

# **The Atlantic Millennium**

A Graduate Journal on Atlantic Civilization

Volume 10 Fall 2011

Published by DOHGSA

Funds Provided by Florida International University's Council of Student Organizations

Florida International University  
Miami, Florida

The Atlantic Millennium Published by the Department of History Graduate  
Student Association

Editor's Notes

Managing Editor  
Gregory K. Weimer

Co-Editors  
Amanda J. Snyder  
Jeffrey S. Austin

Since the mid-fifteenth century, the Atlantic has provided the corridor for the exchange of people, ideas, and technologies defining and challenging entire communities across vast amounts of time and space. The Atlantic Millennium capitalizes on these multiple dimensions and seeks to publish works to enhance our program's focus on the comparative framework of the Atlantic experience.

The purpose of the journal is to provide an academic and scholarly forum for graduate students and the general academic community. The Department of History Graduate Student Association (DOHGSA) published its first journal in 1993, under the title *Southeastern Historical Journal*. In 1994, the name was changed to *The Atlantic Millennium* and the following year the subtitle *A Graduate History Journal on Atlantic Civilization* was added.

Article or book review submissions should be sent to the Managing Editor, Atlantic Millennium, Department of History, Florida International University, DM 397, Modesto Madique Campus or to [AtlanticMillennium@gmail.com](mailto:AtlanticMillennium@gmail.com). Articles should include two paper copies of the manuscript at length of 20 to 40 pages, double-spaced, with footnotes in Chicago Manual of Style. Book review submissions should not exceed 1250 words, double-spaced, with all citation page numbers in parentheses, and include all bibliographic information (indicate number of pages, price, cloth or paper, and ISBN number). Author's name, department, and address should be in the title page. Style and format of all papers should conform to the 16th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

Atlantic Millennium is not refereed but all submissions are carefully evaluated for content, analytical skill, and style by editorial board composed of senior graduate students with expertise in various content areas. DOHGSA disclaims responsibility for any statements made by contributors.

This year, the editors of the Atlantic Millennium wish to thank DOHGSA'S advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Gwyn Davies for his commitment, support and many long hours of service to the graduate community.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**The Atlantic Millennium****Volume 10****Fall 2011****Interview**

- 5 A Discussion of Anglo-American Studies with Dr. Jenna Gibbs

Amanda J. Snyder and Gregory K. Weimer

**Articles**

- 12 Between A Rock and a Hard Place: International Catholic Student Movements, 1946 to 1966

Joseph W. Holbrook

- 36 Only “some resemblance to a man”: Single Men and the Pursuit of Happiness in Philadelphia between 1763 - 1783

Kent Peacock

- 57 Merchant Political Mobilization during the Imperial Crisis: The Impact of London and Northeastern American Merchants on Parliament and Colonial Policy, 1765 - 1775

Susan Schwartz

**Review Essay**

- 82 Who Ended the African Slave Trade? A Historiographical Analysis

Scott Craig

**Reviews**

- 100 *With Our Labor and Sweat: Indigenous Women and the Formation of Colonial Society in Peru, 1550 - 1700*, by Karen B. Graubart

Reviewed by Paula De La Cruz Fernández

- 102 *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos*, by Louis A. Pérez Jr.  
Reviewed by Julio Capó, Jr.
- 104 *The Plague Files: Crisis Management in Sixteenth-Century Seville*,  
by Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook  
Reviewed by Antoinetta di Pietro

## A Discussion of Anglo-American Studies with Dr. Jenna Gibbs

Amanda J. Snyder and Gregory K. Weimer  
Florida International University

### 1. Why did you become a historian?

After working in the theater and television for many years, I began teaching theater arts for a non-profit program at some of the inner-city middle schools in Los Angeles. I really enjoyed the experience and decided to expand my teaching options. Because I had gone to acting conservatory instead of university, I went back to school to get a Bachelors and teaching degree. Along the way, I had some fantastic history classes and was encouraged to apply to graduate school. I had not considered graduate school before but became more and more passionate about my history classes. So, I decided to change careers altogether and go to graduate school.

### 2. How did being raised in India influence your work as a historian?

When I applied to UCLA for graduate school, I remember beginning my statement of purpose with the fact that I grew up in India. Hence, from a very young age, I had a very strong sense of history as interpretation as opposed to narrative. During my first year in India, I went to a local English medium school in Bangalore and I took modern Indian history in the British Empire period taught from the Indian perspective. When that school closed, my brothers and I moved to an English boarding school. We did exactly the same period of history, but taught from the British perspective and all the terms changed. Among other things, in the Indian narrative you have the “Calcutta Massacre,” and in the British version, you have the “Calcutta Mutiny.” It was a very interesting lesson because I had gone into that year expecting it to be an easy-A repeat of my previous school year. In

reality, the interpretation was completely different. In the British version, of course, you are taught all about the railroads they built, the roads they built, the civilization project. All of this was not at all the Indian version of events told from the new nationalist perspective. I think that's one of the ways in which my own personal upbringing very much influenced my love of/interest in history.

The second way my background influenced me is that I have an abiding fixation with interactions between cultures and countries. At UCLA, I trained officially as a British historian through the MA level and then did a transatlantic dissertation and ended up being an Americanist. All my interests were always Britain and the world, so, in fact, I was never really a "British historian." All of my MA work was on Ottoman-Anglo relations in the Levant. My work on anti-slavery is again a question of interethnic/intercultural relations in the transference of ideas between cultures and countries. Every idea I ever end up having for a project is in some way, born of that interest in cultural interactions.

### 3. What scholars or ideas have influenced you and your work?

The first scholar that comes to mind is Joseph Roach, and his book *The Cities of the Dead*. Looking at embodied performance, Roach is particularly interested in questions of race, gender, and slavery and how those different cultures get appropriated by different kinds of performance in the Atlantic World. This is the point in which the penny dropped and I said "Ah-ha! I should be doing this trans-Atlantically." If you're really going to ask questions about the debates about slavery and race and how those developed, you really need to look at the comparison of how it develops in different contexts and the interactions of those ideas throughout the Atlantic World. Joseph Roach's work is actually one reason I wrote a transatlantic dissertation.

More specifically, Roach's approach was important for mine because his study is mostly based in New Orleans and London. I wanted to work on an exchange of theatre popular culture, and originally thought I would focus on London and New York, which, of course, is a very presentist point-of-view. Philadelphia was a much bigger city and had much more theatre than New York in the eighteenth century. As I re-tooled my prospectus to incorporate this, I dashed off to see Gary Nash and said "Help! I'm thinking of doing London and Philadelphia and theatre and slavery. Can you help?" He got quite excited, and...that brings me to second person who has very much influenced me.

That was Gary Nash. I had the privilege of training with him when I was re-tooling to do the American part of the project. He became my co-advisor. All his

work addresses some of the issues that I find intriguing: how ideas of race develop, shifting ideas about slavery, and anti-slavery. His works are very much focused on trying to account for and incorporate the diversity of America.

He also helped me immensely in the sense of figuring out how to ground cultural history in the social. At one point, he had me read sociologist Manheim. Basically, Manheim's work is all about how the social is absolutely crucial to understand anything intellectual or cultural. He really made me think about questions of identity, contemporary community and social circles, social status/class. So many people who do work on the theatre and culture do not always ground their work in such a social structure. I would say Roach and Nash were certainly two of the most influential historians for me, not only in terms of choosing what I wanted to work on, but also in terms of approach.

4. What do you see as the benefits and tribulations of interdisciplinary study in your own work and in the field at-large?

Obviously the benefit of the interdisciplinary approach, both for my work and the larger work, is that you get a rich array of sources. I think most especially for performance it is really critical to have at least some understanding of performance theory, cultural studies, literary scholarship on theatre, and theatre history. In fact, Joseph Roach, again, was very influential in that because he brilliantly fuses all that theoretically.

The problem with interdisciplinarity, however, is that it can become quite amorphous. It can lose your methodological precision, because you're trying to take into account all these different bodies of critical scholarship. I will call it the "interdisciplinarity jargon problem." For example, some literary scholars will read my work and find it insufficiently grounded, from their viewpoint, in literary theory, such as the post-colonial and subaltern concepts and terminology popularized by people like Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. But if all interdisciplinarity means is borrowing each others' jargon and theory, what you may wind up with is not having a very clearly defined methodology of your own. To put this differently, in order to fruitfully cross traditional boundaries between academic disciplines, the disciplines need to maintain their own methodological integrity, and one needs to apply whatever is borrowed in a way that retains fidelity to one's own discipline.

5. Where do you see the future of Anglo-American, Anglo-Atlantic studies moving?

In the conferences I have attended over the past year, there is a noticeable trend to bring the Atlantic World back to the metropole instead of going from the metropole outwards to the Atlantic World. British Empire studies are looking more at what is going on in the larger world and then reading that back into, say, politics in the metropole. I also think there's a trend to think beyond the Atlantic because the Atlantic only works for certain questions. Many different countries are not encompassed in the Atlantic. For example, Kathleen Wilson has a book on theatre and performance coming out that spans the globe. The Atlantic would not work for her because she goes to Calcutta, to Surinam, and all the other British Empire locations.

I think that scholars are also moving out of purely "Atlantic" studies, which for those of us who work in the Anglo-Atlantic is really Great Britain, America, Ireland, and the Caribbean. Scholars are extending some of the same kind of questions we've asked of the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Mediterranean. I would also note that at a recent congress of the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, there was tremendous emphasis placed on trying to bring the African continent into the mix as a cultural player in ways that transcend its interconnectedness to Europe and the New World via slavery and the slave trade.

6. What brought you to FIU and how does the teaching experience at FIU compare to other experiences you've had?

I was short-listed for three jobs, but I really wanted to be at FIU. I wanted to be here mostly because of the Atlantic PhD program which I thought was very exciting and also because the project I want to work on next will take me somewhat into the Caribbean. I thought "that would be fantastic being in Miami. [It] would be a great location." Also, of the schools at which I was offered jobs, FIU's student body was the most appealing. I really, really loved the idea of being in public education again and having a diverse student body. I would have been hard-pressed to see myself in a small liberal arts college somewhere in Iowa. That situation would have been massive culture shock for me. The undergraduate student body, the location of Miami, and the Atlantic PhD program really brought me here to FIU.

There really is no way to compare my current job to my middle-school teaching because those were more creative workshops in which my function was being an artist-facilitator more than an academic teacher. We taught the kids basic acting lessons, put them through some writing courses and guided them through the process of writing their own plays, and then finished the course by producing

the plays that they had written in a professional theatre. Though, in that situation, as here, many of my students were English-as-second-language students, many from immigrant families.

In comparison to UCLA and to the community college where I taught, the students here are much livelier than UCLA, and much more vocal. I'm not entirely sure why that is. I think it must just be the cultural mix. I was used to a much quieter class, and I have to say this is much more fun having more engaged students who are willing to holler out and raise their hand and speak with you.

At UCLA I was teaching European history - Western Civ., Near East history, and World history – so it's been interesting to see how much more easily the students relate to American history than European history. With the exception, as you may have already discovered, of the WWI and WWII stuff. Here they are all fascinated by that, too, but earlier European history, is a lot harder to get them interested in. Teaching American history is really exciting because the students are engaged with things that touch them personally, so that's been a lot of fun. I will say I'm still adjusting to the idea of teaching 150 students in the US survey course. The only regret I have about that is that I really don't get to interact with students very much. The TAs get more of the interaction, and I really miss that.

## 7. What is your next project?

I have two future projects, one of them is larger and more complicated which means it will probably be my third instead of my second. The second is a family biography of the Fenwicks. Eliza Fenwick, and her husband John Fenwick, were part of that whole radical circle of Tom Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, and William Godwin in revolutionary London. Wollstonecraft was Fenwick's best friend, and she was with Wollstonecraft when she died in 1797. Eliza and John actually wind up in Ireland for a period—he's an Irish nationalist and involved in radical anti-colonial politics. Her marriage, however, is a long sad story because he's a drunk and a spendthrift. She is in Ireland for a period of time with his family to help raise her kids. She also goes to the Caribbean, to Barbados, lives there for a number of years, where her daughter becomes an actress in the local theatre. She then winds up in early America, where she lives in New York and ultimately dies in Rhode Island. So she's very much an Atlantic character. What I want to do is not a biography on her so much as a family biography and use that to tell a story of Atlantic family and what happens to family when they are moving around in all those geopolitical contexts: how is family fractured? How is family reconstituted?

Some of the sources for this project are her novels and her letters. One of her novels in particular, *Secresy; or, the Ruin on the Rock* (1795) is part of the democratic radical conversation in 1790s London. But over and above that she's a prolific letter-writer and wrote zillions and zillions of letters from all her various geopolitical sites, so we know actually quite a bit about her comments on the different Atlantic contexts she lived in because she wrote up a storm. From Ireland, Barbados, and the United States, Fenwick kept in touch with William Godwin, Mary Hayes, with various British feminists, and she commented on slavery, society, and theatre in all these places. Some of these letters were published in 1917; others remain in the various archives. I'm also hopeful of finding some archival material in Barbados, in Ireland, and New York to help flesh it out. I want it to be a story about Atlantic family and what family means in the Atlantic World when you are traveling around, using her letters as a source for her sensibilities about family.

#### 8. Advice for budding graduate students entering the market? Insights?

Well, one thing I would say immediately, is that you really should try and get something published before you go on the market. It's been interesting this last year to be on the other side of the fence, the faculty side of the fence, going through the job search process. Publication is something that's come up in every decision made about short-listing and about final job offers. So that's one suggestion for people coming out of FIU's program: try and get something published first. Second, my suggestion would be to finish the dissertation before you go on the job market, as opposed to being ABD, unless you see a job that is just perfect for you. Job-hunting is like applying fellowships, but ten times more work. It's kind of like a full-time job. If you put a huge amount of effort in when you, say, have two chapters written, in the current job market, it's not that likely that you'll out-compete someone who's finished with articles. So, I would say, get something published and get finished unless you see something that is absolutely dead-right for you.

Prepare for the interviews individually as opposed to generically. Here, I speak from a failed experience on my part. I thought I had prepared for all my interviews individually, but I had sort of organized my preparation into categories because I was applying for British Empire jobs, American, and Atlantic of various stripes. I had somehow not noticed that a job I was applying for at UT-Austin was not in fact British empire -- which I was prepared for -- but was instead British history. Which, as I already said, I don't do. This is not something I've ever done.

I really flubbed my interview because the first thing they asked me was what I would do for a historiography class on modern Britain. I must have looked like a deer in the headlights. I really had not thought about British historiography in the four years since I completed my comps. I stumbled my way through. Lessons to be learned from this: Prepare each and every interview individually and rather than categorize your preparation and look to see how you and your work can be tailored to that particular job and prepare syllabi. Job interviewers really like that.

Between A Rock and a Hard Place: International Catholic Student  
Movements, 1946 to 1966

Joseph W. Holbrook  
Florida International University

Introduction

Throughout much of the twentieth century, the Catholic transnational hierarchy promoted a variety of student and youth movements as a defensive strategy against external ideological threats such as secular materialism and atheistic communism.<sup>1</sup> This paper will argue that such Catholic student movements empowered Catholic young people to exercise agency, to critically examine social issues, and to adopt political and moral positions that often contradicted official positions of the Catholic hierarchy. Because of the inherent tension between the traditional ideology of the Catholic hierarchy and the trend towards more progressive ideology of student movements, Catholic students found themselves caught between the twin pressures of the expectations and political orientations of their bishops and clerical advisors and their own observations and conclusions about poverty and social justice issues. Individual students negotiated this ideological tension in a variety of ways, often turning either to the left or the right, or in some cases becoming apolitical. Although many of the Catholic student movements declined in the late 1960s, they nevertheless prefigured the radical student movements in 1968, made significant intellectual contributions to the *aggiornamento* (opening to modernity) of the Catholic Church in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), and contributed to the rise of Liberation Theology in the late 1960s and 1970s.

---

1. By “transnational hierarchy” the author is referring to the Popes, the Vatican curia, and leading national bishops such as Cardinal Manuel Arteaga Betancourt in Cuba and the National Bishops Conference (CNBB) in Brazil. Earlier in the twentieth century, liberal democracy and the nation-state were also viewed as ideological threats to traditional Catholicism and the ultramontane papacy. Catholic views on liberal democracy began to change in World War II with the defeat of fascism and the liberal philosophical influence of French Catholic thinkers such as Jacques Maritain.

As the Catholic Church became marginalized in the twentieth century from influence within both the State and society, the hierarchy attempted to reinsert itself into the public sphere through the mobilization and indoctrination of Catholic students by way of lay-led organizations such as Young Catholic Students (JEC), Young Catholic Workers, (JOC), Young Catholic University Students (JUC) and the university wing of Pax Romana.<sup>2</sup> During the course of the twentieth century, the Catholic Church remained heavily involved in organizing youth and student organizations. Catholic student and lay movements grew rapidly from 1922 to 1939 during the papacy of Pope Pius XI. Pius XI has been described as the Pope of Catholic Action, calling upon the laity and youth, to "participate in the apostolate of the hierarchy."<sup>3</sup>

Using the example of early twentieth-century Paris, Laura Lee Downs notes that:

“Catholics were undoubtedly the most active and innovative force in the development of new pedagogies of child leisure in France...the pioneering influence of Catholic youth organizations--scouts, patronages, colonies de vacance, and after 1925, the Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique (JOC) -- is nowhere more visible than in the working-class cities around Paris, where the sociopolitical mission of re-Christianizing the “heathen” proletariat in this moment of acute religious crisis...imbued these organizations with an especially strong pedagogical purpose...”<sup>4</sup>

---

2. Pax Romana is an international association of lay Catholic intellectuals. The student movement was created in 1921 and the academic movement was launched in 1947 with an emphasis on building a peaceful world. The name refers to the peace existing in the days of Christ.

3. Indre Cuplinskas, “Guns and Rosaries: The Use of Military Imagery in the French-Canadian Catholic Student Newspaper JEC,” *Historical Studies* (2005): 8; *Ubi arcano*, the papal encyclical of Pius XI the 23 December 1922, is often indicated as the document initiating Catholic Action, which was defined as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy." This hierarchical mandate differentiated the movement from earlier lay organizations.

4. Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880–1960* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002) 68.

A proliferation of youth organizations occurred during the WWII era. A definitive youth culture began to emerge in the post-war period resulting in a significant flourishing of student organizations at both the national and the international level. These student organizations themselves eventually became part of the ideological battlefield of the Cold War—much the same as they had been used in WWII. Under the leadership of the clerical hierarchy, Catholic student organizations attempted to avoid aligning themselves with either ideological camp in the Cold War, but rather to chart a third way between Western capitalism and Eastern collectivism: a type of Catholic humanistic socialism. Tens of thousands of students at the primary, secondary and university levels in over 70 nations were intensively trained not only in faith in Christ and faithful obedience to the Pope and the church hierarchy, but were also trained to think critically and compassionately about poverty, land reform, social inequity and working class issues. Idealistic students were encouraged to become ‘soldiers of Christ’-- militants battling the forces of secularism, communism and materialism -- in order to usher in the rule of Christ.

In many cases the idealism and mission of the student movements diverged sharply from the hierarchy’s defensive attempts to maintain the status quo and protect institutional interests. These conflicting agendas inevitably collided. Catholic student “*militantes*”<sup>5</sup> were often forced to choose between ideologies of the right or the left. In some cases like Brazil, student militants suffered at the hands of military oppressors. In Cuba, students suffered under a corrupt dictator and later under revolutionary cadres.

This paper will place Catholic Student Movements in the larger context of history of youth and will use archival evidence, newspaper accounts and secondary sources to argue that, although the Catholic student movements were originally founded by institutional leaders of the Catholic Church for instrumental reasons, the experience of thousands of young Catholic students equipped them to engage social and political issues of the 1950s. Student movements also helped lay a foundation for subsequent radical student movements and the rise of liberation theology in the 1970s, thus helping to precipitate a type of second Reformation within global Catholicism in Vatican II (1962-65). Catholic student movements will be examined transnationally with a primary focus on the international Catholic student movements represented by the Young Catholic

---

5. Committed members of the various branches of Catholic Action and the youth movements such as JEC (students), JOC (workers) and JUC (university students) were traditionally called “militants.”

