the last ten years on racial segregation and public transportation as well as black activism in the antebellum North, at this moment there is nothing as original or thought provoking as *Colored Travelers*.

Morgan, Lynda J. *Known for My Work: African American Ethics from Slavery to Freedom*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016. 208 pages. \$74.95, cloth. ISBN: 978-0-8130-6273-0.

Reviewer: Bertis D. English

Comprised by usual front and back matter—a preface, acknowledgments, an introduction, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index—as well as seven brief chapters, *Known for My Work* is the quintessence of succinctness. Its shortest

and longest chapters are nine and twenty-three pages, respectively. The book's author, Lynda J. Morgan, is professor of history at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. Her writing is academic and eloquent but also pointed and comprehensible. Indeed, she is an excellent wordsmith.

Morgan's command of scholarly articles, books, and cognate secondary sources that examine racial slavery in the United States of America from the New Republic through the Civil War is solid. Her command of the scholarly sources that influence and inform how and what she writes about postwar Reconstruction, Redemption-era Jim Crow, and the modern freedom struggle is correspondingly solid. Historian Steven Hahn's 2003 book titled *Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggle in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*, which won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in history, really informs Morgan. His book, she declares, "treats pre-emancipation black political thought as central, rather than peripheral, to the history of the era. *Known for My Work* expands his findings into the realm of ethics and [in the vein of the 'long civil rights movement' thesis] extends farther into the twentieth century in order to demonstrate the durability of that ethos" (138n28)."¹

Quoting rather than paraphrasing Morgan's appreciation of Hahn is apt, inasmuch as she quotes black slaves and citizens incessantly throughout her book. Allowing subjects to speak for themselves is admirable, particularly with regard to the millions of enslaved blacks in the American South whom innumerable whites in the region and across the country regarded as mere chattel. "Precisely because they possessed two and a half cumulative centuries of experience as slaves in a country allegedly founded to promote human freedom to its fullest," Morgan avers, enslaved blacks "collectively contemplated liberty's meaning extensively" (10). Nevertheless, she expounds, the "intellectual history *writ large* of the enslaved population ... remains somewhat disjointed. Unless they became well-known published fugitives on the abolitionist circuit, enslaved people typically lacked intellectual history until after emancipation" (5).

Morgan seeks to better the historical record. She particularly emphasizes the ingenuity of ordinary slaves, who cleverly devised a host of tangible ways to escape legal captivity. More than 2,000 of these individuals retold their personal or collective story from slavery to freedom in a series of oral histories conducted by field workers employed by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration from 1936 to 1938. Once shunned by many scholars, these histories constitute an important source for Morgan, who also relies on manuscripts available online instead of on contemporaneous newspapers, government records, diaries, broadsides, and more traditional hard-copy primary sources. Morgan "found the

1 Steven Hahn, *A Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2003); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91 (March 2005): 1233–63.

Freedmen's Bureau papers useful," but she does not cite or list these papers in her bibliography (9). Morgan does, however, cite Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, David Walker, and other eminent figures in the black activist canon of the prewar era. At times, in fact, *Known for My Work* reads similar to a compilation of firsthand quotations with scholarly analysis interspersed. Undergraduate and graduate students doubtless will appreciate the treasure trove of quotes, but scholars and avid lay readers of African American history, Africana Studies, and allied disciplines almost certainly will desire greater analysis by Morgan.

A few other aspects of Morgan's book are likely to spur debate among its readers. For example, she contends strongly and frequently that enslaved and free black people, "both before and after emancipation, recognized that white supremacy, like slavery itself, was an issue whose origins were best understood in economic terms, and that race and racism had to be reckoned as consequences rather than causes of slavery. ... Thus, in no small part, racism's economic causation had to be cloaked from nonslaveholders to protect the planter class from challenges from lower-class whites" (28, 29). These ideas, which highlight Morgan's apparent distaste for capitalism, are questionable. Countless white Americans, especially those in the South where the plurality of slaves dwelled, viewed the "peculiar institution" largely in sociocultural and psychological terms rather than solely or chiefly in economic terms.²

By Morgan's own accounting, the vast majority of white Southerners were not slaveholders. A considerable portion of this majority supported slavery, nonetheless, because it provided a sense of belonging. As long as slavery existed, the most destitute or unlearned white person would always rank higher in the South's hierarchy than a rich and erudite black person. Millions of poor whites supported the Confederate States of America from 1861 to 1865 for this exact reason. Millions more of their biological or, in numerous cases, ideological descendants continue to tout what they purport to be the Confederacy's "'lost,' but still glorious, 'cause'" in 2017.³ And these individuals care not about the capitalism that, according to Morgan, undergirded racial slavery prior to Union victory; they care about the white supremacy that American multiculturalism seems to be threatening.