Students (JEC)<sup>6</sup> organization, founded in Switzerland in 1946. By the mid-1960s a cluster of JEC-affiliated organizations had spread to over seventy nations in Europe, Africa, Asia, North and South America and the Caribbean, thus providing a fascinating example of a transnational student movement within the field of the history of Atlantic Civilization.<sup>7</sup> There are a number of secondary sources, including books and articles, on Catholic Action and Young Catholic Students situated in Italy, Spain, France, Canada, and several countries in Latin America.<sup>8</sup> In addition, extensive archives on Pax Romana and the Young Catholic Students

---

6. In French speaking countries such as Belgium, France and Canada (Quebec), JEC (*Jeunesse Etudiante Catholique*) was predominantly used to describe university as well as secondary school organizations. In Spanish and Portuguese countries, such as Cuba and Brazil, JUC (*Juventude Universitaria Catolica*) was used for university movements and JEC (*Juventude Estudiantil Catolica*) was specifically reserved for secondary students or younger.

7. Paula Fass, “The World Is at Our Door: Why Historians of Children and Childhood Should Open Up1,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008): 12.

8. An extremely valuable resource to provide a historical context from the 1930s is Ana María Bidegain’s doctoral dissertation: “La Organización de Movimientos de Juventud de Acción Católica en América Latina: Los Casos de los Obreros y Universitarios en Brasil y en Colombia Entre 1930 y 1956,” diss. (Brussels, Belgium: Universite Catholique de Louvain, 1979). For a weberian sociological analysis of the Italian Catholic Action, see Gianfranco Poggi, “Catholic Action in Italy” (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1967). Alonso provides an overview of the function, values, doctrine and hierarchy of Catholic Action in, *Catholic Action and the Laity* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1961). A study focused on Spain that overlaps with this paper is Feliciano Monteiro Garcia’s *La Acción Católica y el Franquismo. Auge y Crisis de la Acción Católica Especializada* (Madrid: UNED Ediciones, 2000), in which the author traces the process of gradual radicalization of the Spanish branch of Catholic Action from the early 1960s through a rupture with the Church hierarchy in 1966. For other works of varying quality of specific countries see: Errazuriz, 1956 (Chile); Truman, 1960 (Australia); Cole-Arnal, 1997 (France) and Gauvreau, 2005 (Quebec).

International (*Jeunesse Étudiante Catholique Internationale* or JECI),<sup>9</sup> including correspondence, newsletters, and instruction manuals, and conference reports have been made available for examination by church historian Ana Maria Bidegain.<sup>10</sup>

The history of Catholic Action, student and youth movements have been most extensively studied in Brazil in the form of political and intellectual history.<sup>11</sup> Books have been written of varying quality about JEC and Catholic

9. *Note:* There were two Catholic international student coordinating agencies: Pax Romana-MIEC, dating from the 1920s and The *Jeunesse Catholique Etudiant International* (JECI) dating from 1946, and officially adopted the name in 1954. JECI represented French style *specialized* Catholic Action which tended to be more militant, more class oriented and more independent of clerical control. Pax Romana took its name from the idea of a Roman Peace and was focused on mobilizing academic scholars and university students to work for world peace and the restoration of Catholic moral influence (under Catholic leadership in a process called neo-Christendom) through regular World Congresses.

10. Ana Maria Bidegain, *Bidegain Papers*, (Department of Religion: Florida International University, 1946–1994). There are 12 ‘cajas’, each with 4 to 5 folders full of documentary materials, covering Catholic student youth movements at the international level as well as numerous national levels. Bidegain’s archives include Young Catholic Students (JEC and JUC), Young Catholic Workers (JOC), Pax Romana, WAY (World Association of Youth), and focus on Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Central America, in addition to the Vatican, Protestantism in Latin America, and International Catholic Action Youth files.

11. Angela Randolpho Paiva, *Católico, Protestante, Cidadão: Uma Comparação Entre Brasil e Estados Unidos* (Belo Horizonte, Brazil: Editora UFMG, 2003), 221. Paiva carried out a weberian study of the Young Catholic Student movement in comparison to the Black Civil Rights movement in the United States and concluded that JUC/JEC provided an important public space for the empowerment for young Catholic leaders; Luiz Alberto Gómez de Souza, *A JUC: Os Estudantes Católicos e a Política* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1984), 41. Souza’s theoretical approach leans heavily on Antônio Gramsci and his concepts of “historical block”, Hegemony, political and civil society and organic intellectuals. Souza sees the rise of progressive Catholicism among university students in Brazil in the 50 and 60s as the rise of a new group of organic

Action in other countries of Latin America. Most of them are not academic but written by Catholic priests in favor of Catholic Action such as books by Echagüe (Argentine), Errazuriz (Chile) and Bedoya Franco (Colombia).<sup>12</sup> The outstanding exception to these books is the work of Ana Maria Bidgain on JEC and Catholic Action in Colombia.<sup>13</sup> There are several good resources available for the study of JEC and Catholic Action in Cuba.<sup>14</sup>

Another perspective can be developed through the use of oral histories of participants in some of the Young Catholic Student movements in Brazil and Cuba in or even at the international level the 1950s and early 1960s. Oral histories provide insight from the subjective individual perspective that cannot be gained from institutional, political or intellectual histories. Although there has been a surplus of intellectual and political histories of Catholicism in Latin America, there is a need for social and cultural histories of the Catholic Student movements that take into account the role of individuals. Kenneth Serbin, a noted scholar of

---

intellectuals to challenge the dominant hegemonic historical block and has heralds of a new, emergent historical block, which he refers to as a “Post-capitalist” society; Scott Mainwaring, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916–1985* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1986) gives a great deal of information about the Brazilian Catholic Church in the mid-twentieth century leading up through the military dictatorship and the eventual return to democracy; An earlier article, written in Portuguese and published in Brazil gives a detailed history of the Young Catholic Workers movement: “JOC e o Surgimento da Igreja Na Base (1958–1970),” *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira* 43.169 (Mar 1983).

12. Carlos M. Echagüe, *El Católico Frente a los Partidos Políticos* (Buenos Aires: N.p., 1957); Manuel Larrain Mons. Errazuriz, *La Hora de la Acción Católica* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacifico, 1956). Fortunato Bedoya Franco, *Un Social Amanecer* (Medellín: Editorial Carpel-Antorcha, 1966).

13. Ana Maria Bidegain, *Iglesia, Pueblo Política: Un Estudio de Conflictos de Intereses-Colombia, 1930–55* (Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad Javeriana, 1985).

14. Teresa Fernández Soneira, *Con la Estrella y la Cruz : Historia de la Federación de la Juventudes de Acción Católica Cubana* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 2002); Acción Católica Cubana, “Juventudes de Acción Católica Cubana : Bodas de Plata, 1928–1953,” Cuban Heritage Collection, Richter Library (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Ramallo, 1978).

the Brazilian church, has recently published a cultural history of the Brazilian priesthood.<sup>15</sup> Mary Jo Maynes explores the use of personal narratives as a way of illuminating individual subjectivity and agency and provides some helpful methodological suggestions in her 2009 book *Telling Stories*.<sup>16</sup>

### The History of Children and Youth in the Twentieth Century

Since the groundbreaking work of French historian, Phillippe Ariès, in the 1960s, the new focus on children's history has mushroomed into an entire field of history along with social and family history, and has been further sub-divided into other more specific subfields such as youth and students.<sup>17</sup> Histories of children in France, Britain, Russia, the United States, and Colombia, among other countries, have been carried out.<sup>18</sup> Some of these children's history works have examined

---

15. Ken Serbin, *Needs of the Heart: A Social and Cultural History of Brazil's Clergy and Seminaries* (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2006): This work provides cultural study of the priesthood and of key seminaries that formed the nation's clergy.

16. Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer L. Pierce, and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2008).

17. Phillippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York: Vintage, 1962)

18. Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (London and Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2004); Bianca Premo, *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority, and Legal Minority in Colonial Lima* (Chapel Hill, NC: Niversity of North Carolina Press, 2005), and, "How Latin America's History of Childhood Came of Age," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008); Anja Muller, ed., *Fashioning Childhood in the Eighteenth Century: Age And Identity*, Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present; Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890–1991* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2007); Sally Mitchell, *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880–1915* (New York: Columbia UP, 1995); Ximena Pachón C. and Cecilia Muñoz, *La Niñez en el Siglo XX : Comienzos de Siglo* (Bogotá, Colombia: Planeta, 1991); Claudia Nelson and Lynne Vallone, *The Girl's Own: Cultural Histories of the Anglo-American Girl, 1830–1915* (Athens

specific aspects of the emerging child, or youth, culture in the context of modernity or global capitalism.<sup>19</sup> Other children's histories have examined working-class issues or leftist literature with regards to children.<sup>20</sup>

Within the field of the history of childhood, there is no clear consensus about the exact chronology of the stages of infancy, childhood and youth. There is, nevertheless, a general agreement that these stages are socially constructed and may vary greatly from one culture to another.<sup>21</sup> 'Youth' is what some scholars consider to be the period of life that lasts from adolescence (generally beginning with the onset of puberty) through marriage.

Sociologists and historians of childhood generally agree that there was a unique emergence of youth culture after World War II due to the convergence of

---

and London: U of Georgia P, 1994).

19. Marta Gutman and Ning de Coninck-Smith, *Designing Modern Childhoods: History, Space, and the Material Culture of Children*, The Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 2008). David Thomas Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood, The Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2004).

20. Julia Mickenberg. *Learning from the Left: Children's Literature, the Cold War, and Radical Politics in the United States*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2006; Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880–1960* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002). Carolyn Kay Steedman provides a particularly interesting approach to examining individual subjectivity and working class childhood over two generations in *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1997).

21. For a variety of perspectives on definitions of youth and childhood stages see Mary Bucholtz, "Youth and Cultural Practice," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (Dec 2002); Mary Jo Maynes, "Age as a Category of Historical Analysis. History, Agency, and Narratives of Childhood," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008); Leslie Paris, "Through the Looking Glass: Age, Stages, and Historical Analysis," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008); Steven Mintz, "Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008); Peter N. Stearns, "Challenges in the History of Childhood," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1.1 (Jan 2008).

the lengthening of the period of youth (defined by dependence on parents) and the increasing affluence of youth and their new role as consumers in capitalist society. The word “teenager” first appeared in the postwar period. The term defined a distinct teenage language, style, and music. Unlike the term ‘adolescence’, ‘teenager’ implied a distinct culture rather than a state of hormonal transition. Steven Mintz points out significant cultural factors contributing to the emergence of youth culture: “nearly universal high school attendance, suburbanization, early entrance into adulthood, and a high degree of affluence.”<sup>22</sup> The teenagers of the 1950s eventually became the university students of the 1960s who would have a profound impact on transnational Western civilization.<sup>23</sup>

### International Student Movements

Youth movements of various kinds began to appear in the nineteenth century. The World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the international YMCA organization had their origins in the mid-nineteenth century. Christian student movements held international conferences which brought together students from both advanced and colonial nations. This interaction stimulated early student nationalism. Youth organizations with a specifically political character emerged in the twentieth century. The Socialist Youth International began in Germany in 1907 and claimed several thousand members, primarily from the German-speaking countries. Students actively opposed the growing militarism before the First World War. Most of the early international student activity ended with the war and only began again after 1918.<sup>24</sup> Student movements in Spanish America rose to prominence with the university reform movement that began in 1918 in the University of Córdoba in Argentina and quickly spread to other Latin American countries such as Colombia and Cuba.<sup>25</sup>

---

22. Mintz:285.

23. Studies have shown that there significant student movements in China, Japan and most of Latin America. Although Latin American can be considered part of Western Civilization, China and Japan require a different paradigm.

24. Philip G. Altbach, “The International Student Movement,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 5.1, Generations in Conflict (1970): 159.

25. Mark J. van Akin, “University Reform Before Córdoba,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 51.3 (Aug 1971).

The interwar years of the twenties and thirties were a period of ideological radicalization of students and youth. Nazi, Fascist, Communist, Socialist and Anarchist parties were intensively recruiting student participation in their various ideologies. The Catholic Church also entered wholeheartedly into the ideological competition with various youth organizations under the general umbrella of Catholic Action. Each of these competing ideologies, including conservative ‘ultramontanist’ Catholicism,<sup>26</sup> had within them diverse and competing groups. Within the Catholic youth organizations, representing multiple nationalities, the bitter experience of the Spanish Civil War and World War II facilitated diverging ideological orientations between the conservative Spanish and Italian Catholic youth. These movements were influenced by the Falangist and Fascist movements, and Catholic students in France, Belgium, Canada and the United States, who were influenced by democratic pluralism.<sup>27</sup>

The Second World War brought mind-numbing destruction to East and West Europe and large parts of Asia. In France, Germany, Greece and Japan, entire cities were destroyed. British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill described postwar Europe as “a rubble heap, a charnel house, [and] a breeding ground of pestilence and hate.”<sup>28</sup> The physical destruction and loss of life was accompanied by a post-war loss of European idealism and faith in inevitable human progress. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Dean Acheson noted that “The whole world structure and order that we had inherited from the nineteenth century was gone.”<sup>29</sup>

With the collapse of European institutions and structures, the United States and the Soviet Union moved to fill the vacuum in the international world order. From 1948 through 1949 Europe was divided into two hostile and competing spheres of influence. In April of 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was created as a mutual security pact between the U.S. and its Western

---

26. *Ultramontane* means “over the mountain” and is used to describe the tendency toward a heavy focus on obedience to the Pope rather than church councils or a national church.

27. Ana Maria Bidegain, personal conversation (Department of Religion, Florida International University, January 27, 2009).

28. Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.

29. McMahon:3.

European allies. In Asia, the emerging Cold War became ‘hot’ when the Korean War broke out in June of 1950.<sup>30</sup> Another 6 million soldiers and civilians would eventually lose their lives in the Cold War. The Cold War would also have significant influence on U.S. foreign policy in South and Central America and the Caribbean.

After the conclusion of World War II hostilities and the return home of the allied soldiers, there was a sharp rise in the birth rate that has been referred to as the “baby boom.” The rapid rise in births immediately after the Second World War contributed to an increase in educational demands including a swelling student population, due in part to the GI Bill. The rise in university attendance corresponded to a rise in university activism. As more young people took advantage of new possibilities for higher education, increasing numbers of young adults entered into a liminal period in which they were not quite yet adults, with adult employment and family responsibilities, but neither were they children or teens. The university years became an opportunity for young adults to freely and independently think for themselves, and to examine ideologies away from parental influence. Since post-war ‘baby boom’ of the 1950s and the student upheavals and the counter-cultural movement of the late 1960s, university students and their political views and social roles have become popular subjects of scholarly analysis.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Second World War, several major international student movements came into existence. As one author noted in immediate aftermath of student unrest of the late 1960s, student activism had become a “world-wide phenomenon and succeeded in disrupting universities, stimulating political crises, and on several occasions precipitating revolutionary upheavals. Its international aspect has been stressed by many observers...”<sup>31</sup> The author noted that international student organizations were closely connected to the political and ideological conflicts of the Cold War.<sup>32</sup>

Conferences were held in London and Prague in 1946 to lay the groundwork for the formation of the International Union of Students (IUS). At the meeting in Prague, the International Union of Students was founded by representatives of student organizations from sixty-two countries. A driving motivation was the

---

30. McMahon:33, 35.

31. Altbach: 156.

32. Altbach: 156.

desire to avoid a resurgence of fascism in Europe. The IUS was composed of highly divergent groups, combining the communist student organizations from Eastern Europe with student unions from Western Europe.

The tendency of the Communist and leftist students groups to create a politicized movement was opposed by many of the western student organizations. By 1948 it was clear that the Cold War had become an integral part of the international student scene. The growing Cold War tension between these two groups was a major factor in causing a split in the movement which occurred in 1950. After 1950, the IUS was largely left with student unions from the Soviet Union and its east European allies and a few from the developing areas. Twenty-one unions, mainly from Western Europe and North America, dissatisfied with the partisan attitude of the IUS, met in Stockholm in 1950 to lay plans for a new movement. The new organization came to be called the International Student Conference (ISC).

Both the IUS and the ISC were largely dependent on outside financial sponsorship. Almost all organizations, from the World Student Christian Federation to the Young Communist International of the 1920s, have been financially supported from the outside. The cost of international meetings, large-scale publications, and the other activities were beyond the financial resources of university students. In the 1960s, there was implication that a portion of the ISC's budget originated with the CIA, although the ISC denied it.<sup>33</sup> Another international student organization, The World Assembly of Youth (WAY) was founded in London in 1949, and was modeled on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. WAY worked closely with UN agencies such as UNESCO and UNICEF, as did the Catholic university movement as well.

### JECI Development and Discourse

World War II had interrupted the work of Catholic Action at the international level. In Europe, many members of the French and Belgian Catholic Youth organizations joined the underground resistance to Germany. In Latin America, Catholic Action continued its work from country-to-country as autonomous organizations under the control of the national hierarchies of each country.

Parallel to the development of IUS and ISC, Catholic student leaders from Canada, the United States and France took the initiative to meet in the postwar

---

33. Altbach: 167.

period to organize an international coordinating agency for Young Catholic Students, or *Jeunesse Etudiante Catholique* (JEC). The first organizational meeting took place in November 1946 in Fribourg, Switzerland with the participation of nine countries from Europe and North America.<sup>34</sup> Gerard Pelletier, the director of the Canadian JEC and future Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, was a primary mover in organizing the first JEC International Session.<sup>35</sup> The JEC International bulletin published a series of discussions from the meetings in which the participants debated the meaning and significance of JEC and its place within the overall scheme of Catholic Action. Even at this early stage, some of the text reflects a progressive orientation.

The Cold War had not yet begun in 1946 and the Soviet Union was still a Western ally. Perhaps this permitted greater freedom in the West among Catholic students to discuss social issues using Marxist categories. The JEC International Bulletin pointed out that the “bourgeois class” had greater access to material goods and culture. The report also pointed out that postwar material conditions were still very difficult and that the conditions were ripe for the emergence of a type of student proletariat.<sup>36</sup> The second international gathering of the Catholic Student Youth (JEC) took place in September of 1947, just outside of Paris, and for the first time included student representatives from Latin America and Asia. Nearly sixty student delegates were gathered to share their common vital problems and search for reciprocal solutions. They also set about developing an international plan for a coordinating commission for the various national chapters of JEC.<sup>37</sup>

The JEC International bulletin of May 1948 reviewed the progress made in Pointoise and noted that the next World Session was scheduled for August 1948 in

---

34. Jean-Louis Janot, “Janot to Pax Romana MIEC, July 10, 1956,” A. JECI Correspondia Comunicados, Bidegain Papers, Caja 2a (Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1956): 1.

35. CIDI. “Bulletin International.” Bidegain Papers. Caja 2a JEC International. Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1946: 1.

36. CIDI, “Bulletin International,” 1946: 5.

37. CIDI. “Pointoise, Seconde Session Internationale.” Bidegain Papers. Caja 2. Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1947: 2-3. In addition to students from Central and South America, Africa and Asia, there were student representatives present from Lebanon and Australia.

Chicago. This would be followed by a week-long retreat for relaxation and relationship-building among the national directors and leaders for the various national chapters of the Catholic Student Youth.<sup>38</sup> There was also substantive discussion of the future direction and political orientation of the IUS (International Union of Students) and its increasingly Marxist orientation. The bulletin observed that the student delegates from Denmark, Sweden, France and Great Britain had attended the most recent meeting of the IUS with instructions from their national unions to condemn the actions of the Secretary of the IUS. The author of the article raised two questions to be considered by the Young Catholic Students leaders: 1) would the IUS continue in its current political direction? and 2) what kind of political presence could be sustained within the IUS in light of its intensifying socialist orientation?<sup>39</sup> By 1949, the International Bulletin made it evident that the Cold War was in full force. One of the main articles alluded to the “iron curtain” which was dividing Europe between ideologically hostile world powers.<sup>40</sup> The “Iron Curtain” analogy became a common metaphor to describe the East-West military and political division. A similar division arose in Asia with the Korean War and hostilities between Chinese communism and U.S. intervention and was referred to as the Bamboo Curtain.

From the beginning of its existence, the Catholic Student Youth was inclusive of university-age women as well as men. Because the concept behind specialized Catholic Action was to focus on specific class, professional and gender oriented target groups, the French oriented JEC organizations as well as the Latin American JUC tended to encourage collegiate women to form their own autonomous student organizations. The January 1954 edition of the JECI bulletin mentioned plans for a work session with the leaders of two German student organizations in February, which was to include the female student organizations from Belgium, France and England. Young student women played prominent roles in these early international meetings.<sup>41</sup> This is not to say that this early participation by university women in the international Catholic student movement represented a feminist trend, but to argue that the Catholic student movement

---

38. CIDI. “Bulletin International.” Bidegain Papers. Caja 2a JEC International. Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1948: 1.

39. CIDI. “Bulletin International.” 1948: 11.

40. CIDI. “Bulletin International.” vol3 n.4 March 1949:3.

41. JECI Bulletin, January 8, 1954: 2.

provided numerous opportunities for international travel, networking, leadership and exposure to new trends in Catholic philosophy and theology that would later converge with the emphasis on ‘Catholic’ feminism in the form of liberation theology in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The International Commission of the Catholic Student Youth (JECI) had met the previous November to develop a set of internal regulations for *Jeunesse Etudiante Catholique International* (JECI). The bulletin reported a series of articles that were discussed and approved to form the governing basis for the organization. The various national movements of JEC and JUC<sup>42</sup> (male and female) voted to empower JECI to develop a coordinating plan to hold the national organizations accountable in their orientations; to develop new openings in countries where the Young Catholic Students did not yet exist and to coordinate their action at the transnational level. The International Commission of JECI was not intended to represent a superior hierarchical authority over the national organizations. According to the bulletin, the internal regulations that were agreed upon in November upheld the autonomy of each national movement. In other words, not only was the Belgian JEC autonomous from the international JECI and the French JEC, but the Belgian female organization, JECF, was autonomous from the male JEC organization in Belgium. The national secretaries accepted the need of the JECI Commission to propose common positions about the international problems of youth. These common positions could only be taken with the unanimous support of the voting members and each movement kept its autonomy if the unanimity is not obtained.<sup>43</sup> The signatories of the internal regulations for JECI included men and women’s student groups from Brazil, Belgium, Canada, England, France, U.S., Lebanon, and Switzerland.<sup>44</sup>

---

42. In French speaking countries, the Catholic student organizations at both the university and secondary school levels were called JEC: *Jeunesse Catholique Etudiant* (Young Catholic Students) whereas in Brazil and most of Latin America, “JEC” was only used to refer to the work amongst elementary and secondary students and JUC (*Juventude Universitaria Catholica*) was used to refer to the university organizations. In this paper, “JEC” will primarily be used to refer to to organizations in France, Belgium or Quebec.

43. JECI Bulletin, January 8, 1954: 4

44. JECI Bulletin, January 8, 1954: 5

The purpose of maintaining national and organizational autonomy was two-fold. On the one hand it represented the desire of specialized Catholic Action to focus its efforts on faithfully adapting to class, gender and professional milieus in order to maximize its apostolic effectiveness. By avoiding hierarchical rigidity and encouraging maximum local adaptability to focus on influencing homogenous demographic groups, the Young Catholic Students (similarly to the Young Catholic Workers, and Young Catholic Agriculturalists) were most effective in recruiting youth to their ranks. On the other hand, by maintaining national autonomy, the Young Catholic Students avoided coming under too much hierarchical control at either the international Vatican level or the local diocesan level, the two strongest levels of the control of Catholic institutional authority. Another factor was the historical development of these Young Catholic Students organizations. The various national movements had mostly risen in the 1930s—long before the Paris-based JECI attempted to bring greater coordination.

After the discussion of the internal regulations, there was another round of discussions of a proposed document titled “Common Basis,” which provided the various national male and female student organizations with a set of unifying foundational principles. It was hoped that by adopting the “Common Basis” there might also exist a transnational foundation for common action.

The leadership team that was selected for the JECI Commission for the year 1953-1954 included three men and one woman. In the April 1954 edition of the *Bulletin International des J.E.C.* there was a report about the meeting of the European Commission of JECI in February. Certain international problems were discussed, as well as a review of the “bases communes” and the situation of JECF in England.<sup>45</sup>

The April Bulletin continued with a discussion regarding the role of the ‘militant’ as well as the role of chaplain or clerical advisor. According to the authors of the bulletin, a militant of JECF was that person who gains greater awareness of her responsibility with regard to her daily life and work and to effectively engage others with the promotion of Christianity. Such militants ideally should have some degree of influence within the student milieu in their involvement in student organizations at the level of leadership. The article points out that ‘militants’ were rarely already fully formed and need additional training in “apostolic” action and formation in a spiritual community life. The author observed that the militant:

---

45. JECI, *Bulletin International*, April, 1954. Paris, Caja2a : 5

“progressively discovers the truth of the gospel and the need to develop within herself the life of Christ through Christian reflection within a team dynamic on life, the problems of her milieu, and through enterprising action to resolve these problems. The militant is NOT a lone ranger, she always works in reference to a team.”<sup>46</sup>

The same article explained that the role of the chaplain was to encourage the spiritual life of the team, and help each militant become deeper in her knowledge of doctrine and to be a spiritual support to each. The chaplains were normally ordained priests; however, the national JEC organizations were very careful to keep their own autonomy and to define a role in which the priest was an advisor but not a director.

### JECI and Ideology

The JEC student organizations borrowed a training strategy from the Young Catholic Workers (JOC) organization which pre-dated the student organizations (JEC and JUC). This approach to leadership formation was called the “revision of life” method and involved a simple-three step process of analysis: See, Judge and Act. The first step, “See,” involved a fresh reading of the scriptures while observing the social milieu around the student. Such things as poverty and oppression were to be interpreted in the light of the scriptures and the social teaching of the church. The second step, “Judge,” might better have been translated as analysis, discernment or evaluation. This was the process of critically applying the scriptures to the social problems. JEC was very careful not to fall into simply theorizing about social problems. All seeing and judging was intended to result in the third step, Act. For example, the international bulletin in May 1948 emphasized the importance of action: “action makes us become aware of the movement of history; this movement is not just economic, social or political; it is first of all spiritual.” Even by 1964, the “See-Judge-Act” process was still central to the formation of the world views of the JEC student leaders: “This process of revision of life was born in the movement and represents much more than a method; it is a way of life – it is life. This is an essential pedagogical tool for JEC ... a way in daily life of the formation of militants. This is reflective engagement of

---

46. JECI, April, 1954: 4

a team of militants.”<sup>47</sup>

There was a strong emphasis in the discourse of JEC not only on concrete action as a form of spirituality, but also on the necessity of the shared experience of community. There was as strong discursive resistance to western individualism. In one article in the 1948 bulletin, the author affirms that, “We find our salvation together – one does not save oneself alone. Humanity is seeking community.”<sup>48</sup> The article continued to emphasize not only living in community, but a type of transformative community: “Establishing a true spiritual community depends less upon words than acts. It is within ourselves that we must struggle against spiritual individualism, that which is the source of other forms of individualism, and in particular those that deform charity.”<sup>49</sup>

In the December 1948 bulletin, one finds surprisingly radical language. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Cold War had not yet cast a chill upon progressive political views. In an article titled “The purpose of JEC” we find discussion of the need for a social revolution:

“to participate in the social revolution; liberate the church and present to students a Christianity that is temporally committed; Propose action in the student world, an action that transforms and liberates the people to permit them access to God, and to keep in mind the aspirations of the student youth who want to work on the problems of the world, and construct unity.”<sup>50</sup>

The December 1948 bulletin concluded with a three-page report on the political orientations of the International Union of Students which had not yet split into competing Western democratic and Eastern Marxist organizations. The author observed that the IUS was stronger than ever despite internal conflict over student demonstrations and imprisonment of students Czechoslovakia by Marxist authorities. The article reported that the student delegates from Denmark, Sweden,

---

47. “Fundamental orientations and organization of JEC INT.” *World Council Report* Broummana, Chapter 9. (Caja 2 JEC, Fólde F, *Otras Reuniones*) 1964.

48. CIDI, “Seeking a Spiritual Community,” *International Bulletin*, Bidegain Papers, Caja 2a (Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1948): 5.

49. CIDI, May 1948: 5.

50. CIDI, December 1948: 1.

France, Great Britain were instructed by their national unions to condemn the future direction and political orientation of the IUS. Several questions proposed for consideration to the JECI readers: Would the IUS continue in its drift to the left? And, if yes, how would that affect the unity of its members? A related question for JECI was what kind of political presence could be sustained within the IUS as it became increasingly aligned with the communist Eastern bloc? The author noted that the very fact of the existence of the IUS, and the corresponding absence of any other kind of international student group made these decisions even harder.<sup>51</sup>

The report continued with a long, slightly critical, discussion about the political orientation of the IUS, particularly its statements on fascism, which he considered to be poorly defined, along with terms like “democracy.” At the same time, the tone was warmly affirmative about the key role of the IUS in disseminating information in France about the deplorable conditions in Vietnam.<sup>52</sup> The author also affirmed the role of the IUS in denouncing the injustice of colonialism, but pointed out the hypocrisy in not equally criticizing the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.<sup>53</sup>

In August 1967, the World Council of JEC met in Montreal under the leadership of the current Secretary General, Paco del Campo. In the three volume report that was issued after the Council, one notes that the discourse of JEC had changed and had incorporated post-colonial and social pluralism categories. In the course of a twelve day session, the council dealt with the “fundamental problem of domination and the struggle against under-development and the need to value the uniqueness of each region and each culture.”

The historicity of JEC: JEC is not an organization for just any time, the JEC must be an organization for today: this present time. (*Il est un mouvement pour aujourd'hui*). It is then within this perspective that the council has analyzed and judged the situation of the student movement, the experience of engagement, the experience of faith; that is to say, the global experience of the JEC International. It

---

51. Bob Rambusch, “L’Union Internationale Des Étudiants,” JECI International Bulletin, December 1948, Bidegain Papers, Caja 2a (Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1948) 10 [authors translation from French].

52. Rambusch, December 1948: 11.

53. Rambusch, December 1948: 12.

is following this perspective that the Council has developed the lines of international work at every level.<sup>54</sup>

Most of the national chapters of JEC began to be closed down in the mid to late 1960s. The Cuban Catholic student and university movements (JEC and JUC) gradually began to be squeezed out of existence by the Cuban Revolutionary regime after the Bay of Pigs in 1961. Many of the former student leaders went into exile in Miami or part of the clandestine insurrection to Castro until their defeat or capture. By 1964, the various youth oriented branches of Catholic Action were barely functioning and the organization was officially dissolved in 1967 by the Cuban Bishops.<sup>55</sup> In Brazil, the Young Catholic University movement came into increasing conflict with the clerical hierarchy in the 1960s due to JUC's increasing acceptance of socialism and its tendency to act independently of the Brazilian bishops.<sup>56</sup> Many of the increasingly radical student activists in Brazil began to leave JUC from 1961 to 1963 in order to join more radical political organizations such as the AP or Popular Action. After the military coup of 1964, increasing pressure was brought to bear against progressive members of JUC to depoliticize. The hierarchy decreed the end of the university movement in 1967 and by 1968, new repression from the military dictatorship brought ferocious repression against the student movement and the ex-militants of JUC and particularly the members of *Ação Popular* (AP).<sup>57</sup> Social or political space no longer existed for radical student activists and most students were forced into exile or to become apolitical. Similarly, the Spanish branch of Young Catholic Action came into major conflict with the church hierarchy and in 1966 was shut down and reorganized in order to mute opposition to Franco's authoritarian regime.<sup>58</sup>

---

54. JECI, "Rapport Du Conseil Mondial," JEC Internationale Montreal, Bidegain Papers, Caja 2 (Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1967) iii [authors translation from French].

55. Teresa Fernández Soneira, *Con la Estrella y la Cruz : Historia de la Federación de la Juventudes de Acción Católica Cubana* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 2002) 465-85.

56. José Oscar Beozzo, *Cristãos Na Universidade e Na Política* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1984) 10.

57. Beozzo, 1984: 16, 94.

58. Feliciano Monteiro Garcia, *La Acción Católica y el Franquismo. Auge y*

## JECI and Gender

Catholic university women increasingly found space within Catholic student and youth movements to develop their own organizational and leadership skills. Because of the “specialized” national and semi-autonomous nature of the Catholic student movements, several national student organizations were formed that were composed entirely of women and led by women. These young women from female high school and university organizations participated in international coordinating movements such as Youth Catholic Students International (JECI in Spanish and French), headquartered in Paris, and Pax Romana, headquartered in Fribourg, Switzerland, representing autonomous national organizations. These Catholic organizations provided young female student leaders from Latin American countries such as Brazil and Cuba with opportunities for interaction with other student leaders in Europe and North America and for the development of leadership skills and identity as women that may not have been available through other venues.

The February 1954 edition of the JECI International Bulletin provided a description of the Belgian female student organization, JECF. According to the report, the Belgian JECF sought to be a mass movement composed of “militants.” It was not to be just an elite group, seeking to transform the masses. The JECF was committed to allow any “girl” to join the team, discover and respond to student problems and receive the necessary training and formation in order to make a vital contribution. Each member was to be a participant in the life and work of the team in the context of class or school, and each member was to develop an understanding of her responsibility and required to make a commitment to militant action.<sup>59</sup>

JECF in Belgium was structured around these core orientations at the secondary educational level. According to the report, there were about 4000 High School members in the Belgian organization, sub-divided into 200 sections. Most

---

*Crisis de la Acción Católica Especializada* (Madrid: UNED Ediciones, 2000) 244, 246.

59. JECI, “Organization Des Mouvements Belges,” *Bulletin International Des J.E.C.* 2.2 (February 1956): 2-19, Bidegain Papers, Caja 2a (Miami: Florida International University, Department of Religion, 1956) [author’s translation].

of the sections correspond to schools. The sections were grouped into thirteen regions. Each region had a team composed of a president, chaplain (a priest) and section chiefs who were responsible for all of the students in their section. The national team was composed of a national president and national chaplain, and had its headquarters in Brussels. There was also a section composed of Congolese Belgian students that was under the direction of the national team. The report further emphasized the importance within the Belgian organization of allowing each student to discover the typical student problems for themselves and then help them to organize themselves for effective collective response to the overriding student problems through an annual campaign.<sup>60</sup>

The Belgian JECF sought to provide certain services to all female students, not only members of JECF. These included three areas: Information about secondary and university studies; a service of international correspondence and a counseling service for student difficulties (*maladies*; one can only conjecture that this may have referred to female reproductive and sexual issues). At the national level a National Encounter was organized and led each year by the older (*ainées*) jecistas. Also, there was a training camp each year for girls from age 12 to 15 years of age. At the regional level there were also smaller but more frequent training sessions as well as regional ‘mass’ meetings, and the regional team had periodic work and planning sessions. The national team of the Belgian JECF was responsible for publishing a monthly journal called “*Jeunesse Etudiante*” and a bulletin, “*En Mission*” for the leaders of JECF, and a brochure published each trimester summarizing the work of the organization. At the regional level there was a bulletin called “*Echanges*”.<sup>61</sup>

The report underlines the fact that the Belgian JECF leadership was aware of rapid social changes and the need to adapt to the social evolution in the world, particularly in the student milieu. The leadership team of JECF in Belgium felt that their organization must also “evolve” to be relevant to the contemporary problems of female students. The document goes on to discuss the need to recognize the “psychology” of 12 to 15 year-old girls and to adapt their methods accordingly.<sup>62</sup>

---

60. JECI (February 1956): 12.

61. JECI (April 1956): 13.

62. JECI (February 1956): 14.

Because of the decentralized and “federated” structure of the various branches of specialized student and youth Catholic Action movements from the late 1940s through the early 1960s, numerous women’s student organizations were able to flourish with a high degree of independence and autonomy in European, North and Latin American countries such as women’s student groups from Brazil, Belgium, Canada, England, France, U.S., Lebanon, Switzerland, Mexico, Argentina and Cuba. It was not unusual for women to rise to top leadership positions even within coed organizations and also at the international level.

The various movements of Young Catholic Students and Catholic Action Youth at both the international level, as well as national levels, created a range of opportunities for university-age women as well as young men, to develop their own semi-autonomous political and social views and to operate to the fullest of their individual potential as leaders and organic intellectuals within carefully prescribed limits set by the Catholic Church hierarchy and traditional Catholic gender ideology. Inevitably, when the student and student organizations began to push the ideological limits imposed by the Church, conflict between the militants and the church hierarchy resulted.

Some of the key leaders of early liberation theology were former members or advisors in Catholic Action or the Young Catholic Students organizations. In Latin America, Catholic Action youth groups focused university reform, rural unionizing, agrarian reform, and literacy programs. Prominent among Catholic Action groups were the youth and student organizations mentioned previously: Young Catholic Workers (JOC), Young Catholic Students (JEC) and Catholic University Youth (JUC). Out of these organizations emerged leading liberation theologians and Catholic activists such as Gustavo Gutierrez.<sup>63</sup>

Catholic university students found increasing opportunities within Catholic student and youth movements to develop their organizational and leadership skills. Even more importantly, the pedagogical ‘See-Judge-Act’ method of leadership formation permitted young Catholic student leaders to develop a critical awareness of social needs and autonomous ideological views which were often more progressive than official Catholic institutional positions. These Catholic organizations also provided male and female student leaders from Latin American

---

63. Milagros Peña, “Liberation Theology in Peru: An Analysis of the Role of Intellectuals in Social Movements,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 33.1 (Mar 1994): 39.

countries with opportunities for international travel and social and intellectual interaction with other student leaders in Europe and North America.

The ideological tensions of the Cold War were reflected within Catholicism itself. On the one hand, the traditional Catholic hierarchy felt threatened by secular atheist Marxism and attempted to counter Marxist proselytization of young workers and high school and university students. On the other hand, the Catholic Church sought to constructively critique western materialism and individualism. The Catholic Church has always had an uneasy coexistence with the capitalist economic system. In the attempt to mobilize young Catholic students, the church granted the student movement a large degree of autonomy. The church hierarchy allowed the student leaders and advisors the freedom to form effective student militants through training them in a process of discernment and evaluation resulting in concrete action. From the late 1940s through the mid-1960s, tens of thousands of young adults in over seventy nations in the Atlantic world, Africa and Asia, were empowered to think critically about issues of poverty and social injustice. In the end, when the student movements attempted to follow the process of political and social engagement to its logical end, the clerical hierarchy could not endorse or permit the leftward move and intervened in order to bring the student organizations back under hierarchical control. Nevertheless, the seeds of independent social thinking were sown and would sprout again in Vatican II and liberation theology.

Only "some resemblance to a man": Single Men and the Pursuit of Happiness in  
Philadelphia between 1763 - 1783

Kent Peacock  
George Washington University

In 1782 a father, lamenting the appearance of his son upon the son's return home, had a Philadelphia newspaper print the following description:

My eldest son having spent some weeks in this city [Philadelphia] last fall, came home a mere baboon. His hair besprinkled as white with powder as an old man's of eighty five with extreme age; a pair of ruffles reaching from his wrist bands to the extremities of his nails, a strip of gold lace encircling his hat, with a button and loop of the same metal; a huge flock on his neck containing almost muslin enough for his winding sheet; a suit of superfine cloaths wrought off in a wonderful glaring manner, and to complete all a long piece of cold iron, called a sword.<sup>1</sup>

This description contradicts the standard narrative of the plainclothes American, the colonist who renounced the "baubles" of Britain at this time of political crisis. Additionally, although clothing and the consumer revolution of the last half of the eighteenth century are commonly branded as part of a woman's domain and used to explain the increased presence of women in the public sphere, these men challenged such bounded narratives and brought forward a new lens through which to understand Philadelphia and early America in regards to discourses of consumption, fashion, the American Revolution, and gender. To be sure, this one young man (and the men he was emulating) wore neither the proper dress nor the fashion of the majority of eighteenth-century American men. However, he was not an aberration, though enough of one to get published in print. He was part of an increasing number of men who Philadelphians saw as challenging the social, economic, political, and gender orders in the British North American colonies between 1763 and 1783. This "menagerie" of men, with their eccentric, visible presence and demeanor, were easily recognizable wherever they went and became

---

1. "To the Printer of the Freeman's Journal." *The Freeman's Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 10 July 1782 vol. II, iss. LXIV:2. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

a symbol of the disorder Philadelphians were experiencing. The menagerie represented and lived out alternatives to current social norms, alternatives that were commonly feared. They remind us that even something as simple as a piece of clothing can become unexpectedly entangled in a contest of meaning and provide an insight into how the Revolution was not just politically and military based, but also experienced at the social and everyday level by the ordinary and eccentric individuals of Philadelphia. These men are prime examples of how the supposedly simple act of pursuing happiness can, in many different ways, become viewed as revolutionary.<sup>2</sup>

Philadelphia, as the largest and most cosmopolitan city and busiest port in eighteenth-century colonial British North America, provides an ideal place to examine the menagerie, although other cities on both sides of the Atlantic also experienced their presence.<sup>3</sup> Philadelphia because of its size, its extensive and thriving trade with the Atlantic World, and movement towards a more capitalist wage labor economy congregated the men, ideas, and goods needed for the menagerie to occur. The city was large enough to enable a class of people to exist who possessed enough money and leisure time to devote to material pleasures. It also was a magnet for young men, whether sailors, immigrants, or rural sons (and daughters) who came looking for work without a family to support. Like any other city, Philadelphia provided freedom from family and employer surveillance to allow a group of men to express themselves without formal control and thus allowed a group of men who acted differently or against traditional societal norms of self-control, piety, and marriage to exist. The problem that some Philadelphians came to see was that “*Actors and macaronies swell our shore/Importing rites*

---

2. T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004, XVIII.

3. In his *Sex and the Eighteenth Century Man*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2006, Thomas Foster takes Boston as his subject city and devotes his fifth chapter to single men. Kate Haulman in her “Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 62, No. 4 (Oct., 2005), pp. 625-662 also looks at these same ideas in Philadelphia, but she looks at both men’s and women’s fashion. Both works, however, take a more limited look at single men as they only engage with one or two characters of the menagerie. By looking at the multiplicity of characters mentioned in the press, I am able to make broader conclusions and to show how common the menagerie may actually have been.

obscene, unknown before” as a poem in 1783 on “the Consequences of an Unlimited Trade” complained.<sup>4</sup> Their presence and supposed disregard for social norms, as highlighted by their outlandish visual appearance, made them important figures in Philadelphian’s anxiety ridden debates of the changes taking place around them.