The sizeable number of hasty generalizations made by Morgan in *Known for My Work* is another troublesome feature of her book. She, for instance, claims "laziness [was] endemic [among] most slaveholders" (46, 47). Because most slaveholders were petit agrarians, they had to perform much field labor diurnally. To be sure, the idea that every owner or master was an aristocratic gentleman who sat idly in a grand manor as his cultured wife sipped a mint julep on the

2 Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-bellum South* (1956; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1984).

3 "Col. Y. L. Royston," *Marion (Alabama) Commonwealth*, September 19, 1872, p. 3.

manor's porch is mythical. Additionally, Morgan's suggestion that "a substantial portion of the slave, and later the freed, population—probably a majority—rejected vengeance [against physically violent whites], bearing in mind memories of their own victimization and the effects violence had on slaveholders" is incomplete (50). Black people—enslaved and freed, subject and citizen—also feared potentially deadly or materially disastrous consequences if their attempts at vigilante justice failed.

The preceding statement warrants qualification. Few slave revolts were completely successful before Confederates bombed Fort Sumter in 1861, commencing officially the military phase of the Civil War. The success rate of slave revolts increased during wartime, but vengeance-seeking postwar blacks were rare, and not because they were forgiving humanitarians. In addition to the prevalence of white paramilitary organizations throughout the South, a large number of erstwhile Confederates or similarly atavistic white men controlled the political, judicial, and economic institutions of southern society. When the federal government mandated direct black participation in politics and in government, black officials were not in sufficient number on local, statewide, or national levels to completely ameliorate legal and extralegal white injustice. To Morgan's credit, though, she emends the abovementioned suggestion regarding black vengeance later in her book (63), whose revised edition surely will resolve issues such as "forty acres [being] promised but never distributed to freedpeople" or, more pedantically, the birthplace of black author Zora Neale Hurston (119). Morgan indicates Hurston was born in "segregated Florida" (105). Hurston actually was born in segregated Alabama—expressly, Notasulga, a small town in the state's black belt subregion located at the confluence of Lee and Macon counties about eleven miles northeast of Tuskegee.

Despite the concerns outlined supra, *Known for My Work* is an informative and provocative book. Morgan's insistence that every contemporary ghost of nineteenth-century slavery is macabre reverberates with importance. That twenty-first-century African Americans have a generally "poor work ethic, [share] indifference to education, and [are plagued by] disordered family life" are three ghosts that Morgan addresses directly (2). Her call for reparations, a call first made by enslaved blacks and their freed compeers, she notes, is yet another provocative and important facet of the book, whose final two lines of main text are unassailable: "We of the twenty-first century should heed the ethical legacies of freedpeople and their descendants, people who experienced slavery and segregation and passed on wisdom which still speaks to policies that continue to debilitate the individual and common good and thereby imperil national integrity. Such an initiative would be a fitting commemoration of the 150th anniversary of emancipation" (130).

Ngwang, Emmanuel and Kenneth Usongo. *Art and Political Thought in Bole Butake* (New York: Lexington Books, 2016. 140 pages. \$75, cloth. ISBN: 978-1-4985-3810-7.