Much of this debate, a debate that was primarily critical of the menagerie, took place in the newspaper print culture that thrived in Philadelphia. Citizens of Philadelphia took to the press to complain, poke fun at, and, most importantly, to warn and caution others about the menagerie. At least nine Philadelphia newspapers existed at some duration between 1763 and 1783 which provided all its citizens, not just the “professional class or . . . university graduates,” a space to share opinions about and debate the menagerie in letters to the editor or opinion essays.<sup>5</sup> The newspapers also provided societal guidance about how to recognize and deal with the menagerie through advice columns, poems, and satires; and advertised the goods yearned for by the menagerie. The overall tone of the public towards the menagerie was one of annoyance or disgust and nowhere in the papers does one find a defense of the menagerie. More often, as a personal letter from a “Lamenting Libertine” who wrote to *The Pennsylvania Packet* to warn other men not to follow his life path, the mentioning of the menagerie was used as a cautionary tale.<sup>6</sup> These tales or short bits of advice were an important response to the economic and social changes the citizens of Philadelphia were experiencing. As Richard Godbeer describes in his book *The Sexual Revolution in Early America*, “as urban society became less organic and more individualistic, [it] left its members less protected as well as less restricted by the corporate and hierarchic ties of the past. With personal independence came new forms of vulnerability.”<sup>7</sup> Concerned citizens of Philadelphia turned to the press to warn others, especially

---

4. “Poet’s Corner.” *The Independent Gazetteer* [Philadelphia, PA] 19 July 1783 iss. 90:4. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

5. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, 28.

6. “To the Printer of the Pennsylvania Packet.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 16 Nov. 1772. Vol. II, iss. 56:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

7. Richard Godbeer, *The Sexual Revolution in Early America*, Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002:334.

parents and unwed women, about these new, dangerous men who were testing the limits of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The menagerie was made up of many different characters who appeared in the press and each label has a slightly different meaning and history behind it.<sup>8</sup> However, for this discussion these histories and specific differences are not of great importance and it should be understood that there is no linear progression from one label to the next. Some of them, such as fop, beau, coxcomb, and macaroni have a stronger tie to the visual and fashion characteristics of the menagerie while others, like the libertine, rake, debauchee, and flatterer are connected more to their disregard of sexual morals and the sanctity of marriage. Nevertheless, when a character was mentioned in the press it was almost always used with little description and rarely referred to a named person, giving the impression that the character or label represented an idea of a set of characteristics easily recognizable and known to eighteenth century Philadelphians.

The menagerie was easily recognizable because of their colorful and outlandish appearance. These men took full advantage of Philadelphia's vibrant trade with Western Europe and made the city the "most refined, and most fashionable city in the colonies, its position signified by the rise of conspicuous

---

8. I have specifically used the term character because that is how these men come across in print. They are men who understood the performability of identity, like actors on the stage. They also appear most often as stereotypes as none are mentioned with a proper name and only rarely does an article claim to be written by a man in the menagerie. Using character and menagerie, however, is not to be demeaning of the men who would have been labeled as part of this group. For a more detailed look about some of the labels/characters mentioned see Philip Carter, "Men about town: representations of foppery and masculinity in early eighteenth-century urban society," In *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, Ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, London: Longman, 1997; Michael Kimmel, "From Lord and Master to Cuckold and Fop: Masculinity in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century England," In *The History of Men*, Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005; Randolph Trumbach, "The Birth of the Queen: Sodomy and the Emergence of Gender Equality in Modern Culture, 1660-1750," In *Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay & Lesbian Past* Ed. George Chauncey, Jr., Martin Bauml Duberman, and Martha Vicinus, New York: Penguin Books, 1989; and Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution, Volume 1: Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

consumption and high style” in the last half of the eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup> In the most forthright article about the appearance of the menagerie titled “A Description of a Beau,” the author, with only a touch of satire, describes the beau’s dress as including all of the following: “french silk, gold lace, fringe, silk stockings, hat and feather, sometimes a cockade . . . a diamond ring, snuff box, scented handkerchief, and cane.”<sup>10</sup> Other articles defined these men as those whose “want of sense by Dress supplies” or “Mere slaves to fashion, and extremes of taste,/With hat completely cock’d, and coat well lac’d.”<sup>11</sup> Fashion did not stop at just clothes and accessories, but also included hairstyles as a beau is one who “has a vast quantity of hair on its head, which seems to stand an end . . . [and] that hair is loaded with powder and pomatum.”<sup>12</sup> Another article also described the “antediluvian beau” as one “with his beard curled and powdered as modishly as the side locks now a days . . . or cued with a ribband according to art.”<sup>13</sup> Overall, these were men whose merits were judged by their “taylor’s bill.”<sup>14</sup> As the concept of personally enjoying a consumerist and material culture was still tarnished by a

---

9. Haulman, “Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia,” paragraph 21.

10. “Description of a Beau.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Feb. 1772 vol. VI, iss. 5:19. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

11. “On Love.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 18 Oct. 1773 vol. VII, iss. 39: 368. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009 and “Custom: A Satire.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Aug. 1772 iss. 44. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

12. “Description of a Beau.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Feb. 1772 vol. VI, iss. 5:19. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

13. “The Pilgrim, No. 14.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 8 May 1782 vol. II, iss. LV:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

14. “Custom: A Satire.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Aug. 1772 iss. 44. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

negative moral connotation, these descriptions were printed to help good citizens understand what not to buy and how not to look. This was so important that *The Pennsylvania Packet* saw it relevant enough to reprint a list of demands originally published in Edinburgh, Scotland from “a citizen of the world.” The list included the demand for people in general to have “less vanity of appearing and living above their” station.<sup>15</sup> Overall these descriptions give the negative opinion that underneath this physical appearance were men with few brains, considerations for others, or virtues. These were definitely men “whose ALL consists in outward Shew.”<sup>16</sup>

Besides making the menagerie appear to live above their class, this clothing inadvertently took on national significance as political tensions with England erupted because the ideas and physical fashions of the menagerie primarily came from Europe. As T.H. Breen argues in his work *The Marketplace of Revolution*, during the second half of the eighteenth century consumer goods became a prime way for American colonists to form connections across gender, class, ethnicity, religious, and colony borders. These goods also became politically charged as they became the focus of fights between the mother country and the colonies over taxation. The menagerie was accused of not supporting the cause of the new nation through their continuous buying and flaunting of goods from the enemy nation. These men, as a public letter in *The Freeman’s Journal* in 1781 declared, were “adding fuel to the flame.”<sup>17</sup> They were providing financial resources to the British force that was trying to retake the rebellious colonies. A year later the same newspaper printed another letter to the printer with the same sentiment. The author complained about people not being able to pay their taxes because they were buying such “luxury and superfluity, so much in vogue amongst us.” However, the bigger problem was that this “luxury and superfluity” existed because of the

---

15. “To the Printer of the Edinburgh Advertiser.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 26 Feb. 1782 vol. XI, iss. 851:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

16. “On Love.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 18 Oct. 1773 vol. VII, iss. 39: 368. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

17. “To the Public. Number II.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 2 May 1781. Iss. II:4. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

“illicitly smuggling trade carried on with the enemy at New York.”<sup>18</sup> The menagerie got the fabrics and outlandish articles of clothing they desired from the enemy. There was no way to completely break from England if Americans were still reliant upon the goods of the Mother country, especially goods that were not required for basic survival.

As this writer remarked, the problem was not just that the menagerie was giving money to the enemy, but that money was not going to support the American cause. The always cash-strapped American government needed its citizens to support American industries, pay their taxes, and support the Continental Army if the new nation had any chance of survival. Instead, the menagerie’s personal happiness bought through “macaroni buckles, buttons, skeleton-wire, ribbons, &c. &c. . . . seem[ed] to be valued more than articles of real advantage” in this War of Independence.<sup>19</sup> The menagerie valued and bought goods that had no use to a country at war. These goods only helped the selfish individual. Thus, instead of these “idle fopperies” being purchased from England, Americans should turn to “a country housewife’s plain . . . homespun linen.”<sup>20</sup> This would follow the laws of the non-importation agreements passed throughout the colonies and by the Continental Congress, allow the menagerie to retain enough money to pay their taxes to support the Continental Army, and deny monetary support to the enemy.

Sometimes it was not specific goods but just the characters of the menagerie in general, because they were understood as coming from outside the United States, that drew the ire of the press. Right before the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777 one author complained of “what opinion . . . must the public entertain of the political principles of the Honourable Congress of the United States of America . . . when some Members openly . . . undertake the managements of balls . . . [with people] noted for their tory principles, and their *late* fondness for

---

18. To the Printer of the Freeman’s Journal.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 10 July 1782 vol. II, iss. LXIV:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

19. “To the Public. Number II.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 2 May 1781. Iss. II:4. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

20. “To the Printer of the Freeman’s Journal.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 10 July 1782 vol. II, iss. LXIV:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

British debauchees and macaronies.”<sup>21</sup> Another author, who sided with the Loyalists, believed that it was not the British who were corrupt, but the American’s new allies, the French, who were the cause of the menagerie. He called on all “who now hate with the true spirit of English subjects, French frippery, French politicks, French religion and alliances, to join with” the English and overthrow the Patriot government.<sup>22</sup> This connection to the French recognizes the significant and peculiar place that Philadelphia found itself in during these twenty years. Kate Haulman, in her article “Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia,” remarks that there was an increase in Philadelphia’s focus on fashion after 1778.<sup>23</sup> This was because the city had become the capital of the new nation and had to present itself as culturally and fashionably up-to-date as other world capitals and host political guests from other European nations. The city had to present itself in a European style that was more eccentric than colonial style. But, at a time when in order for Philadelphians to appear more fashionable they had to rely on European goods, this represented a paradox for the city’s citizens. They needed to impress on the international stage, but they also needed to adhere to anti-importation laws and laws against excessive fineries that were passed to show support for the new nation. The citizens were stuck in a unique situation in this marketplace of revolution. The menagerie reminded Philadelphians of this paradox and that the city was connected to and survived because of an Atlantic economy. These representations of menagerie men in print, the men identified with these labels, and the physical garments required to emulate them all traveled across the Atlantic to the great port of Philadelphia. However, these direct connections in the press of the menagerie to other nations, as well as the reporting on the menagerie from other parts of the world, could allow Philadelphians a small source of comfort, even if they also represented a tie to the enemy.<sup>24</sup> These articles proved that their city was not the only city plagued by the

---

21. “Extract of a Letter from the Camp at White Plains . . .” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 22 Aug. 1778:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009.

22. “Boston, April 15.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 27 April 1779:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

23. See Haulman, “Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia,” paragraph 35-end.

24. For examples of articles written from or about other cities see “From the

menagerie and that their desire to rid the city of them might be possible, if only trade could be truly stopped as the anti-importation laws demanded. The political break with Britain was possible.

Nonetheless, the menagerie had invaded their city and these ties to other nations or ties to the politics of the Revolutionary War were only one part of the anxiety felt by the citizens of Philadelphia because of the menagerie. When examined chronologically, there is only a limited correlation between when the menagerie is mentioned in the press and the timeline of non-importation agreements as detailed in Breen's *The Marketplace of Revolution*.<sup>25</sup> The menagerie was instead continuously connected to many other non-political revolutionary changes going on throughout these twenty years. The menagerie appeared to take one of those changes, an increased idealism of the power of the individual or the common man as opposed to a king or aristocracy, too far. They were perceived as

---

*London Gazetteer.*" *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 16 May 1774 vol. III, iss. 134:1. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009; "London." *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 31 May 1773 vol. VII, iss. 20:290. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009; "London. May 4." *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 2 Aug. 1773 vol. VII, iss. 29:326. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009; "London, May 21." *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 17 Aug. 1772 iss. 43:2. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009; "London, Dec. 21." *The Pennsylvania Ledger* [Philadelphia, PA] 11 Mar. 1775 iss. VII:2. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009; and "Poet's Corner." *The Pennsylvania Ledger* [Philadelphia, PA] 11 Mar. 1775 iss. VII:4. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

25. A closer examination around specific articles of clothing or dress and fashion in general would need to be conducted to see if there is any correlation between the menagerie and the consumer boycotts/non-importation agreements as outlined in Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*. The correlation is weak because trade of ideas, people, and items of entertainment (such as plays, books, and pamphlets) still continued even in times of non-importation and all three were important to the concept of the menagerie. The menagerie are most often mentioned in the years between the non-importation agreement in reaction to the Townshend Acts and the final boycott that began after the Intolerable Acts and then there is a notable increase during the last two years of the Revolutionary War.

selfish and vain because they did not use their bodies to further the economy by laboring or supporting the nation by taking care of a family or devoting themselves to political or military service. Instead, their individualism, both their consumerism and daily demeanor, was all about themselves. It was about buying goods and enjoying leisure activities for their own pleasure, drawing attention, and creating themselves as individuals. It was conceded that “a *moderate* conformity to the reigning mode of dress, is not only allowable but requisite,” even if that meant adding more extravagance to the existing style.<sup>26</sup> However, there was a difference between those dressing more extravagantly to fit in and those, like the menagerie, who did it in search of “*singularity*” because the reasons behind this were “generally founded in pride.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, as a writer in *The Freeman’s Journal* agreed, it was acceptable in small amounts to have trade in fancy clothing and luxury goods to keep individuals dressed in the current fashions. However, “it would be far better to have no trade at all than to traffick for such commodities as we have no real necessity for, and are [consistently] used or rather misused for humour, ostentation, dissipation and vanity,” the ways the menagerie were viewed as using the superfluities of fashion.<sup>28</sup>

It was this accusation of vanity that many writers repeatedly hurled towards the menagerie. Vanity not only hurt the advancement and stability of the common good in general, it, as shown through the “much time . . . wasted in decorations of the person,” became “an injury done to the mind.”<sup>29</sup> These men, and thus society, became physically less intelligent, less civilized. They were “a dunce in council, in the street a blab.”<sup>30</sup> Their vanity was not just about appearance, it involved their conversation. In this society that placed great emphasis on oratory, how and what

---

26. “To the Printer of the Pennsylvania Packet.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 23 Nov. 1772 vol. II, iss. 57:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

27. *Ibid*

28. “To the Printer of the Freeman’s Journal.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 10 July 1782 vol II, iss LXIV:2.

29. *Ibid*.

30. “By the Goddess of Plain Truth, A Manifesto and Proclamation.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 29 Dec. 1778 pg. 3. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

one spoke about carried great weight. But all the menagerie wanted to talk about was their “superficial accomplishments” and they wanted to share them with anyone who would listen.<sup>31</sup> These accomplishments did not even need to be real, the menagerie man just needed some way to talk about or bring attention to himself. Hence, one man wrote into *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* to state that a recent article had reminded him of “a debauchee I have heard of, who constantly every morning wrote letters to himself, from women of fashion, to be brought to him at the tavern, after dinner.”<sup>32</sup> This fabrication of events, combined with any opportunity to bring the attention back to himself and not to form a true and trustworthy connection with the other members of society around him, were the fundamental problems of the menagerie’s vanity. This lack of trustworthiness stymied the building of a productive society, a society with an economy that still valued reputations and personal connections. An article of warning and teaching in *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* explained the problem by forcefully stating:

“The pretender . . . is *foppery* . . . [A] fop piques himself upon *counterfeiting* the natural expression of passion, of which his unfurnished soul is unsusceptible. When a polite man makes a bow, he discovers his respect . . . [A] fop, on the contrary, will take an opportunity of shewing the skill of his dancing-master, by bowing to you with a studied formality, while he secretly hates you; he will pour forth the torrent of congratulatory phrases, which he has taken pains to learn by rote, while he envies your success . . . [H]e is an hypocrite in politeness.”<sup>33</sup>

While a poem in *The Pennsylvania Packet* included the characteristic of vanity when it described a member of the menagerie as “proud as the Devil” and “Vain as a beggar mounted on an ass,” another way the menagerie gave Philadelphians

---

31. “Mr. Goddard.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 7 Jan. 1771 vol. IV, iss. 51: 204. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

32. “Messrs. Hall and Sellers, Printers of the Gazette . . .” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 29 Aug. 1768 vol. II, iss. 31:242. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

33. “No. 4. The Visitant.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 22 Feb. 1768 vol. II, iss. 4:25. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

cause for alarm was that with their love of clothing they appeared to be crossing the natural lines of gender.<sup>34</sup> Clothing, as it had evolved to require different garments for each sex and considered a more feminine interest, was a prime way that eighteenth-century Philadelphians distinguished between the sexes. The menagerie blurred these lines. As the previously quoted article “Description of a Beau” stated outright, “a Beau, in its outward appearance, has some resemblance to a man—but then it is a much more shewy animal than many of that species.”<sup>35</sup> In a poem, “the macaroni’s plan” was described as one “to divest himself of man; For were he man, broad, plump, and boney, He could not be a macaroni.”<sup>36</sup>

This divesting himself of man, an identity understood as natural or God-ordained, again called into question whether the citizens of Philadelphia could trust these men. The problem became that “if the Beau endeavours to render his whole external appearance, manner, looks, person and demeanour as much as possible effeminate, how can he expect to conciliate the real regard of any sensible individual of that sex which nature designed should esteem not a *woman* but a man?”<sup>37</sup> The ability to look effeminate, or show off their appearance, was something that was the purview of women. Women were to be allowed some freedom in enjoying the pleasures that came from appearance and fashion, but men were supposed to be above these frivolous pursuits. A 1782 essay to *The Freeman’s Journal* conceded this thought for the writer “would rather see the fashions carried to an agreeable extravagance on the female side of the question

---

34. “By the Goddess of Plain Truth, A Manifesto and Proclamation.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 29 Dec. 1778 pg. 3. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

35. “Description of a Beau.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Feb. 1772 vol. VI, iss. 5:19. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

36. “Fun.” *The Pennsylvania Evening Post, and Public Advertiser* [Philadelphia, PA] 15 Sept. 1781 vol. VII, iss. 773:150. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

37. “The Pilgrim, No. 14.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 8 May 1782 vol. II, iss. LV:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

than that affection of being too prudishly plain.”<sup>38</sup> This boundary of different interests that was supposedly natural, like other gender differences (such as the belief that women were easily overcome with emotions and a man could prove his virtue through the self-control of his emotions) was not to be crossed. The essayist of *The Freeman’s Journal* continued his article proclaiming that it was by no means allowed “that a man is as excusable as a woman in bestowing the same attention to dress and ornament” for “what shall that sex who were designed by nature for all that is great and noble entertain so mean an opinion of themselves as to imagine they cannot gain the affections of the fair any other way than by those very methods that a girl of eighteen takes to render herself amiable in the eyes of men?”<sup>39</sup>

To the modern audience this confusion of gender roles and pre-occupation with fashion and appearance may bring to mind discourses of homosexuality, especially since the characters of the menagerie were commonly referred to as effeminate in print.<sup>40</sup> However, as this last question remarks, the sex the menagerie was trying to woo was the female sex. The character of the molly, or (in modern terms) the gay man, is not a part of the discussion of the menagerie in the Philadelphia newspapers. While it is known that men who lived as mollies and same-sex sex did exist in Europe (and at least the sex in the colonies), the sex of a menagerie man’s sexual partner is not a question in this discourse.<sup>41</sup> The

---

38. “The Pilgrim, No. 14.” *The Freeman’s Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 8 May 1782 vol. II, iss. LV:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

39. *Ibid.*

40. For a more detailed understanding of the meaning of “effeminate” during the eighteenth-century see Foster, *Sex and the Eighteenth-Century Man*, 111-2. Effeminate did not commonly carry the denotation that it does today of being like a woman. Instead, the word most often meant excess or the failure to control one’s passions especially in relation to consumer goods. The gendering of the word is not a part of its definition.

41. See references to sodomy in Goodbeer, *Sexual Revolution in Early America* and Clare A. Lyons, “Mapping an Atlantic Sexual Culture: Homoeroticism in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 60, No. 1 (Jan. 2003): 119-154. See also those works referenced in note 8.

newspapers never state that a same-sex sexual partner was an option. Neither label of molly or sodomite appears in print and the only two mentions of sodomy during these twenty years are in the context of advertisements for books about the legal system.<sup>42</sup> However, as Clare Lyon's article "Mapping an Atlantic Sexual Culture" points out, this silence does not mean there was not same-sex sex occurring in the colonies, but this crime against nature was not a part of the dangers seen with the menagerie.<sup>43</sup>

When it came to heterosexual relations and marriage, however, this "hermaphrodite species of mortals," as an opinion essay in *The Freeman's Journal* called the menagerie, caused great concern to Philadelphians. These issues were significant because members of the menagerie were most often referred to as young and many times unmarried.<sup>44</sup> As a traveler from Europe commented,

---

42. This is not surprising, as many times scholars of same-sex sexual relations and identities must rely solely on criminal records for data as it is only because of court cases of individuals who have broken the laws against sodomy that it is known that same-sex sex or non-pro-creative sex occurred. For these two usages of "sodomy" see "Just published . . ." *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 12 June 1769 vol. III, iss. 20:171. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009 and "Extract of a Letter from Leghorn." *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* 3 Oct. 1772 vol. VI, iss. 37:150. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009.

43. This silence in the press can probably be attributed to one of three reasons. First, as Lyons admits, the presence of men who identified as mollies may not have existed in Philadelphia at this time. Second, these single men may simply not have considered or had any interest in same-sex sex as a possibility in their sexual libations. Third, and probably most importantly, the press was not a moral or proper place to discuss such a taboo and shunned practice as sodomy. It was not part of gentlemanly or public discourse, although, as Lyons proves, the subject was definitely known, understood, and fascinating to the people of Philadelphia.

44. There are references to them throughout the papers such as "the young and the gay" ("On Wednesday, the 26th ultimo . . ." *The Freeman's Journal* [Philadelphia, PA] 2 Jan. 1782 iss. XXXVII:2. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009), "young coxcomb" (For the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*.) *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 5 Oct. 1767. Vol. I,

bachelors were “more numerous in Philadelphia than in any other city.”<sup>45</sup> Sailors, immigrants, and men from the rural lands of the colonies, many of them unattached to families, had come to the city in search of work or excitement. The work that many of these men found was a part of the new wage labor economy that was beginning during this period. It was no longer an economy of trades and apprenticeships, but an economy that separated spaces of work and leisure and gave workers many hours of the day outside of the supervision of their employers. Once their shift was done these men were free to do as they pleased and many did not live with their employers. These single men had no families to support and could spend their money on the material goods or leisure activities, such as drinking, whoring, or attending plays and high society events, which were a part of the menagerie culture. Philadelphians concerned with the reckless lives these men were living viewed the press as a new method to distribute information to men (and women) of how to grow up into respectable citizens. The lack of family and employer control in a city transforming from an apprenticeship and trade economy to a wage labor one, meant that moralists and those in power had to find other places, like the press and literature, to teach the next generation social norms. As one item in the list of demands from Edinburgh set forth, this could also mean teaching parents so the advice would reach their sons before they left the home and entered the workforce. The list demanded parents to see their offspring married at an early age as a means of preventing their falling into the torrents of

---

iss. 37:145. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009), “youth” (“A Song.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 9 Dec. 1771 vol. V, iss. 46:184. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009), “young gentlemen” (“The Citizen, No. II.” *Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 7 Mar. 1774 vol. III, iss. 124:1. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009), “youth” (“Custom: A Satire.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 24 Aug. 1772 iss. 44. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009), “young men” (“To the Printer of the Pennsylvania Chronicle.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 29 June 1767 vol. I, iss. 23:89. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009), or having the “follies of youth” (“To Men of the World.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 27 Apr. 1782 vol XI, iss. 877:3. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009).

45. Howard P. Chudacoff, *The Age of the Bachelor: Creating an American Subculture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, 25.

vice and dissipation.”<sup>46</sup>

Probably the biggest vice the menagerie partook in was their enjoyment of sex. These were men who were “half destroyed with whoring.”<sup>47</sup> The exploits of a “wandering Libertine” were poetically described as one “who pursues the rose through the unlawful paths of love, who tramples under foot every tender plant that comes within his reach, and who roves from flower to flower, like the bee, only to rob it of its sweets.”<sup>48</sup> Another cautionary story from *The Pennsylvania Packet* focused on “a wild young Gentleman, who would rake about the city, and take up his lodging with harlots; who had told many a girl a pretty story, that was fool enough to believe him.”<sup>49</sup> These men took full advantage of the number of women in the city, including the thriving brothel and prostitution businesses.<sup>50</sup>

The problem was that not only were these men sleeping around and thus not settling down in a monogamous marriage, but, in conjunction with their previously discussed vanity and falseness, they were disingenuous and disrespectful to women. One writer warned that there was “no instance [in] the difference between a polite man and fop more striking, than in their conduct towards the Ladies. The fop, indeed, will not make any remarks on her character for he wants discernment; But as he flattered her, only to be thought well-bred, and to do himself honour—

46. “To the Printer of the Edinburgh Advertiser.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 26 Feb. 1782 vol. XI, iss. 851:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

47. “By the Goddess of Plain Truth, A Manifesto and Proclamation.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 29 Dec. 1778 pg. 3. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

48. “The Nettle and the Rose.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 9 Feb. 1782 vol. XI, iss. 844:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

49. “To the Printer.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 13 July 1772 iss. 38:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

50. See Goodbeer, *The Sexual Revolution in Early America*, especially chapter 9, and Claire Lyons, *Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender & Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia 1730-1830* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

not her.”<sup>51</sup> The menagerie’s comments could again be fabrications or insincere as another writer remarked that “while the man of sense pays the most delicate compliment in his power [to a woman] . . . [women now] readily listen to those studied epithets of flattery which the fop has committed to memory, and repeats to every lady his is acquainted with.”<sup>52</sup> One single man, in order to distance himself from the menagerie, stated that he “always avoid[s] those arts of flattery which many of our sex have employed to insinuate themselves into [women’s] good graces; these I utterly disclaim, not only because flattery is in itself contemptible, but because I do not observe . . . that it meets in general with the expected success.”<sup>53</sup>

Although this last writer believed that many women had the capacity to discern between a gentleman’s compliment and a fabrication from the menagerie, it was more often feared, because of the weakness of their minds and how easily they could be led into temptation, that women would be easily led astray into the arms of these men. “Women in general . . . judge[d] too much from outward circumstances” and people were afraid that women would be awed by these men and their showy appearance and not choose proper husbands who would work and support their families and be faithful to their wives.<sup>54</sup> Or worse, these women would give into the sexual advances of the men and be left single and pregnant. Nonetheless, as a poem and letter with a tone of both humor and disappointment relayed, the situation was getting so dire in Philadelphia that young women were having to chose between the “noisy rake,” “fickle beau,” “the chattering coxcomb,

---

51. “No. 4. The Visitant.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 22 Feb. 1768 vol. II, iss. 4:25. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

52. “The Citizen, No. II.” *Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 7 Mar. 1774 vol. III, iss. 124:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

53. “[No. 3.] The Visitant.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 15 Feb. 1768 vol. II, iss. 3:17. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

54. “On the Simplicity of Dress.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 6 Sept. 1773 vol. VII, iss. 33:345. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

the powdered beau, and the monied ideot” as possible men to marry.<sup>55</sup> Respectable gentlemen were nowhere to be found.

Marriage was the foundation of any civilized nation and as a “constant reader” pleaded to “unmarried men of property and sense,” they must take up “they duty incumbent on them to be protectors of the female sex.”<sup>56</sup> The aforementioned “Lamenting Libertine,” who had his life story printed in *The Pennsylvania Packet* as a warning to all the young men who were following in his footsteps to reevaluate their choices, reflected back on his earlier years when he had seen “marriage as a terrible restraint upon pleasure.”<sup>57</sup> His story of being disowned by his family, living without wealth, and producing a bastard child that he had trouble supporting served as a warning and moral message for all those like himself to take the proper role of a man and unite “with a woman of honour.”<sup>58</sup> These young men needed to learn before they made too many bad decisions that “the life of the debauchee makes him undervalue a virtuous woman.”<sup>59</sup> An article from *The Pennsylvania Packet* on March 7, 1774, summed up all the problems the citizens of Philadelphia saw occurring. The changes in the economy, political situation, and gender and sexual norms were producing men who disregarded their role of supporting women, the community, and the nation. The problem was that “the young gentlemen of our day seem to take very little pleasure in the company

55. “From the Lyon’s Mouth.” *The Pennsylvania Ledger* [Philadelphia, PA] 20 Jan. 1776 iss. LII:4. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

56. “Mr. Towne . . .” *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* [Philadelphia, PA] 2 Feb. 1775 vol. I, iss. 5:17. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

57. “To the Printer of the Pennsylvania Packet.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 16 Nov. 1772. Vol. II, iss. 56:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

58. “To the Printer of the Pennsylvania Packet.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 16 Nov. 1772. Vol. II, iss. 56:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 16 Nov. 2009.

59. “[No. 3.] The Visitant.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 15 Feb. 1768 vol. II, iss. 3:17. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

of the ladies. They tell you there is neither entertainment or improvement to be found in it—That fashions and dress take up so much of their time, as the leave no leisure for any thing else.”<sup>60</sup> Ultimately, these men cared only about themselves.

It may appear striking that so far there has been no mention of the label of bachelor. This is because that while today this is the most common term for a man who is single and can refer to a young, suave, unmarried man, in the eighteenth century it meant a man who was past the prime age for marrying. He was commonly referred to as “old” and contrasted to the “youth of this our city.”<sup>61</sup> In addition, bachelors complained in the press that they did not have the money to woo women. They loathed that men now had to give “presents so expensive and numerous” to women to get them to be interested in himself.<sup>62</sup> One bachelor went so far as to complain that courtship “as the Ladies are pleased to order it, is now the greatest penance any man in the world can undergo.”<sup>63</sup> It is this economic reason that many of the bachelors who write to the press cite as their reason for remaining single and also puts them in a class unable to purchase the large number of goods required of men in the menagerie. Thus, because of their age and lack of opportunity to engage in the consumerist activities of the rest of the menagerie, bachelors do not belong in this group labeled the menagerie.

With even bachelors criticizing the menagerie it is hard not to view these men as just a group of rich, spoiled brats. However, this is not the conclusion I want to draw. Instead, these men, for better or worse, can be viewed as some of the

---

60. “The Citizen, No. II.” *Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 7 Mar. 1774 vol. III, iss. 124:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

61. “Mr. Goodard. In my own Behalf . . .” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 9 Nov. 1767 vol. I, iss. 42:168. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009 and “Kensington, August 24, 1770.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 27 Aug. 1770 vol. VI, iss. 31:125. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009 and “Mr. Printer.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 27 Aug. 1770 vol. IV, iss. 31:125. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009.

62. “Kensington, August 24, 1770.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle* [Philadelphia, PA] 27 Aug. 1770 vol. VI, iss. 31:125. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009.

63. *Ibid.*

first individuals to experience and take advantage of the new way of life that slowly became the norm after the Revolution. This was a way of life ordered by a wage labor and capitalist economy, a life that divided work and leisure, and a culture and economy that became heavily reliant on consumerism. It was a way of life that put the individual, that glorified subject of the Enlightenment and democracy, at the center of everything. Because they so outlandishly pioneered this way of life amidst much criticism, I believe these men should be should be praised for challenging through their dress, if not through their vanity and social skills, the tenets of diversity, acceptance, and equality that are supposedly part of the greatness of America. The menagerie, through their everyday visibility, fought for the right of freedom of expression, the right to their own kind of family, and the right to consume. But their fight inadvertently took on additional meaning because it came to prominence right when national solidarity and not individualism or identification with other identities like religion or connection to an individual colony became the ideal. Thus, these men became understood as failed Patriots because “it is impossible [for] a man, who is false to his friends and neighbours, [to] be true to the public,” a public the Revolutionary leaders and many common citizens through anti-importation agreements had arduously worked to achieve. This was now a public that was connected to a nation.<sup>64</sup>

The overall reading of the menagerie in the press became as men who “have worn out all sensibility of the difference between right and wrong.”<sup>65</sup> Their fashion, embedded with meanings that ranged from gender and sexual norms to political allegiances, became an easy target for conflict because of its daily-required usage, its continuous visibility, and its “intense local and individual significance, helping people read and locate one another in the social landscape.”<sup>66</sup> This social landscape became a place of much confusion between 1763 and 1783, but these men, for better or worse, tested the limits of freedom, commercialism, and individualism that have come to be some of the fundamental tenets in

---

64. “The fabric of the human mind . . .” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 25 Dec. 1775 vol. V, iss. 218:2. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 21 Nov. 2009.

65. “To the Printer.” *The Pennsylvania Packet* [Philadelphia, PA] 13 July 1772 iss. 38:1. *Readex: America’s Historical Newspapers*. Web. 14 Nov. 2009.

66. Haulman, “Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia,” paragraph 2.

American society. These were men who consciously or unconsciously fought a revolution against politics, gender and sexual norms, and community identity not through bullets and military maneuvers, but in their everyday actions of consumption, dressing, walking around the city, and interacting with people. It is through appreciating their individuality, even at the seemingly simplistic level of clothing, that we can continue to learn from the menagerie and understand how hard it is to embrace the freedoms this country was born upon.

Merchant Political Mobilization during the Imperial Crisis:  
The Impact of London and Northeastern American Merchants on Parliament and  
Colonial Policy, 1765 - 1775

Susan Schwartz  
Florida International University

Following the French and Indian War in 1763, Great Britain imposed a series of taxes upon the American colonies. The passage of the Stamp Act particularly infuriated the American colonists. In Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, merchants reacted in an extralegal manner, inciting riots and entering into non-importation agreements that cancelled all orders for goods from Britain.<sup>1</sup> The Americans' goal was to coerce British merchants into publicly supporting the American cause in England and ultimately, to obtain a full repeal of the Act.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Philadelphia, New York, and Boston were the three most significant colonial shipping centers as well as the seats of provincial governments. Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), xi. Southern colonies did not support non-importation until 1769, at which time southern merchants succumbed to the popular pressures that began in the northern colonies. T. H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). For further research on merchant-led opposition, see: Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*. (New York: Norton, 1991). 12-13. Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution*. (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1918) Schlesinger and John Tyler, *Smugglers & Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution*. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986).

2. T. H. Breen, 245. Breen notes that merchants, as the “link between producer and consumer,” ensured the success of boycotts against British goods. Also see, Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution*. (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1918); Edmund S. and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, reprint edition, 1995). 118-9. The economic and political motivation of American merchants have been explored in: Schlesinger; Charles

Non-importation proved effective; as British merchants lost orders and their business dwindled, they responded with petitions for repeal. Conventional scholarly wisdom holds that these British merchants, either through their own political power or as instruments of pro-American members of Parliament, played a prominent role in garnering colonial appeasement and repeal of the Stamp Act.<sup>3</sup> The evidence, however, suggests that this is an oversimplification. Contrary to earlier interpretations, Parliament was not responding to British merchants when they decided to repeal the Stamp Act. Indeed, the Parliamentary record reveals that British merchants, with their vague demands and their narrow focus on economics, failed to apply significant pressure on Parliament.

---

McLean Andrews *The Boston Merchants and the Non-Importation Movement*. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1916); Thomas Doerflinger, "Philadelphia Merchants and the Logic of Moderation, 1760-1775." *William and Mary Quarterly* 40 no. 2 (1983): 197-226.

3. For the British merchant community's ability to sway Parliament and the Board of Trade, see: Dora Mae Clark. *British Opinion and the American Revolution*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1930); Michael Kammen. *A Rope of Sand: The Colonial Agents, British Politics and the American Revolution*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968); Walter E. Minchington, "The Political Activities of Bristol Merchants with Respect to the Southern Colonies before the Revolution." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 79 no. 2 (1971): 167-189; Richard M. Ketchum, *Divided Loyalties: How the American Revolution came to New York*. (New York: Henry Holt, 2002). For scholarship that depicts British merchants as pawns of Parliament, see: Jack Sosin. *Agents and Merchants: British Colonial Policy and the Origins of the American Revolution*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965); Robert Middlekauf. *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); John Sainsbury, "The Pro-Americans of London, 1769-1782." *William and Mary Quarterly* 35 no. 3 (1978): 423-54; John Sainsbury, *Disaffected Patriots: London Supporters of Revolutionary America, 1769-1782*. (Kingston, UK: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987); James E. Bradley, *Popular Politics and the American Revolution in England; Petitions, the Crown, and Public Opinion*. (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1986) 20-36. It should be noted that Bradley's writing on merchants is a small section that deals only with the petition of 1775.

In an indirect way, Americans held more sway in Parliamentary decision-making. The language used by Americans, with its emphasis on constitutional rights, was at the center of the Parliamentary debates. Furthermore, American boycotts against British goods resulted in unemployment and an economic downturn that impacted more than just merchants.<sup>4</sup> The American non-importation movement, which countermanded an estimated £700,000 in new American orders, affected British artisans, manufacturers and the shipping industry.<sup>5</sup> Such a turn of events presumably encouraged a Parliamentary response. Paradoxically, merchant-led violence in the colonies also influenced Parliamentary decision, making it difficult for Ministers to offer a full repeal of the act without appearing weak. Thus, although British merchants certainly played a role, they were not central in Parliament's decision to repeal the Stamp Act as other historians have suggested. Demonstrating the relative weakness of the British mercantile community during the Stamp Act crisis also explains their lack of influence as the colonial crisis progressed. While scholars have struggled to understand why British merchants lost the ability to influence government, a review of the Parliamentary record indicates that the power of the merchants was limited from the start of the American crisis.<sup>6</sup>

---

4. Clark, 37-9. To the contrary, T. H. Breen, argues that there was no "appreciable drop in the value of British imports." There was, however, some public perception of economic loss that affected manufacturing. Upon repeal of the Stamp Act, British newspapers detail "great rejoicings" among tradespeople as orders from America resumed. [No Headline.] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 19 March 1766. Another article reports the hiring of more than "100 journeymen shoemakers...by two masters only concerned in the exportation trade to the colonies" upon news of repeal. [No Headline.] *St. James Chronicle or the British Evening Post*. 20 March 1766.

5. Clark, 36.

6. Alison Gilbert Olson has written a series of articles addressing the merchant "loss" of power: Alison Gilbert Olson, "Parliament, the London Lobbies, and Provincial Interests in England and America." *Historical Reflections* 6, no. 2 (1979): 367-386.; "The Board of Trade and London-American Interest Groups in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century." *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 8 no. 2 (1980): 33-50; "The London Mercantile Lobby and the Coming of the American Revolution." *The Journal of American History* 69 no. 1 (1982): 21-41. See also,

## The Stamp Act, 1765

The Stamp Act took effect in November 1764, and American merchants promptly contacted their British counterparts for assistance against the bill. This trans-Atlantic interaction was common; because North America was far from the center of power in London, colonial merchants frequently used their British colleagues as agents to petition the government against unwanted legislation or to request market concessions.<sup>7</sup> British merchants most commonly worked with the Board of Trade. As experts on the colonies, they served as advisors to the Board. Most often, these agents dealt with provincial matters. A Rhode Island agent, for instance, filed a grievance against the Sugar Act on behalf of that colony's merchants. An agent for Virginia spoke out over the price of tobacco.<sup>8</sup> Yet merchants rarely, if ever, lobbied the Board on colony-wide issues.<sup>9</sup> Less often, British merchants lobbied Parliament, and "even at the parliamentary level most issues affected the merchants in one colony or one colonial region."<sup>10</sup> The Stamp Act, however, would change this. With the passage of this legislation, American merchants expected their British counterparts to intervene at the Parliamentary level, and to represent the increasingly unified colonies against taxation.