Reviewer: Victor N. Gomia

Art and Political Thought in Bole Butake is an illuminating and insightful foray into the works of one of Africa's foremost playwrights and theater practitioners, Bole Butake. This book is pioneering in its in-depth focus on a single writer from Anglophone Cameroon. Previous publications on the Anglophone Cameroon literary landscape often made panoramic appraisals of texts of many authors, casually highlighting the authors' disenchantment with the economically and politically marginalized Anglophones in Cameroon. In *Art and Political Thought* Ngwang and Usongo place Butake's dramaturgy in social, political and economic contexts through which one can better appreciate the writer's works. These contexts are rooted in a unique colonial history in Africa, for Cameroon is the only country in the continent to have undergone three colonial experiences from the Germans through the French to the British, a history that resulted in the merging of two territories, namely majority French-speaking La Republic due Cameroon and minority English-speaking Southern Cameroon. Butake's corpus of seven published plays and numerous play-scripts for radio and television provide a fertile ground for the exploration of the role of art in a changed and changing social order in a post-colonial setting grappling with the onslaught of neocolonialism.

At the beginning of the text the reader is introduced to the historical context that informs Butake's creative imagination. An interview with him that follows provides this background in a more visible manner as Butake speaks to his sources of inspiration and the challenges of siding with everyday people languishing under the weight of misery. Ngwang and Usongo aver that in the interview Butake...

explains his focus on writing drama in terms of his intent to dialogue directly with his audience as well as his resolve to conscientize the marginalized Cameroonian masses mainly on some of the political and social deprivations to which they have been subjected. At the same time Butake is worried about the greed and egocentricity of the ruling class in a society that has setup a coercive military and gendarmerie to intimidate people and minimize any opposition to the regime's quest to despoil the wealth of the nation (6).

The authors go on to demonstrate in what ways three of Butake's plays, namely *And Palmwine Will flow*, *The Rape of Michelle* and *Lake God*, portray a setting wrought with cupidity and moral bankruptcy. The plays are rooted in the activities of a real inept political leadership whose excesses result in events like the calls for a sovereign national conference in 1992 and the controversial presidential election in the same year in which the lone Anglophone candidate is widely believed to

have won, but was never declared winner by the county's Supreme Court.

The compelling nature of this book rests on the authors' assertion that what obtains in Butake's Cameroon is a reflection of what obtains in postcolonial Africa as a whole. Political leadership in postcolonial Africa is portrayed as a "vestige of colonial lingering of assimilation with leaders who seem more preoccupied with serving the interest of western powers rather than Africa" (6). This is demonstrated in Butake's *And Palm Wine Will Flow* where Shey Ngong cultivates a cult of worship around himself as a leader. He becomes an embodiment of the African dictator with a firm grip on power that is sustained by a brute and ruthless military. In this setting mediocrity is given primacy over meritocracy; misuse of power, cronyism and corruption abound.

Another crucial perspective explored in Butake's dramaturgy is the suggestion that women, believed to possess "extra ordinary powers" that are being subsumed by longstanding entrenched male chauvinism, would be better at the task of liberating society from tyranny. The authors opine that Butake's "coded language is that faced with the political ineptitude which has often been manifested by men in positions of authority in Africa, women should be given a chance at governance" (17). While it is true that Butake suggests women may be better at the helm of political power in Africa, he tends to make them (when given power) peripheral in defining and implementing policy.

Ngwang and Usongo have provided a compelling analysis of a front-line Cameroon Anglophone writer from a new historicist standpoint, a framework that is premised on the thinking that a writer does not write in a vacuum. That is in part why they find him "creatively reimagining his society and foregrounding issues of politics, culture and ethics" and "appealing to ... the dominant groups of society to reassess the policy of subjugating other people to various indignities..." (118). Art and Bole Butake, however, does not explore in-depth Butake's experimentation with Development Theater, a sub-genre he later embraced in an effort to reach and energize the down-trodden.¹ The decision by Butake to turn to Development

1 Due primarily to its all-inclusive attribute, Development Theatre (DT) or Theatre for Development (TFD) is considered an aspect of action research that would address the immediate needs of communities, for it brings everyday people at the periphery to the center where they would become actively involved in crucial issues in their everyday lives. DT is employed in community education initiatives to mobilize and educate everyday people, most of whom do not have access to education as a cultural pedagogical practice as obtained within school and university systems or in the mass media. It does not aim at a result; it aims at a process that would lead to a series of events that constitutes action and reaction for change. The practice gained currency in Africa at the backdrop of poor literacy rate and the primacy of bottom-top development model in development economics, see Augusto Boal, *The Theatre of the Oppressed* (London: Pluto Press, 1979) and *Aesthetics of the Oppressed* (New York: Verso, 2004); and Dale Byam,

Theater and his contribution in that area is germane to the playwright's dramaturgy and should not have been given the cursory attention we find in *Art and Political Thought in Bole Butake*, a title that suggests the study of Butake's entire work as a committed writer. This is because the collection of belles lettres or highbrow texts discussed in the book would seldom reach the down-trodden whom the playwright considers an invaluable part of his audience. Nonetheless, *Art and political Thought in Bole Butake* is a refreshingly thorough elucidation of the works of one of Africa's important playwrights. Although Butake's corpus of plays is set in and speaks to the Cameroonian condition, it as well speaks to a typical post-colonial African reality of a people living in abject poverty despite abundant natural resources. The text will be an invaluable material to scholars and students of African studies and literature.

Aden, Roger C. *Upon The Ruins of Liberty: Slavery, The President's House at Independence National Historical Park, and Public Memory*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2017. 264 pages. \$19.95, paper. EAN: 978-1-4399-1200-3.

Reviewer: Jessie MacLeod

United States history is steeped in troubling realities that shatter romantic visions of the past, perhaps none so dramatically as slavery. Public memory sites that relate to slavery frequently become battlegrounds for competing historical narratives. One of the most famous sites of such controversy is the President's House, the Philadelphia mansion (no longer extant) where George Washington and John Adams lived between 1790 and 1800. The site is now part of Independence National Historical Park (INHP)—a Philadelphia National Park Service location that also includes the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. Remarkably, after nearly a decade of planning, the dominant narrative at the President's House installation when it opened in 2010 was the story of slavery. In his detailed and insightful study of the project, Roger C. Aden answers the pressing question: "how did it happen?"

In Aden's telling, it began with the 2002 publication of historian Edward Lawler's archival discoveries: the precise location and floor plan of the President's House, as well as the presence of nine enslaved people laboring in the building under George Washington. Even more shocking was Washington's secret practice of rotating the nine individuals out of Pennsylvania every six months to prevent them from claiming their freedom under the state's emancipation law. The location of some enslaved people's sleeping quarters was just feet from a planned multi-million dollar visitor center, leading to outcry when the fact was publicized.

Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa (London: Bergin and Garvey, 1999).

National Park Service officials were initially reluctant to change or delay the visitor center project after years of planning. The discovery also threatened to undermine one of the site's core interpretive tenets: a celebration of American liberty. Aden recounts how the controversy quickly became a symbol of African American disenfranchisement, revealing "long-buried issues about selective storytelling" at national heritage sites (8). Ultimately, pressure from historians, the public, local advocacy groups, and the city of Philadelphia forced INHP to address the new discoveries.

Aden catalogues in detail the circuitous process that followed. He relies primarily on interviews with participants and site visitors, internal documents, media coverage, and scholarship in public memory. Drawing from his home field of rhetorical studies, Aden terms his approach "*persons-with/in-places*," arguing that meaning-making at sites of public memory occurs through a complex interaction between visitors and the place itself (14). He identifies the competing discourses that multiple publics brought to the President's House project, as well as how the site fits into both its immediate landscape and the national commemorative landscape. His approach is heavy on theory at times, but Aden's clear writing style ensures that the text remains accessible.

Some of the book's most valuable contributions lie in its documentation of "behind-the-scenes" details. Aden devotes a chapter to the five semi-finalist designs and hundreds of public comments on each proposal. The results reveal the wide range of stakeholders, from those primarily interested in the executive branch to others who pushed for the project to focus solely on slavery. Ultimately, the winning design incorporated a partial reconstruction of the house, with interpretive panels and video screens featuring actors portraying enslaved individuals. A memorial marks the site where the enslaved slept. The installation's title, *The President's House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation*, reveals its interpretive bent.

Unsurprisingly, the installation did not go entirely as planned. After Philadelphia-based firm Kelly/Maiello was named winner of the design contest, an archaeological excavation of the site revealed architectural details, including a wall of the kitchen where enslaved cook Hercules worked and an underground passageway used by enslaved and indentured servants to travel between the house and its outbuildings. One of the book's most striking sections recounts the power of this excavation as a visual symbol of the "buried history" of slavery. Aden describes how visitors, who could watch the work from a viewing platform, frequently reported feeling the presence of the building's enslaved residents. The unmediated experience of viewing the ruins also fostered contemplation and difficult conversations among diverse onlookers.