In 1764, Thomas Cushing, a lawyer from a prominent Boston merchant family, contacted Jasper Mauduit, a merchant and agent in London, requesting that

---

Clark, Sosin, Kammen, and Minchington.

7. David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 129-30 and 315-16. See also: Olson, "Parliament"; "Board of Trade" and "London Mercantile Lobby."

8. Great Britain--Board of Trade, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1936), 77 and 107.

9. Colonial Office Records, Class 5 files (C.O. 5), Part II, "The Board of Trade, 1689-1775). Colonial Office Records, Class 5 files (C.O.5), Part V. "The American Revolution, 1772-1784."

10. Olson, "London Mercantile Lobby," 24.

he “oppose most strenuously any stamp duty.”<sup>11</sup> Mauduit brought the petition to the Board of Trade to no result. In fact, an investigation of the *Journals of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, or the Board of Trade records, reveals no official grievances or formal petitions requesting repeal of the Stamp Act.<sup>12</sup> Mauduit was also unable to locate a sympathetic MP that might sponsor a petition before Parliament. Hoping that he might find more success by coordinating with other London merchants, Mauduit approached a prominent group. Of the experience he wrote, “The Merchants talk much, but cannot bring them to act. They say why don’t the Agents write, apply, and take the Lead? The Agents say the Merchants will be much better attended to than they.”<sup>13</sup> With no one willing to assist in the manner, Mauduit admitted defeat. Philadelphia merchants also contacted London merchants for assistance. In a formal letter the “Merchants and Traders of Philadelphia” begged for assistance in “procur[ing]...a speedy Repeal of the STAMP ACT” and for an amendment to the Currency Act which would allow for the use of paper money to pay debts.<sup>14</sup> The Philadelphians utilized economic arguments in their complaints against the Currency Act, explaining that the demand for specie in payment of debts would result in declining orders from many colonists who had no silver with which to pay. For the Stamp Act, however, the Philadelphia merchants went beyond trade issues. Using terms like “unconstitutional” and “unnatural,” the merchants indicated that the Act oppressed their rights as British citizens. Regardless of their arguments, the London merchants seemed no more amenable to the Philadelphia merchants than they had

---

11. “Letter from Thomas Cushing to Jasper Mauduit.” (22 June 1764). Reprinted in, *Jasper Mauduit Agent in London for the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay 1762-1765*. (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1918). Available FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued. It is presumed that Cushing represented a larger group of merchants in the Boston area.

12. Great Britain--Board of Trade, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*. (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1936). Colonial Office Records, Class 5 files (C.O. 5), Part II, “The Board of Trade, 1689-1775).

13. *Jasper Mauduit*, fn 168-9.

14. “To the Merchants and Manufacturers of Great-Britain; The MEMORIAL of the Merchants and Traders of the City of PHILADELPHIA.” (Philadelphia:, 1765).

to Mauduit.

Frustrated at every turn, and with the London merchants unwilling to provide assistance, American merchants devised daring new methods of protest. To be sure, violence offered one solution. The Board of Trade journals list numerous uprisings in response to the Stamp Act between 1765 and 1766.<sup>15</sup> Much of the trouble began in Massachusetts with the “Loyal Nine,” a small group of militant merchants whose membership soon grew into the “Sons of Liberty.”<sup>16</sup> Merchants and their followers, believing that the best way to avoid paying the duty was to eliminate the collector, aimed much of this violence against the newly appointed stamp distributors. In August of 1765, for instance, mobs in Boston attacked the home of the selected stamp distributor, Andrew Oliver as well as the homes of several other government officials.<sup>17</sup> In December, they demanded that Oliver offer a public resignation, warning that his “non-compliance would incur the displeasure of the True-born Sons of Liberty.”<sup>18</sup> The following day, Oliver arrived at the “liberty tree,” the proposed public meeting place, and resigned before some two thousand spectators, including the “gentlemen,” “merchants” and “principle inhabitants” of Boston.<sup>19</sup> In New York, merchant-led mobs also adopting the “Sons of Liberty” moniker, similarly forced their stamp distributor to

---

15. *The Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations*, index. Unfortunately, the record gives very little detail regarding these events. Also see Israel Mauduit, *A Short View of the History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay, with Respect to their Charters and Constitution*. (London: J. Wilkie, 1774), 5-6. Israel was Jasper Mauduit’s brother and was also a prominent merchant.

16. Maier, 58.

17. Peter D. G. Thomas, “The Stamp Act Crisis and its repercussions, including the Quartering Act controversy,” in Jack P. Green and J. R. Pole, eds. *A Companion to the American Revolution*. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 126.

18. “Your Inserting the Following Letter, Sent on Monday Evening Last to the Honourable Andrew Oliver, Esq. Commissioner for Distributing Stamps in this Province;” (Boston, Hanover Square: 18 December 1764).

19. *Ibid*, unpaginated.

resign.<sup>20</sup> In Philadelphia too, violence threatened the stampman.<sup>21</sup> Like Boston's Oliver, John Hughes of Philadelphia had not yet begun his duties as stamp distributor when five local merchants and a printer approached him for his resignation. They warned the man that hundreds of people awaited his decision at the Customs House. Hughes understood the implied threat to his home and person, and acquiesced to the demand under duress. In his resignation letter to his superiors, Hughes cautioned, "every person who has been named to the stamp-office must leave North America shortly, or they and their families will fall a sacrifice to the deluded populace."<sup>22</sup>

While the violent protest methods bought colonials some time against Stamp Act enforcement, they still needed to gain a voice in Parliament to get the Act repealed. As a result, American merchants turned to non-importation agreements in the belief that they could force British merchants to act as their spokesmen. Two hundred merchants in Philadelphia and four hundred in New York entered into associations that proposed to stop all trade with Great Britain until Parliament agreed to repeal the Stamp Act. These compacts were almost identical in wording and intent, and they demanded compliance among association members. In Philadelphia, the agreements advised British merchants that all outstanding and future orders would be "countermanded...until the Stamp Act [was] repealed."<sup>23</sup> To ensure non-payment to British merchants, the American merchants also promised not to sell any merchandise already in the colonies. By December, two hundred Boston merchants had forged a similar agreement.<sup>24</sup> In

---

20. "[James McEvers; Stampman; New York]" *Boston Post-Boy* 2 September 1765.

21. Maier, 55.

22. John Almon, *A Collection of Interesting and Authentic Papers Relative to the Dispute between Great-Britain and America, shewing the Causes and Progress of that Misunderstanding from 1764-1775*. (London: J. Almon, 1777): 49.

23. "The Merchants and Traders of the City of Philadelphia, Taking into Consideration the Melancholy State of the North-American Commerce in General..." (Philadelphia: [William Bradford], 1765). and "A Patriotic Advertisement. City of New-York" (New York: Hugh Gaine, 31 October 1765).

24. Thomas, "Stamp Act Crisis," 127.

each of these, the objective was clear. American merchants began non-importation “in the hopes that their Brethren, the Merchants and Manufacturers of Great-Britain [would] find their own Interest so intimately connected with [the American’s], that they [would] be spur’d on to befriend [them].”<sup>25</sup> Ultimately, the American plan coerced British merchants to action.

In many ways, the non-importation agreements proved a success for the Americans —the widespread economic impact of the agreements made American protest against the Stamp Act difficult to ignore. The loss of colonial business, valued by some at “two million pounds worth of goods shipped,” injured large sectors of the British mainland economy.<sup>26</sup> In London and the other major trading centers of England, for instance, the middle and working classes suffered real privation as the boycotts took effect.<sup>27</sup> As trade declined, unemployment for laborers and artisans rose considerably. In the manufacture and sale of nails, a business worth upwards of 50,000 pounds per annum, for example, one merchant had “at present 300 men out of business.”<sup>28</sup> The shipping industry also felt the pinch as production fell off and “an almost uncanny stillness hung over the waterfront.”<sup>29</sup> Most important, the threat of non-importation alarmed the merchants of London. The colonies owed them millions for goods already shipped, and they feared that they would all be “great Sufferers” if Parliament failed to repeal “this cursed Act.”<sup>30</sup> An anonymous pamphlet printed in London and

25. “The Merchants and Traders of the City of Philadelphia, Taking into Consideration the Melancholy State of the North-American Commerce in General...” (Philadelphia: [William Bradford], 1765).

26. “Query I.” *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*. 29 Jan 1766. Within this article, the anonymous author asked “how many people may be reckoned employed in manufacturing and navigating the two millions worth of goods”...and “how much per annum [would] it cost the nation to support those people when they are entirely out of employ.”

27. Clark, *British Opinion*, 37-39.

28. London. *St.James Chronicle or the British Evening Post*. 20 Feb 1766.

29. Clark, 38.

30. “Extract of a Letter from a Principal House in England to a Gentleman in New York” (New York: Hugh Gaine, 31 October 1765). *Cobbett’s* vol. 16, 134.

addressed to the Committee of London Merchants exacerbated these fears by warning that the colonies would set up their own “manufactories.”<sup>31</sup> If the colonies manufactured their own goods, Americans need not obtain products from England. A permanent loss of trade could result.

As the non-importation agreements chipped away at the British economy, several parties petitioned Parliament for relief. A year after the initial colonial requests for assistance, for example, London merchants took action. In January of 1766, a group of London merchants sent a short petition advising the House of Commons that the Stamp Act caused harm to trade.<sup>32</sup> Not wishing to offend either party, the merchants used the most careful, measured language, obviously trying to strike a balance between their American business partners and the government. In their memorial, the London merchants explained that they held millions of pounds sterling in outstanding colonial debts, which the American colonists were unable to pay under the restrictive taxation. Additionally, the Londoners warned that manufacturers were facing “impending ruin” with the loss of orders.<sup>33</sup> At no time did they address Parliament’s right to tax the colonies, nor did they write of representation or constitutional issues. Further, the merchants did not specifically request repeal. Instead, they very vaguely “entreat[ed] such relief as to the House shall seem expedient.”<sup>34</sup> In addition to merchant appeals, the available record lists more than twenty similar petitions heard alongside that of the London merchants, some from merchants in other parts of Britain and others from manufacturers from across the country. In addition to the petitions of merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen, lesser officials, such as aldermen, sheriffs and mayors likewise joined in, “all containing much the same complaint as in the former...and concluding with the same prayer.”<sup>35</sup> Letters and papers also poured into Parliament from

---

31. “A Letter to the Gentlemen of the Committee of London Merchants, Trading to North America.” (London: W. Richardson & L. Urquart, 1766).

32. William Cobbett and T. C. Hansard. *Cobbett’s Parliamentary History of England: from the Norman Conquest, in 1066, to the year 1803*. vol. 16, cols. 133-136.

33. *Cobbett’s* vol 16, 134.

34. *Cobbett’s* vol. 16, 135.

35. *Cobbett’s* vol. 16, 136.

government officials in the colonies detailing the insurrections under way back in America.<sup>36</sup> Under such pressure, Parliament began their debates.<sup>37</sup>

Members of Parliament were largely unmoved by the economic arguments offered in the petitions.<sup>38</sup> In the House of Commons, those who voted to repeal the Stamp Act based their decision upon the claims of the colonials. They argued that the colonies were not adequately represented in Parliament for the purposes of taxation.<sup>39</sup> William Pitt, for instance, defended America's position on representational grounds, writing that the British government did not sufficiently represent the American colonists.<sup>40</sup> In the House of Lords too, those favoring repeal based their opinions on an apparent lack of American representation.<sup>41</sup> Ministers who rejected repeal rebuffed constitutional arguments and displayed alarm over the violent nature of colonial protests. Many of these opponents feared that the colonists would interpret repeal as an admission of defeat. "We are of opinion," wrote one Lord, "that the total repealing of that law, especially while such resistance continues, would make the authority of Great Britain contemptible hereafter."<sup>42</sup> In a rare reference to British merchant petitions, dissenting officials

36. *Cobbett's*, vol. 16, 112-33. There were also petitions from individual colonies, warnings from the Board of Trade regarding plans for a colony-wide congress and an account regarding the attacks on Andrew Oliver.

37. Even as they debated, more papers and letters came in and colonial agents offered testimony against the Stamp Act. *Cobbett's*, vol. 16, 136-61.

38. In addition to petitions, Parliament also heard the testimony of Steven Fuller, a West Indian merchant, Benjamin Franklin, and agents from Georgia and Virginia. See *Cobbett's* vol. 16; 136-60.

39. *Cobbett's*, vol. 16, 112-93. ["Packet of Letters from London"] (Philadelphia, 1766).

40. William Pitt, First Earl of Chatham, "The Celebrated Speech of a Celebrated Commoner." (London: Stephen Austin, 1766).

41. *Cobbett's*, vol. 16, 163-176.

42. Great Britain--House of Lords, *Protest Against the Bill to Repeal the American Stamp Act*. (Paris: Chez J. W. Imprimeur, 1766): 4-5.

refuted mercantile warnings about pecuniary losses.<sup>43</sup> “Even if the distress of trade had been as real and as great as it was represented,” they argued, it would be “better to submit to this temporary inconvenience...than to hazard the total loss of just superiority of Great Britain over her colonies.”<sup>44</sup> To avoid such “inconvenience” in the future, they recommended making non-importation illegal.<sup>45</sup> Naturally, such an act would have been nearly impossible to enforce, and its proponents quickly dropped the idea.

In light of these debates, it seems inaccurate to credit British merchants with inspiring the ultimate repeal of the Stamp Act. In its final form, no mention was made of the British merchant’s assertions about commerce.<sup>46</sup> In fact, if British merchants were looking for concessionary legislation to reinstate positive trade relations with America, this was certainly not it. The first part of the decision, known as the Declaratory Act, stipulated that Parliament “had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies...in all cases whatsoever.”<sup>47</sup> The next five provisions, perhaps as a compromise measure to gain support from dissenters, dealt with the insurrections that had taken place in the colonies. These resolutions proposed compensation to those who had lost property in the riots. The final provision of the agreement repealed the Stamp Act without explanation or fanfare. Within this multi-part legislation, there is no mention of trade.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the

43. Great Britain—House of Commons, *A list of the minority in the House of Commons, who voted against the bill to repeal the American Stamp Act*. Paris: (Chez. J. W. Imprimeur, 1766). Of the dissenters, one was John Stevenson, a director of the East India Company and two, Jeremiah Dyson and George Rice, were Lords of Trade.

44. *Cobbett’s* vol 16, 193.

45. House of Lords, *Protest Against the Bill to Repeal*, 14.

46. Almon, *A Collection*, 81. Also see, Great Britain—House of Commons, *A List of the Minority in the House of Commons, who Voted Against the Bill to Repeal the American Stamp Act*. (Paris: Chez. J. W. Imprimeur, 1766). The vote passed at 105 to 71.

47. *Cobbett’s*, vol. 16, 161.

48. *Cobbett’s*, vol 16, 161-5.

Declaratory Act and the reprimands over colonial violence would not go far to heal the quarrel between Great Britain and her colonies. Clearly, Parliament was not reacting to the counsel of British merchants in an effort to bolster trade. Rather, the government body aimed to define its relationship with the colonies by asserting its power.

Nor did contemporary British merchants take inordinate credit for the repeal. In letters to New York and Boston, London merchants did not demand recognition or praise for their actions. Instead, they merely notified the colonial merchants about the nature of the Stamp Act debates.<sup>49</sup> Within these letters, the Englishmen informed the Americans of Parliamentary concerns regarding colonial violence. The Committee of Merchants in London, for instance, wrote, “In this line of Argument every debate and every Question from Opposition has run.”<sup>50</sup> On this note, they warned the Americans to accept the repeal with a sense of gratitude towards the mother country and not with a sense of victory.<sup>51</sup> While some colonials may have accepted this advice, Bostonians “plumed themselves much upon the victory they had gained.”<sup>52</sup> For at least two years following the repeal, Boston mobs commemorated their triumph over Parliament by burning effigies and destroying property. There were also marches through the city, with “principal

---

49. [“Letters from the Committee of Merchants in London to the Merchants of Boston, directed to John Hancock.”] (London: 18 March 1766), reprinted in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 54 (1920-1): 215-222. “Letter from the Committee of Merchants in London, trading to North-America, directed to John Cruger, Esq. and the Rest of the Merchants in New-York.”] (London: 28 February 1766).

50. “Letters...to John Hancock” and [“Letters...to John Cruger”]

51. Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*. (New York: Norton, 1991). 111.

52. “Letter from Rob. Auchmuty to Hutchinson.” (7 May 1767). in Thomas Hutchinson, *The Letters of Governor Hutchinson, and Lieut. Governor Oliver, &c. Printed at Boston. And remarks thereon. With the Assembly’s Address, and the Proceedings of the Lords Committee of Council*. (London: J. Wilkie, 1774). 6. Available FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued.

merchants” at the “head of the procession.”<sup>53</sup> The London merchants’ warnings proved prescient, and in light of this “unjustifiable conduct in America,” Parliament once again imposed a revenue act upon the colonies.<sup>54</sup>

### The Colonial Crises after the Stamp Act

For the remainder of the colonial period, as imperial war loomed ever closer, British and American merchants continued to follow the cause-and-effect pattern of protest and reaction that originated in the Stamp Act crisis. Increasingly militant American merchants restaged boycotts and street violence to agitate against all subsequent British taxation legislation. In reaction, British merchants, distressed by the dire economic impact of losing their American trade, desperately persisted in petitioning Parliament for appeasement and reconciliation to little avail. Some scholars have sought to understand why British merchants lost their ability to influence Parliament in this period, but the government’s opinion of the mercantile community had not changed.<sup>55</sup> Nor was there any alteration in the methods or language of the British merchants. From the Townshend Acts to the Intolerable Acts, British merchants continued to submit their weakly worded petitions to the government; what was different was Parliament’s increasingly hostile reception of their memorials. As violence and the destruction of property escalated, Americans lost support in Parliament and British public opinion. Moreover, non-importation, the colonies’ best weapon during the Stamp Act lost its edge as American merchants divided over the continuation of non-importation

---

53. *Letters to the Ministry from Governor Bernard, General Gage, and Commodore Hood. And also Memorials to the Lords of the Treasury, from the Commissioners of the Customs, with Sundry Letters and Papers Annexed to the Said Memorials.* (Boston: Edes & Gill, 1769), 13 and 50. Celebrations also noted in Anne Rowe Cunningham, ed., *Letters and Diary of John Rowe, Boston Merchant, 1759-1762 1764-1769.* (Boston: W. B. Clarke & Co., 1903). Available FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued.

54. “Letter from a Committee of Merchants in Philadelphia to the Committee of Merchants in London, 1769.” Philadelphia, 8 April 1769.

55. Olson, Minchingon, Kamman, and Clark.

and British businessmen found new markets for their manufactures.<sup>56</sup> These contingencies, not British merchant political weakness, steadily led Great Britain and America toward impasse.

The colonial crises resurfaced in 1767 when Great Britain imposed the Townshend Acts, an edict that placed duties upon glass, lead, paper, paint and tea. The purpose of the Declaratory Act had not been lost on the Americans, and they understood that the Townshend Acts were yet another attempt to raise revenue from the colonies without their consent.<sup>57</sup> More important to the American merchants, the Acts also created a customs board to collect the taxes and to ensure adherence to the new policy.<sup>58</sup> Under this new entity, with its extensive paperwork and its royally appointed officials who did not have to answer to colonial governments, merchants often had to wait for days to get approval to land and/or unload their ships.<sup>59</sup> Encouraged by the success of non-importation during the Stamp Act crisis, some American merchants decided to revisit that method in their opposition to the new legislation. Their intent, as it had been in 1767, was to “raise an alarm among the merchants and traders of Great-Britain.”<sup>60</sup>

56. One English contemporary found that between 1763 and 1772, trade to Holland and Germany was more profitable than trade to North America. European totals: 30,294,126 sterling; American totals: 20,061,023 sterling. Tucker, Josiah. *An humble address and earnest appeal to those respectable personages in Great Britain and Ireland, who, by their great and permanent interest in landed property, their liberal education, elevated rank, and enlarged views, are the ablest to judge...*(London: T. Cadell, 1776) unpaginated pull-out chart. Available FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued.