The final design was adjusted to place a vitrine over parts of the archaeological site, but Aden notes that this solution fails to replicate the quiet reverence and

authenticity of the original excavation. This is just one of many shortcomings that Aden identifies when he offers a detailed critique of the installation in his final chapter, ultimately arguing that the installation tries to do too much and is not well-incorporated into the landscape of INHP. Despite his own criticism, Aden acknowledges the tremendous challenges of the project. He also makes the important observation that critics and scholars, including himself, are not typical visitors to public memory sites and thus should not assume that their opinions are shared.

Overall, this book offers a comprehensive analysis of the "dilemmas, contradictions, and anxieties packed within" this contentious project (172). Aden locates his case study within a larger exploration of public memory, especially as it relates to the uniquely challenging topic of U.S. slavery. As such, the book could easily become a staple of graduate public history courses, while also serving scholars of public memory and professionals interpreting slavery at their own sites.

Russworm, TreaAndrea M., Karen M. Bowdre, and Samantha N. Sheppard, editors. *From Madea to Media Mogul: Theorizing Tyler Perry*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016. 240 pages. \$65, cloth. ISBN: 978-1-496-80704-5.

Reviewer: Morgan Morgan

In *From Madea to Media Mogul: Theorizing Tyler Perry* the Hollywood Black tycoon's impactful cultural productions are placed under heavy academic scrutiny. This scrupulous collection of essays, edited by professors TreaAndrea Russworm and Samantha Sheppard, along with independent scholar Karen Bowdre, seek to provide a serious platform for critical analysis. Perry's rise to notoriety warrants the dissection of his legitimacy, his lack of respectability, and the inquiry of his authenticity. Through a reflective lens of the past and forthcoming works, Perry's work is challenged for an audience who otherwise fails to do so (xiv).

Tyler Perry's presence in the film industry is questioned as the historical implications, advertising, and future of his work is considered. Perry's dominance is reminiscent of the patterns of Black vaudeville, the urban circuit, and the paths that playwrights such as Shelly Garrett, David E. Talbert, August Wilson and Charles Fuller paved. However, Perry is criticized by high profile names in the industry such as *The Boondocks*, Larry Leon Hamlin, Malcolm-Jamal Warner, and Spike Lee for a lack of quality and credibility of the Black experience (47). Perry's testimonial-style, gospel cinema productions take on the same grassroots advertising practices that have worked historically in the Black theater community such as cooperating with churches for word-of-mouth referrals (39), becoming a byproduct of self-help trends from influencers (57), and by avoiding negative film

critiques by omitting pre-releases (64).

The evaluation of Perry's timeline of accomplishments towards fame includes the examination of his validity. The accolades of Perry's career are marked by high profile support—both from the film industry and his targeted demographic. Perry's credibility as a filmmaker is fortified by financial backing, collaborations, and by the likes of media magnate Oprah Winfrey and television evangelist Thomas Dexter "T.D." Jakes. Perry has built the ideal filmmaker/studio relationship with Lionsgate (81), has landed a small role in *Star Trek* (2009), and Rashida Shaw brings to attention the noteworthiness of Perry presenting an award at the Tony Awards show despite not having been nominated himself (40). Furthermore, Perry's extensive box-office investment comes from primarily over-25, Southern, Black Christian women who are also the targets of his work (64). Through eleven chapters, these concise essays take notice of the ways of which Perry's beginnings as a playwright on the "Chitlin' Circuit" transitioned to his current stance as the bridge for Black American access to recognition and legitimacy in the mainstream theatre world (49).

Perry and his body of work is examined due to a lack of respectability based on a lack of identity, culpability, and negative portrayals of the Black community. Although Perry is a Christian, cinephile, and survivor of child abuse, he remains invisible in his biomythographies (95) by joining the vicious cycle where cultural norms correlate victim-hood as a more acceptable role for women in mainstream film and media (113). Perry's identity resides in a lack of accountability: he fired his writers that tried to unionize (145), he has been accused of thieving his *Madea* character from Miss Sophia of a gay club (147), and he softens his negative imagery of the Black community by downplaying the harm of his bait to discuss larger themes, *Madea* (77). His sitcoms *House of Payne* and *Meet the Browns* are seen as neo-minstrels (xiv) that play upon negative stereotypes which offer a myopic view of Black Americans to broader audiences (172). Sacred conversations about race and class amongst Blacks have been commodified by Perry for mainstream consumption.

From *Madea to Media Mogul* is a necessary foundation for discussion about the Black cinematic experience within the confines of popular culture. Russworm, Sheppard, and Bowdre provide a timely collection in response to a lack of platforms for critical analysis. This important monograph addresses concern for the intricacy that is Black cinema, its future, and of whose hands that future lies-in.

Russell Roberts, Brian and Keith Foulcher, eds. *Indonesian Notebook: A Sourcebook on Richard Wright and the Bandung Conference*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. 288 pages. \$89.95, cloth. ISBN: 978-0-8223-6051-3.

Reviewer: Guy Reynolds

Richard Wright's peripatetic travels in the 1950s now seem increasingly significant, less an addendum to a career that had begun with native soil and native sons than a prescient movement toward what we would now call 'globalism' or 'transnationalism.' Wright spent time in recently-decolonized Ghana (the result: *Black Power* in 1954), where his travels and conversations with figures such as Kwame Nkrumah led to powerful reflections on how independent African nations might pursue modernization and development. In April 1955 Wright pursued his globalist quest by attending the so-called Bandung Conference (Afro-Asian Conference) in Bandung, Indonesia. Political and cultural historians increasingly see this event as a key moment for international cooperation between the nonaligned countries who were not part of either the Western or Warsaw pact blocs (the Nonaligned Movement was then founded in Belgrade in 1961). This was a non-Western gathering, an anti-hegemonic meeting for countries keen to carve out a co-operative space as the Cold War began to create a new (Western-led) alignment that became starkly binary. The United States found itself in an interesting and tricky position, both wanting to claim anti-colonial legitimacy while resisting the increasing significance of China, in particular, in this new internationalist formation. The U.S. had no formal representation at the meeting.

Richard Wright, though, did attend, with funding from the Congress for Cultural Freedom, an anti-communist body which was later discovered to have been covertly funded by the CIA (17). Wright worked as a political analyst, a journalist and an 'engaged' author able to address deep structures of politics and power. Yet the record we have of his Asian travels and writings from Indonesia, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference* (1956), has not yet received a full contextualization. In their new and deeply significant compendium, Brian Russell Roberts and Keith Foulcher give us for the first time a more rounded and nuanced picture of Wright in Indonesia, by bringing together a large number of works produced by other writers. The volume includes newspaper reports about Bandung, reports about Wright from other authors, and post-Bandung reflections too. As they suggest: "*Indonesian Notebook's* complications and contestations in turn call out for re-assessments of the Bandung Conference's place in histories and theories of postcoloniality, the global South, nonalignment, and US investments in transnational cultural exchange" (27).

The editors have brought together materials from a range of authors, writings originally published in Dutch (Indonesia's colonial language), and Indonesian itself. These figures are journalists, intellectuals, academics and also institutions: one excerpt is from the Indonesian Embassy's *Cultural Life of Indonesia* (1951). The

effect is one of great revelation, since most scholars of Wright (and one thinks of the larger African-American intellectual diaspora, too) have worked with English and French materials alone. Here, we see Wright's impact across cultural and linguistic boundaries; we sense his impact on Indonesia's thinkers who were themselves grappling with the profound cultural and economic problems thrown up at the moment of decolonization. Intriguingly, there are parallels with Wright's own profoundly dialogic way of working: in *Black Power*, Wright reported on conversations with Nkrumah – in *Indonesian Notebook* Wright's editors import a similar approach to map Wright's post-colonial legacy.