57. Almon, *A Collection*, 168.

58. David Brion Davis and Steven Mintz. *The Boisterous Sea of Liberty: A Documentary History of America from Discovery through the Civil War*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). 151.

59. *Observations of the Merchants at Boston in New England, upon Several Acts of Parliament, made in the Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh Years of his Majesty's Reign, Respecting American Commerce and Revenue, and their Military and Civil Execution*. (Boston, 1770): 19.

60. *Letters to the Ministry*, 19.

The record of American merchant action in this period is sometimes contradictory. On the one hand, with regard to Boston, the *London Magazine* claimed that merchants began their agreement in September of 1767.<sup>61</sup> Francis Bernard, the British Governor of Massachusetts, on the other hand, mentioned a merchant meeting in a letter to the Earl of Hillsborough held on March 4, 1768. In this meeting, according to Bernard, public pressure probably forced many merchants into signing for fear of going against the “popular stream,” but they did agree to an eighteen-month boycott of British goods.<sup>62</sup> Thomas Hutchinson, who replaced Bernard as governor also noted in August 1768 that all but a handful of the city’s merchants were involved in the Boston boycott.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, not all were in agreement with instilling a colony-wide, unified embargo of British merchandise. Philadelphia seemed to be obstructing the plan for unity and still had qualms about joining in July. Taking a wait and see attitude, Philadelphia merchants were reluctant to act until they knew of the outcome of some colonial assembly petitions that were sent to Parliament.<sup>64</sup> New York, however, did finally enter into an agreement on September 12, 1768, although it is unclear whether they were working alone or with other colonies.<sup>65</sup>

Many merchants were less willing this time to follow the stipulation of non-importation.<sup>66</sup> An anonymous American pamphleteer, for example, condemned

---

61. *London Magazine: or Gentlemen’s Monthly Intelligencer*. vol. 37 (1768): 4. Agreement entered Sept. 28, 1767.

62. *Letters to the Ministry*, 18-9.

63. Thomas Hutchinson, *The Letters of Governor Hutchinson, and Lieut. Governor Oliver, &c. Printed at Boston. And remarks thereon. With the Assembly’s Address, and the Proceeding of the Lords Committee of Council...*(London: J. Wilkie, 1774): 6.

64. Pacificus, [John Dickinson], “To the Public,” (Philadelphia: William Goddard, 15 July 1768).

65. “New York Merchant Resolves.” *New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*. 12 September 1768. Reprinted in David A. Copeland. *Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers: Primary Documents on Events of the Period*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000):239-40.

66. Breen, 244-46. There were economic reasons behind some merchants’

New York merchants for receiving and storing “all the Goods, which arrive contrary to your politick Agreement.” What difference does it make what you do with the items, he asked, if you continue to pay Britain for them. The author warned that the merchants of Great Britain would not be moved to action under these circumstances.<sup>67</sup> By December of 1769, only Boston continued to uphold the embargo, thus undermining the unified front presented during the Stamp Act crisis. Boston merchants complained that their counterparts in New York and Philadelphia were not taking part in any boycotts, and that they had “already ordered their Goods to be shipped.”<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, Parliament was once again concerned. In 1769, the Parliamentary officials sent word to the colonial governors about potentially rescinding the taxes on glass, lead and paint in order to restore trade. “Government at home will deceive itself,” Hutchinson warned, “if it imagines that taking off the duty on glass, paper and painter’s colours will work a reconciliation.”<sup>69</sup> These words proved true, and there were no signs that the American merchants would back down until they received a full repeal, including annulment of the tea tax. More important, Americans planned to hold out until Great Britain agreed that Parliament had no right to tax the colonies.

London merchants decided not to risk the damage that they had incurred under the Stamp Act boycotts. Once again, they delivered a petition to the British government. On March 5, 1770, the House of Commons began its debate.<sup>70</sup> American disobedience was at the forefront of the discussions, and one of Parliament’s utmost concerns was to reach an agreement without appearing weak. Lord North, the new Prime Minister, indicated that the previous year he had been

---

reluctance to reinstate nonimportation. Breen also notes a measure of distrust between merchants of different colonies.

67. Paracelsus. “A Pill for the Committees of Non-Importation.” (New York: John Holt, 1769).

68. “The Merchants and Traders in this Town.” [Boston: Edes & Gill, 6 December 1769].

69. Thomas Hutchinson, “Letter,” (12 August 1769 ). in *The Letters of Governor Hutchinson, and Lieut. Governor Oliver, &c. Printed at Boston. And remarks thereon. With the Assembly’s Address, and the Proceeding of the Lords Committee of Council...* (London: J. Wilkie, 1774): 38.

70. *Cobbett’s*, vol. 16, 852.

willing to consider a full repeal. With the American reinstatement of the boycotts and insurrections, however, North was no longer inclined to offer the colonists conciliation. “I am now under consideration,” he supposed, that were the tax “wholly abolished, it would neither “excite gratitude,” “nor re-establish tranquility. The debates also revealed the continuing concern with the principle of taxation. One minister pointed out that the real reason for maintaining the tea tax was to solidify Parliament’s ability to do so.<sup>71</sup> It was not for the revenue that would come from tea, which was minimal. Instead, by retaining a part of the Townshend Acts, Parliament could also retain its preamble which supported the expediency of revenue acts for the “support of civil governments... and towards further defraying the expenses of defending, protecting and securing” the colonies.<sup>72</sup> This confirmation of Parliament’s right to tax, like the Declaratory Act, was precisely what alarmed the Americans.<sup>73</sup>

While American behavior greatly influenced the decision making process, trade also received a good deal of attention during this session of Parliament. On the surface, it appeared that the eventual repeal of the Townshend duties owed a great deal to the British merchants and their trade complaints. Edmund Burke, however, called this a “paltry pretense, in which this commercial motive never was believed by any man, either in America...or in England.”<sup>74</sup> Had trade been the primary issue, Parliament would have never maintained the tea tax.<sup>75</sup> Further, the trade arguments offered up by some of the ministers made little sense. For instance, North implied in his opening speech that British merchants exaggerated their claims regarding the non-importation impact on trade. The mercantile classes, in his opinion, painted the situation in “very terrifying colours in which

---

71. *Ibid*, 866.

72. *Ibid*, 852.

73. *Ibid*, 866.

74. Edmund Burke, *The Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq.; on American Taxation, April 19, 1774*. (New York: James Rivington, 1775): 10-11. Within this speech, Burke is reminiscing about the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts to make a point regarding the Coercive Acts.

75. Edmund Burke, *Speech of Edmund Burke*, 11.

the least interruption of their customary intercourse is held up to the kingdom.”<sup>76</sup> He also contended that American non-importation would be short lived as evidenced by “constant necessity its abettors [were] under of enforcing it by fraud, nay of often supporting it by blood.”<sup>77</sup> Yet, he centered his vote for repeal upon the same commercial principles that he had just disproved. Despite the discontinuity, a majority did agree to a partial repeal of the Townshend Acts. By repealing on “anti-commercial” grounds, rather than repealing “as being contrary to the rights of America,” Parliament could maintain the appearance of retaining control over the colonies.<sup>78</sup>

If American merchants were in disharmony over the boycott movements before 1770, they were even more agitated and disunified following the partial repeal. American merchants split over non-importation as some favored reestablishing trade, while others preferred to continue the boycotts until Parliament agreed to repeal the tea tax. In Boston, New York and Philadelphia, merchants met and debated the expediency of maintaining their agreements.<sup>79</sup> While assemblies in each of the cities eventually agreed to retain their non-importation plans, for many months some merchants continued to break the agreements and to call for the reinstatement of trade.<sup>80</sup> This failure to promote a unified front did not go unnoticed in England. In the *Public Advertiser*, an author

76. *Cobbett's*, vol. 16, 855.

77. *Ibid*, 855.

78. Benjamin Franklin, “On Partial Repeal” in William Willcox, ed. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 17. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973): 62.

79. “To the Free and Patriotic Inhabitants of the City of Philad. & Province of Pennsylvania: Brethren and Fellow Citizens, Country Men and Friends.” (31 May 1770); “New-York Advertisement” (31 May 1770); “The Merchants, and All Others, Who are any Ways Concerned in, or Connected with Trade.” (19 May 1770).

80. “The Merchants of this Town and all Others” (Boston: 4 September 1770); “To the Tradesmen, Farmers, and other Inhabitants of the City and County of Philadelphia.” (Philadelphia: 24 September 1770); “To the Freeholders, Merchants, Tradesmen and Farmers, of the City and County of Philadelphia.” (26 September 1770); No title, (Philadelphia, 27 September, 1770).

let it be known that the Americans continued to “clandestinely import and consume as much British Goods as ever.”<sup>81</sup> Others wrote that the Americans were holding true to their agreements, but the need for necessary items would soon force them to send orders to England. Benjamin Franklin responded to these detractors in an angry fashion, reminding the English that Americans were perfectly capable of creating their own manufactures.<sup>82</sup> Yet, it appeared that the damage was done—for two years, the Parliamentary debates contained no mention of the American crisis or cause.

In America, merchants seemed to be losing their monopoly on political activism and large-scale protest was no longer the exclusive purview of the mercantile class.<sup>83</sup> The weakening leadership of American merchants and the questionable efficacy of non-importation agreements came to a head in 1773 with the passage of the Tea Act. This piece of legislation permitted the East India Company to ship tea directly from India to America, thus saving money on shipping costs. While the price of the tea would be cheaper, it would still retain the tax imposed by the Townshend Acts.<sup>84</sup> Interpreting the law as a clandestine way in which “to raise a revenue, and to establish parliamentary despotism, in America,” the colonies made plans to protest.<sup>85</sup> Assembled citizens of New York, Philadelphia and Boston all entered into agreements regarding the tea, which maintained that Parliament could not tax them without their consent, and that “a virtuous and steady opposition to this ministerial plan of governing America is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty.”<sup>86</sup> Not all merchants,

81. Quoted in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 17, 266.

82. *Ibid*, 266.

83. T. H. Breen, for instance, demonstrates the role of colonial women in upholding boycotts. 181-182.

84. Mintz, *The Boisterous Sea*, 151.

85. “To the Commissioners Appointed by the East-India Company, for the Sale of Tea, in America.” (Philadelphia: 1773).

86. The Association of the Sons of Liberty, of New-York, (New York, 1773); The Votes and Proceedings of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Town of Boston, in Town Meeting Assembled, According to Law, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> days of November. 1773 (Boston: Joseph Greenleaf: 1773): 5.

however, were in agreement with the plan.

As the controversy over the Tea Act unfolded, many members of the colonial mercantile community were on the “wrong” side of the battle with England. The East India Company found American merchants willing to handle the sale of the low-priced tea, angering many colonial proponents of the boycott.<sup>87</sup> Newspaper articles, likening these “tea commissioners” to stamp distributors, demanded their resignations.<sup>88</sup> In Boston, in a “meeting of freeholders and other inhabitants,” members resolved to “prevent the sale of the tea” “by all means in their power;” a measure strongly opposed by many of the town’s merchants.<sup>89</sup> Despite the strong indication of trouble, shipments of tea did arrive at the end of 1773. When it reached Philadelphia and New York, the colonists did not allow the ships to be unloaded.<sup>90</sup> In Boston, however, John Hancock and other colonials destroyed the tea in Boston Harbor.<sup>91</sup> When the East India Company demanded restitution for its losses, the merchant community divided further into two antithetical groups. Soon after the Boston Tea Party took place, one merchant, Harrison Gray, wrote, “instead of being a means to obtain a repeal of the ACTS, will in all probability bring on us a heavier condemnation than that of the port-bill, or the ACT for the alteration of our constitution.”<sup>92</sup> In this, he was correct and

87. Francis S. Drake, *Tea Leaves: Being a Collection of Letters and Documents Relating to the Shipment of Tea to the American Colonies...* (reprint, Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1970): 210-40.

88. “To the Commissioners Appointed by the East-India Company” (Philadelphia: 1773).

89. The Votes and Proceedings of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Town of Boston, 7.

90. David Ammerman, “The Tea Crisis and its Consequences.” in Jack P. Green and J. R. Pole, eds. *A Companion to the American Revolution*. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000): 197.

91. It should be mentioned that by this point, John Hancock was acting as a colonial government official rather than an individual merchant.

92. A Friend to Peace and Good Order. [Harrison Gray]. “A Few Remarks upon some of the Votes and Resolutions of the Continental Congress, held at Philadelphia in September, and the Provincial Congress, held at Cambridge in

Parliament responded with the Coercive, or Intolerable Acts that, among other things, closed the Port of Boston and altered the charter of the Massachusetts colonial government.

By 1774, non-importation was still a protest method, but American merchants were no longer the primary leaders of the opposition against taxation. Nor was non-importation primarily concerned with coercing British merchants to act as campaigners of the America cause. Instead, boycotts became the responsibility of the Continental Congress, of which only nine of the fifty members were merchants.<sup>93</sup> On September 5 of that year, the Congress enacted The Association, a “non-importation, non-consumption and non-exportation agreement.”<sup>94</sup> In keeping with earlier boycotts organized by merchants in the individual colonies, the Association stipulated that Americans would not import any items from England, and that American merchants must cancel orders immediately. The method of enforcement, however, was far stronger. If any merchant broke “the said non-importation agreement, or in any manner contravene [sic] the same, on such unworthy conduct being well attested, it ought to be made public; and, on the same being so done, we will not from thenceforth have any commercial connexion [sic] with such merchant.”<sup>95</sup> Congress also vowed that Americans would sever business ties with any colony that refused to submit. Also different was the objective of this agreement. Unlike earlier efforts that aimed at gaining British merchant attention, Congress intended to stir Parliament directly. They gave Parliament one year to repeal the Coercive Acts.

November 1774.” (1775): 3. FAU Libraries, Special Collections, Weiner Collection, item no. 6452. Interestingly, Gray, named as a loyalist, would later lose his property and be banned from returning to Massachusetts.

93. Nathaniel Folsom, NH, Robert Treat Paine, MA, Stephen Hopkins, RI, Isaac Low, NY, John Alsop, NY, Thomas Mifflin, PA, Edward Biddle, PA, Joseph Hews, VA, Christopher Gadsden, SC.

94. *Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the American Continental Congress, Held at Philadelphia on the fifth of September, M,DCC,LXXIV.* (Philadelphia, 1774): 12. Available, FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued.

95. *Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the American Continental Congress*, 13.

Although British merchants were not the intended audience of the Association, on January 23, 1775, some 400 London merchants concerned with North American trade petitioned Parliament in response to the measure; once again, they omitted political language, opting instead for vague declarations of harm to trade.<sup>96</sup> As had been the case in the past, the merchants opened their latest appeal with an enumeration of all the items commonly traded with America. This time, however, they also provided a brief history of the last nine years. Starting with the Stamp Act, the merchants informed Parliament that with each revenue imposed upon the colonies, England experienced a loss of trade. Whenever these acts were repealed, “the trade to the British colonies immediately resumed its former flourishing state.”<sup>97</sup> With regard to the Tea Act and the Association, the London merchants made no mention of America’s constitutional arguments. Nor did they make specific demand for repeal. Instead, they meekly asked that Parliament “apply such healing remedies, as can alone restore and establish the commerce between Great Britain and her colonies.”<sup>98</sup> Another group of London merchants concerned with West Indian trade also petitioned Parliament in the same dispassionate language, requesting the government “adopt such measures”

---

96. *London Magazine*, vol .XLIV,42-3; Lane, Thomas. [Chairman of the Committee of Merchants, Traders, and others, of the City of London, concerned in the American Commerce] Series of seven petitions presented to the House of Lords, House of Commons, and King George III, 1775. Available at FAU Special Collections and Archives, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued. It is interesting to note that British merchants used strikingly variable language in their petitions to Parliament depending on the complaint. In 1774, for instance, when a group of London merchants appealed for better protection against Spanish ships, they formulated very specific demands regarding suggested locations for the British fleet. Only with reference to America were the British merchants unwilling to use forceful language. *A Short Account of the Late Application to Parliament made by the Merchants of London upon the Neglect of their Trade: with the Substance of the Evidence Thereupon; as summed up by Mr. Glover.* (London: T. Cooper, 1774): 7.

97. William Cobbett and T. C. Hansard. *Cobbett’s Parliamentary History of England: from the Norman Conquest, in 1066, to the year 1803.* vol. 18, 168-70.

98. Lane, Thomas. [Petition].

that would “preserve the intercourse between the West India islands and the Northern Colonies.”<sup>99</sup>

Whereas in the past, members of Parliament listened politely, if indifferently, to British merchant petitions, by 1775, ministers were at the end of their patience regarding the American cause. Indeed, they questioned whether they should hear the memorials at all. Many members opposed giving any more attention to the Americans. One particularly disgusted minister said, “whenever the Americans had any point to gain, let it be ever so unreasonable, all they had to do was to...threaten to stop all commercial intercourse with us, and their business would be done.”<sup>100</sup> In spite of this, Parliament did agree to forward the petitions to a special committee; a commission sardonically called the “Committee of Oblivion,” by pro-American minister, Edmund Burke. Two days later, the same London merchants approached Parliament again asking to be heard by the whole House.<sup>101</sup> This time, the merchants came under attack as MPs questioned their motivations and intentions.<sup>102</sup> One member accused the merchants of secretly representing certain pro-American political factions. He went on to question the purpose of listening to the merchants, “What information could they lay before the House?” he asked, that, “their trade would undergo a temporary stagnation? This...was already known.”<sup>103</sup> What was important, he continued, was the sovereignty of Parliament, not the problems of a self-interested group of merchants. Again, Parliament voted against a full hearing.<sup>104</sup> As for the petitions, Edmund Burke was correct. Nothing came of the hearing in front of the special committee. Indeed, they disappeared into “oblivion.”

---

99. *The Substance of the Evidence on the Petition presented by the West-India Planters and Merchants to the Hon. House of Commons, as it was introduc'd at the Bar, and summ'd up by Mr. Glover on Thursday the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, 1775.*(London: T. Cadell, 1775).Available. FAU Special Collections, Weiner Collection, uncatalogued.

100. *Cobbett's*, vol. 18, 174.

101. *Ibid*, 184.

102. *Ibid*, 186.

103. *Ibid*, 186.

104. *Ibid*, 193.

Parliament thus ignored the British merchants, yet they did still debate the American question. In their deliberations, MPs made little pretense of economic principle and instead they dealt specifically with Parliamentary power over the colonies. On February 1, 1775, Parliament proposed an act for “Settling the Troubles in America, and for asserting the Supreme Legislative authority and superintending power of Great Britain over the Colonies.”<sup>105</sup> The recommended plan, ultimately rejected, would have nullified the Coercive Acts and presumably settled the question of sovereignty once and for all had it passed.<sup>106</sup> On February 7, 1775, the House of Lords and the House of Commons sent a joint resolution to the king declaring that Massachusetts was for all intents and purposes in rebellion.<sup>107</sup> On February 10<sup>th</sup>, Parliament enacted legislation that restricted New England’s trade.<sup>108</sup> “As the Americans had refused to trade with [England], it was but just that we [Parliament] should not suffer them to trade with any other nation.”<sup>109</sup> Within a few months, however, this threat became unimportant. Using commerce as a weapon grew obsolete as the arguments between Great Britain and the colonies took a military turn. On April 19, 1775 with the battles of Lexington and Concord, the Revolutionary War began thus suspending the commercial battle between England and her American colonies.

### Conclusion

At times, scholars repeat interpretations of episodes in history so frequently that we come to accept them without question. Such has been the case regarding the idea that London merchants had the ability to convince Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act. Several historians have repeated this assertion as a matter of fact, like the date of a famous battle, or the name of an eminent statesman.<sup>110</sup> Some

---

105. *Ibid*, 198.

106. *Ibid*, 215.

107. *Ibid*, 297.

108. *Ibid*, 298-305.

109. *Ibid*, 299.