One particular strength of this book—and here it dovetails nicely with Brian Roberts's earlier monograph, *Artistic Ambassadors: Literary and International Representation of the New Negro Era* (2013)—is its mapping of forms of what one might call literary and cultural diplomacy. Through tracing the ways Indonesians such as Mochtar Lubis reacted to, and created a dialogue with Wright, the editors outline an intellectual network initiated by the American and then developed by his readers and interlocutors. The effect is to suggest a transnational milieu working in counterpoint to conventional diplomacy. The focus is on encounter and cultural conversation, and on how geo-political events are remembered and misremembered. The aim (achieved handsomely) is to return Bandung and Wright's encounter with this Asian-African conference, from 'myth' to 'history.'

The design of this book resonates. Tracking the importance or impact of an historical moment can be tricky: when and how to trace the origins of a turning point or a cultural intervention? The editors choose to begin the story just before Bandung; then to capture the conference itself; and then to move to its aftermath. This a suggestive and telling timeline, since in many ways the importance of an event such as Bandung lay in how it acted as a pivot between historical periods—between the colonial, anti-colonial and then post-colonial eras. In arranging their materials in this way, the editors also help us to see not only the near-term moment of the 1950s with new eyes, but also to historicize a literary moment in the most fundamental way: as an unfolding track of readings, interpretations, re-readings, responses. As such, the book presents a quite unique amalgam of materials that will be of use to graduate and faculty researchers in the field (who will find materials drawn from hard-to-reach sources), and a sourcebook that will work in the advanced undergraduate classroom as an embodiment of the richness of post-colonial studies.

Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc.

HISTORY:

S.C.A.A.S.I. had its beginnings in 1979 following a successful statewide Black History and Culture program at Texas Southern University. The program at T.S.U. was held to bring together persons from across the state of Texas who were interested in interpreting and preserving black history and culture. The participants were very responsive. It was reasoned that this venture was such a success that the momentum had to be kept alive and expanded. Even though the southern states contained, perhaps a majority of African Americans, most of the intellectual activities geared at interpreting and preserving African American history and culture were centered elsewhere. This was virtually a virgin field. Here was something that had to be done. It was immediately decided to try to bring together, regardless of color or creed, all who were interested in interpreting and preserving Black history and culture, especially that which had originated in and/or affected the South.

MEETINGS:

S.C.A.A.S.I. holds an annual meeting/convention. Eventually, each former Confederate and border state will be the site of a meeting. Most importantly, attempts are made to hold meetings at historically black colleges. At the meetings, scholarly papers are presented and critiqued. Unlike other meetings, after the paper is read, the discussion leader(s) look at the paper, not simply to negatively critique it, but to examine the validity of the work; its reflection on the black and white communities; and the possible future effect(s) of the subject matter.

Meetings have been held at the following colleges/universities: Texas Southern University; Dillard University; Tougaloo College; Alabama State University; Morehouse College; Jackson State University; North Carolina A&T University; Southern University; LeMoyne-Owens College; Virginia State University; Clark-Atlanta University; University of Texas-Arlington; Florida A&M University; Philander Smith College; Bennett College; St. Phillip's College; and Tennessee State University.

INQUIRIES:

S.C.A.A.S.I. membership inquiries should be addressed to Howard J. Jones, Secretary/Treasurer, Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc., P.O. Box 330163, Houston, Texas 77233. The annual membership fee is \$50.00. All members of S.C.A.A.S.I. receive the journal free. Single copies are \$30.00 each. The library subscription rate is \$75.00 per year. The international rate is \$100.00.

Inquiries concerning THE GRIOT should be addressed to Andrew Baskin, Editor of THE GRIOT, CPO 1715, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky 40404; email: andrew_baskin@berea.edu.

YVONNE OCHILLO GOLDEN PEN AWARD:

Named after the former vice president of S.C.A.A.S.I., the late Yvonne Ochillo of Southern University. The purpose of the award is to recognize and honor the best article published in either issue of THE GRIOT during the preceding year. The winner is announced by the editor of THE GRIOT at the annual meeting/convention.

Previous winners:

1990- "The History of Black Studies: Edward Willmont Blyden-A Portrait of a Forgotten Radical" by Shiamé Okunor

1991- "On the Edge: The Houston Riot of 1917 Revisited" by C. Calvin Smith

1992- "Playing with Fire!", Manifesto of the Harlem Niggerati" by Matthew Henry

1993- "Establishing and Maintaining White Supremacy in Florida: 1876 - 1905" by Wali Rashash Kharif

1994- The three articles dealing with the reigns of popes of African Origins by Adrian R. Roberts and Deora E. Hazel which appeared in the Fall 93, Spring 94, and Fall 94 issues of The Griot

1995- "Why Pan-Africanism Failed: Blackness and International Relations" by Rhett Jones

1996- "The Sweet Scent of Ginger: Understanding the Roots of Song of Solomon and Mama Day" by Holly W. Fils-Aime

1997- "The Pursuit of Racial Equality in America: A Reality or a Mere Fantasy?" by John Okegbe Belle-Ogunu

1998- "Can the Poet Make A Griot? Memory and Orality in African Poetry" by Niyi Afolabi

1999- Suicidal Tendencies: African Transmigration in the History and Folklore of the Americas" by Daniel Walker

2000- "How Paul Became Saul: The African-American Conversion Experience" by Yolanda Pierce

2001- "The Sado-Masochistic Dynamic in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, as Illuminated by Sartre's Being and Nothingness and Chancer's Sadomasochism in Everyday Life" by Tommie L. Jackson

- 2002- "The Pelletier Case: A Study of the Correlation between Racial Politics in the United States and American Diplomacy Toward Haiti, 1861-1865" by Wanda Jackson and "On the Wings of Birds, Butterflies, and Bats: Fear, Flight and Freedom in African Diaspora Women's Literature" by Alexis Brooks de Vita
- 2003- "The Physical and Psychological Context of Slave Diseases: From the Senegambia to Southern Louisiana, 1812-1860" by F.K. Danquah
- 2004- "Black Environmental Liberation Theology: The Historical and Theological Roots of Environmental Justice Activism by the African America Church" by Dianne Glave and "Western Christianity: A Nationalist Ideology in African Political History" by Rupe Simms
- 2005- "Womanhood, Motherhood, Life and Death in African/Diaspora Folktales: Meta-morphosis and Affirmation Despite Loss and Sacrifice" by Johnea Brooks de Vita
- 2006- "Geography and the Slave Creation of Blackness in the Americas" by Rhett Jones
- 2007- "Privilege Lost: Shifting Creole Identity in Antebellum Louisiana" by Miller W. Boyd, III
- 2008- "How Holy a Cause: Revisiting Slavery and the Secession Debate in Alabama, 1860-1881" by Bertis English
- 2009- "From Alabama to Moscow: Black Americans and the Soviet Experiment" by Joy Gleason Carew
- 2010- "African American Amusement Parks in the Jim Crow District of Columbia" by Mary Stanton
- 2011- "Dundus: Disabling the Concept of Race in Namba Roy's Black Albino" by Vida Robertson
- 2012- "Harlem is Nowhere: Blues Spaces in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man" by Donald Shaffer
- 2013- "There's No Jim Crow on Soviet Trains: Black Visitors Testing Out the Soviet Experiment" by Joy Gleason Carew
- 2014- "They Keep the Colored Men in Low Places" by Bryan M. Jack

2015- "Manchild in the Promised Land: A Case Study on Black Masculinity" by
Kendric Coleman

2016- "Ain't No Trust in Medicine: The History of Medical Experimentation on
African Americans" by Brianna Rock

THE GRIOT solicits articles relative to any disciplinary perspective in the humanities that further enhances knowledge of the African's (African-American, Caribbean) experience. Poetry and book reviews will also be published. Typed articles submitted for publication should not exceed 20 pages and should conform to a style manual in the author's discipline. Please send two copies of the original manuscript, a brief autobiographical sketch, and a stamped return address envelope. The Griot: The Journal of African American Studies, the organ of the Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc., is published at Berea College, Berea, Kentucky.

New Contact Information for the Southern Conference on African American Studies Inc.

Dr. Howard Jones, one of the founders and more recently, the Executive Secretary of the Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc. (SCAASI), has retired after over thirty-five years of service to the organization. The new Executive Secretary is Dr. Tonya Thames-Taylor of West Chester University. As a result there is a change in the contact information for the organization and the journal. Below is the new contact information for SCAASI and *The Griot: The Journal of African American Studies*.

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