110. Olson, Clark, Kammen,. Minchington, Ketchum, Sosin, Middlekauf, Sainsbury, Bradley.

historians, base their arguments upon the assumption that Parliament listened to the London merchants and then increasingly dismissed their demands over time.<sup>111</sup> The evidence, however, does not support the claim. On the contrary, Parliament responded to the indirect efforts of the American merchants. Prime Minister Pitt and Parliament became ever more entrenched in their opposition to American claims of liberty. Their intransigence only increased as American merchants lost control of the protest movements and as the destruction of property escalated.<sup>112</sup> While Parliament certainly did not ignore the British merchants, to say that they were instrumental in achieving repeal is too simplistic. Thus, Parliament was far more concerned with colonial insurrection and questions of constitutionality than it was with the plight of British merchants. This better explains why London merchants “lost” the ability to influence Parliament in the years between the Stamp Act and the beginning of the Revolutionary War. Of course, this work does more than simply correct a commonly held misconception; it also better illustrates the motivations of Parliament in making colonial policy, and, it is hoped, that it contributes a better understanding of both Parliament and popular politics in the pre-Revolutionary periods.

---

111. Olson.

112. Nash, 309-11.

<sup>1</sup>Who Ended the African Slave Trade: A Historiographical Analysis  
Scott Craig  
Florida State University

Few fields of historical inquiry are as arduous as the study of the African slave trade. Replete with issues of morality, intentionality, and social justice, scholars have had to tread carefully as their findings even today unveil a society that still feels the aftershocks of slavery. The end of the African slave trade has consequently been the focus of historians' efforts to explain the decision to abolish the trade at a time when it was most profitable. Since 1807, when the trade ended in the British Empire, historians began inculcating the advent of abolitionism into contemporary ideologies. The first authors of the antislavery movement emphasized the role of prominent Protestant leaders in order to underscore the importance Christianity had in emancipating African slaves. The celebration of the Christian abolitionists continued throughout the nineteenth century, and only became questioned by Marxist historians in the early twentieth century. This study seeks to track how changes in contemporary real world ideologies have affected historians' interpretations of the end of the slave trade. It particularly focuses on how Marxist ideology and the rise of social history have impacted scholars' interpretations of the end of the slavery in the British Empire. An intellectual tug-of-war between two competing ideological camps within academia has shifted scholars' attention away from European abolitionists and toward restoring the agency of African slaves who themselves resisted the slave trade.

The earliest histories documenting the suppression of the slave trade were written by the abolitionists themselves. Religious zeal became the foundation for understanding the end of the slave trade and out of this celebratory tradition historians sculpted a Eurocentric understanding of abolition. Thomas Clarkson wrote perhaps the first account documenting how the slave trade came to an end in 1807. His text, *The History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the*

---

1. The author is greatly indebted to Professor Robinson Herrera of Florida State University, Professor Matt Childs of the University of South Carolina, and the editor of *Atlantic Millennium*, Greg Weimer, for their helpful comments and source suggestions.

*Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the Parliament* (1808), defined slavery as the ultimate struggle between good and evil. By casting it in the light of moral principles, it seems apparent that Clarkson saw the end of the trade as only the first step toward correcting the injustices of slavery. Later historians followed in Clarkson's footsteps, and published similar accounts throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, alternatives to the traditional Christian narratives of the end of slavery were created perhaps as a response to the failure of Western capitalism. It is out of this chaotic economic environment that new accounts of the end of slavery began to appear. C. L. R. James, a follower of Leon Trotsky's brand of Marxist thought, was one of the first to challenge the traditional story of abolitionism. James, a native of Trinidad, wrote *Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* in 1938. In his recounting of the Haitian Revolution he subtly argued that this uprising was a useful model for future Marxist rebellions in the region. The cultural similarities between, and proximity of Haiti to Trinidad were therefore meant to inspire popular anti-colonial sentiment within the Caribbean.<sup>3</sup>

C. L. R. James worked as a schoolteacher in Trinidad, and imparted his anti-colonial stance upon his students including a young Eric Williams. Heavily influenced by James, Williams eventually attended Oxford University where he studied under Vincent Harlow, a historian of the British Empire. Williams completed his dissertation, "The Economic Aspect of the Abolition of the West Indian Slave Trade and Slavery," in December 1938. He first published it as a monograph in 1944, under the title *Capitalism and Slavery*, which was received critically by historians in the field. Using government documents, and the personal papers of elites from archives around Great Britain, he was able to reconstruct a history of the slave trade that did not emphasize the role of the early abolitionists.

---

2. Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 3-8.

3. For more information on the impact of *Black Jacobins*, see Aldon Lynn Nielsen, *C. L. R. James A Critical Introduction* (Jackson, M.I.: University of Mississippi Press, 1997), 61-87; Michael Foote, "C. L. R. James" in *C. L. R. James: His Intellectual Legacies* eds. Selwyn R. Cudjoe and William E. Cain (Amherst, M.A.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 98-105.

Instead, he argued that the end of the slave trade came from the rise of industrialization, and by 1833, he argued “the Negroes had been stimulated to freedom by the development of the very wealthy which their labor had created.”<sup>4</sup>

The significance of his work cannot be underestimated as Williams admitted that his subject was, “of all the chapters in British colonial history, the least known.”<sup>5</sup> His thesis became known in academic circles as “the Decline Thesis,” and it was extremely provocative in its emphasis that humanitarian motives were not the root cause of abolitionism in the West Indies. Williams charged scholars with placing too much emphasis on the abolitionists, as canonized by the early historians of the slave trade. It was the Industrial Revolution in England, propelled by the profits from hundreds of years of slavery that allowed for the decline of the slave system, thus low-wage labor effectively substituted slavery.<sup>6</sup>

Williams wrote his dissertation at a time when Marxist and anti-colonial ideas were spreading throughout Europe. Less than a year before the outbreak of World War II, his work challenged capitalism on moral grounds. To Williams, slavery was a direct consequence of the uninhibited laissez-faire capitalism that had dominated the New World for centuries. The Marxist-interpretation of slavery passed agency to the lowest class of laborers and threatened to uproot the moral tradition of celebrating abolitionists espoused by generations of Eurocentric-minded historians. Critics of *Capitalism and Slavery* decried that Williams was undermining the importance of humanitarianism in ending the slave trade. As the economic determinist approach to history became more prevalent, it was apparent that such ideas were dangerous to the traditional interpretation of history.<sup>7</sup> Frank

---

4. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 209.

5. Williams, *Inward Hunger*, 49.

6. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, v-vi; Williams’ thesis drew heavily on the idea that economic forces and not humanitarianism drove social change in the West Indies. In this aspect he was heavily influenced by Lowell Ragatz, whose monumental work was first published in 1928. See Lowell Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean 1763–1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York: Octagon Books Inc., 1963); Williams, *Inward Hunger*, 50.

7. Elizabeth Donnan, review of *Capitalism and Slavery*, by Eric Williams. *The American Historical Review* 50 no. 4 (Jul., 1945): 782; Wilson Gee, review of *Capitalism and Slavery*, by Eric Williams. *American Sociological Review* 10 no.

Tannenbaum, wrote the most vociferous attack of Williams' work in his review, "A Note on the Economic Interpretation of History." Tannenbaum reproached that Williams wrote of slavery "with the indignation proper to a child of the American and French Revolutions." Indeed, his entire basis lacked the human element, as mankind seemed to be "just a cog." The review concluded that, "Mr. Williams, in fact, repudiates all of the values of human life, all traditions, all the tenacious notions of right, good and fitting, all the ideals and beliefs that men have stood and died for."<sup>8</sup> Disenchanted with academia, Williams returned to his home in Trinidad to work on political reform and independence and by 1956, he became the first prime minister of the former British colony, and served in that capacity until 1981.<sup>9</sup>

The same year that *Capitalism and Slavery* was published, another Marxist interpretation of slavery was released entitled, *American Negro Slave Revolts*. The author, Herbert Aptheker, argued that historians "have generally tended to minimize or deny the discontent among the Negro slaves." Revolution was a key component in the implementation of Marxist economic theory and Aptheker sought to highlight how African slaves rebelled under their oppressive capitalist masters.<sup>10</sup> Reviewers of the text critiqued the author for overemphasizing the readiness for slaves to start an insurrection whenever the opportunities arose. Some historians went as far as to question Aptheker's objectivity, suggesting that his agenda was to promote ideological change instead of recovering the truth. Aptheker concluded his text by speculating that "discontent and rebelliousness were not only exceedingly common, but, indeed, characteristic of American Negro slaves," a statement that hardly seems quantifiable.<sup>11</sup>

---

4 (Aug., 1945): 566-567; W. L. Burn, review of *Capitalism and Slavery*, by Eric Williams. *The English Historical Review* 62 no. 242 (Jan., 1947): 111-112.

8. Frank Tannenbaum, "A Note on the Economic Interpretation of History," *Political Science Quarterly* 61 no. 2 (Jun., 1946): 247, 252-253.

9. Eric Williams, *Inward Hunger: The Education of A Prime Minister* (London, UK: André Deutsch, 1969), 161 - 67.

10. Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 16.

11. Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, 374; J. G. De Roulhac Hamilton, review of *Negro Slave Revolts*, by Herbert Aptheker. *The American Historical*

The traditional history of abolitionism was clearly being rewritten by a new generation of scholars whose intention was to promote social and ideological change. Some historians did not take these challenges sitting down. Among the defenders of the humanitarian school was Frank Tannenbaum, a historian of Latin America who was a tenured professor at Columbia University. Tannenbaum, was a fierce critic of Williams' Decline Thesis and wrote a small text in defense of the abolitionists, entitled *Slave and Citizen* (1947). He argued that it was "the idea of the moral value of the individual [that] outlasted slavery and became the chief source of its undoing." Using emancipation in Latin America as a basis for comparison, Tannenbaum contended that abolition there was "achieved in every case without bloodshed, and without civil war," thus revolution was not a prerequisite to promote social change. A gradual progression toward equality worked in Latin America, and if other regions were patient the same could work there too.<sup>12</sup>

As the Cold War heated up in the 1960s, new attempts were made to buttress the humanitarian argument in order to quell the more radical elements in academia. One of the leaders of the Europeanist school was David Brion Davis. Davis completed his dissertation, "Attitudes Toward Homicide in American Fiction, 1798-1860: An Intellectual History," at Harvard in 1956 and taught briefly at Dartmouth College before moving onto Cornell University in 1955. Since 1969, he began teaching at Yale University where he has remained ever since. His first monograph, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (1966),

---

*Review* 49 no. 3 (Apr., 1944): 505; G. G. van D., review of *Negro Slave Revolts*, by Herbert Aptheker. *The English Historical Review* 63 no. 247 (Apr., 1948): 283; For more on Aptheker's lasting legacy see Herbert Shapiro, "Introduction: A Biographical Sketch," in *Herbert Aptheker on Race and Democracy: A Reader* edited by Eric Foner and Manning Marable (Urbana, I.L.: University of Illinois Press, 2006), xi-xviii.

12. Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Press, 1947), viii, 106, 114, 125; In his review of Tannenbaum's work, Aptheker fired back that revolution and violence were indeed everywhere in the abolition of slavery in Latin America. See Herbert Aptheker, review of *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas*, by Frank Tannenbaum. *The American Historical Review* 52, no. 4 (Jul., 1947): 756.

argued that it was a change in moral perception and not economic determinism that caused the abolition of the slave trade.<sup>13</sup>

To understand how the West rationalized slavery, Davis examined conceptions of morality as applied to the institution from the days of the ancient Greeks, to Christian Europe during the Middle Ages, to the eighteenth-century British Empire and the effects of evangelical Protestantism. It is particularly this latter era that intrigues Davis, as it appeared unique in the history of Western slavery. What specifically was it about this period that caused a complete reversal on the acceptability of slavery? The author suggests that the answer is multifaceted. A reinterpretation of the understanding of sin and Millennialism affected various religious denominations across America. Perhaps more importantly however, in this era emerged, “the new ideal of individual responsibility [which] appealed particularly to the merchant elite who, though lacking inherited status, could at least prove their moral worth by increasing the security or opportunities for the less fortunate.”<sup>14</sup> This shift in moral perception did not by itself cause the abolition of slavery Davis explains, but it certainly increased societal pressure to do so. Critics of Davis’ argument highlighted that his intellectual approach to abolitionism conveniently allowed him to circumnavigate the economic interpretation all together. Eugene Genovese, a Professor of History at Rutgers University and advocate of the Marxist school, called Davis’ work “seriously flawed,” because of “Davis’ insistence on bypassing the class structure of each slave society.” And consequently according to Davis “what men thought about slavery is largely divorced from consideration of such simple questions as the role of slavery and economy at each given moment.”<sup>15</sup>

A further defense of the humanitarian school came from the Cambridge educated historian, Roger Anstey. While other authors writing on the slave trade lived and worked in the West, Anstey had first hand experience doing research in

---

13. History News Network. <http://www.hnn.us/roundup/comments/25840.html> (accessed June 20, 2010).

14. David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), 334.

15. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, 296; Eugene D. Genovese, review of *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, by David Brion Davis. *The Journal of Southern History* 32 no. 4 (Nov. 1966): 530.

Africa while a lecturer at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria from 1952 to 1957. He spent several years at the University of Durham, before finally settling at the University of Kent in 1968. His text, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760–1810* (1975), attacked Williams' Decline Thesis, and reemphasized the role Christianity had in the abolition of slavery. The approach of economic determinism, which had become so prevalent in the study of slavery and abolition, was inherently flawed according to Anstey. Instead he devoted his text to "the truth, evident but frequently forgotten," that "it was law and stature which brought the British slave trade to an end and that was a product of the political process." Indeed, Anstey was unswerving in his belief that the end of the trade stemmed from the virtue of a handful of great men. It was through "their doggedness," that these "religiously inspired men who constituted the core of the abolition lobby" prevailed. Consequently, these men "had a profound significance in the development of a theology of anti-slavery, and for future social reform."<sup>16</sup> Reiterating many of the themes from his previous text on slavery, Davis sought to reveal the development of a European antislavery ideology by examining how ideas of morality and equality led to intense social change.

The abolitionists found another ally in Seymour Drescher, a historian who has spent his career at the University of Pittsburgh since 1962. Drescher, published his first work on the topic of slavery fifteen years later. The monograph, *Econocide* (1977), polemically critiqued Williams' Decline Thesis and the Marxist interpretation of history. Drescher argued that Williams was "a cynical historian," whose work was ultimately the "wholesale devaluation of the significance of noneconomic forces." He suggested that the author of *Capitalism and Slavery* was "offended by the aroma of self-righteousness in abolitionism as by the stench of slavery in the colonies." In fact, Williams had gone so far that "wherever the

---

16. Roger Anstey *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760–1810* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975), xxi, xxiii, 409; In a brief biographical appreciation of Anstey, David Brion Davis remembered his colleague as a devout Protestant, and added that, "no-one could deny Anstey's desire to discredit economic determinism and to counter Williams' contention that humanitarianism became convincing when it served material interests." See David Brion Davis, "An Appreciation of Roger Anstey" in *Anti-slavery, Religion and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey*, edited by Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (Hamden, CT: Wm Sawson & Sons, 1980), 12; Released the same year as Anstey's work was David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution 1770–1823* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975).

humanitarian school had seen a crusade of saints against the ruthless degradation, Williams saw the invisible hand of capitalism.” Thus Drescher accused the Marxist author of believing “that the abolitionist movement was merely a humanitarian cloak covering economic interests of diabolically Machiavellian cleverness.”<sup>17</sup>

While Williams argued that the decline of the West Indies allowed for the possibility of abolition, Drescher countered that the region was actually at the very peak of profitability when the slave trade was abolished, indicating that non-economic factors were paramount. Using data from archives across the nations that made up the old British Empire and beyond, Drescher was able to extrapolate a significant amount of information on the profitability of the sugar trade. He concluded that Great Britain was actually committing economic suicide by banning the slave trade in the early nineteenth century, and thereby sent a message to Marxist historians that capitalism was not to blame.<sup>18</sup>

In 1979, Eugene Genovese, a Marxist historian who had been heavily critical of David Brion Davis’ work, released *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World*. Genovese was evidently influenced by the Marxist Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, whose theory of cultural hegemony buttressed Genovese’s claim that slave revolts were restorationist in nature. In other words, violent resistance against slavery was simply “the basic [re]assertion of human dignity and of humanity itself.” In an attempt to draw readers toward a more liberal ideological viewpoint, the author linked slave revolts in the colonial era to the Marxist revolutions going on in the twentieth century. He argued that slave societies in themselves were a European creation that grew or perished based on the economic need of capitalist countries.<sup>19</sup> In his review of the text, Seymour Drescher warned that Genovese condoned violence to promote social change: “While declining to defend terrorism

---

17. Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), 4-5.

18. Drescher, *Econocide*, 4-5, 184; For more on the reaction to Williams’ Decline Thesis see Cedric J. Robinson, “Capitalism, Slavery and Bourgeois Historiography,” *History Workshop*, no. 23 (1987): 122-140.

19. Eugene D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), xviii, xx.

*per se*, Genovese never seems to be able to bring himself against any particular instance of violence in the history of black revolution.”<sup>20</sup>

Michael Craton, a professor at the University of Waterloo who received his doctorate from McMaster University, released an article on slave resistance entitled “Proto-Peasant Revolts? The Late Slave Rebellions in the British West Indies 1816–1832,” in 1979. In this piece, he suggested that the state of slavery alters the human personality and therefore, “only in resistance can the self be realized and dignity restored.” This Freudian element of the Marxist interpretation echoed Genovese’s argument that slave revolts were restorative in nature.<sup>21</sup> In his monograph, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (1982), Craton attempted to examine slave revolts in the Caribbean comparatively, thus showing that revolution was not particular to any specific region or time period. This methodology essentially shattered any notion that resistance could be quantified, meaning that slaves attempted to shape society on their own terms. Craton also charged “certain Eurocentric historians,” with overlooking the ideology of resistance in order to continue a tradition of Western hegemony.<sup>22</sup>

Craton’s conclusion that slave resistance was remarkably diverse signified the need for historians to be more specific in their studies of slave societies. Thus, the synthesis approach used by historians like Williams, Aptheker, and Genovese gave way to a new methodology of historical inquiry, which focused on the more detailed aspects of slave resistance. As Craton showed that slave resistance was not necessarily contingent on any particular region or time period, scholars began seeing conflict in areas outside of those traditionally studied by the earlier Marxist scholars. Barbara Bush, a historian at Sheffield Hallam University, saw that resistance had generally been seen by historians as a male dominated act and was usually considered violent in nature. Bush, author of *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (Oxford, 1990), first unveiled that female slaves were far from “passive” in her article “Towards Emancipation: Slave Women and Resistance to

---

20. Seymour Drescher, review of *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* by Eugene D. Genovese. *Journal of Social History* 15 no. 1 (Autumn, 1981): 123.

21. Michael Craton, “Proto-Peasant Revolts? The Late Slave Rebellions in the British West Indies 1816–1832,” *Past & Present* no. 85 (1979): 125.

22. Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 11, 13.

Coercive Labour Regimes in the British West Indian Colonies, 1790–1838,” in 1984.<sup>23</sup> In fact she countered that the opposite was true: “Women were the primary agents in the emancipation of the slave community.” It was through their “non-cooperation at work,” that the “general spirit of resistance” put immense pressure on planters to change their attitudes toward their workers.<sup>24</sup>

As social history became mainstream and essentially supplanted some of the more traditional accounts of abolition, the advent of postcolonialism, subaltern studies, and postmodernism encouraged historians to look outside of the borders of the West to find answers to their questions about the slave trade. Instead of confining their studies of resistance to the New World, some scholars began to trace patterns of resistance all the way back to Africa. For example, Richard Rathbone, a professor of history at Prifysgol Aberystwyth University in Wales has suggested that the African past is something that indeed influenced slaves in the New World. In 1985, he wrote an article published in *Slavery & Abolition* entitled “Some Thoughts on Resistance to Enslavement in West Africa.” His argument was based on primary sources which revealed “a more thorough understanding of a culture of resistance... rooted very firmly on African soil.” Historians needed to understand how the slave trade was resisted in Africa, and to do this they could look at the “actual evidence of physical attempts to prevent the forcible removal of people from their home environment.”<sup>25</sup> These sources proved that Africans were not passive in the slave trade, and “suggest a mounting challenge not only against the Atlantic trade but also against indigenous institutions of slavery.”<sup>26</sup>

---

23. Professor Barbara Bush | History | English and History | Sheffield Hallam University. <http://www.shu.ac.uk/history/staff/barabarabush.html> (accessed November 6, 2009).

24. Barbara Bush, “Towards Emancipation: Slave Women and Resistance to Coercive Labour Régimes in the British West Indian Colonies, 1790-1838,” *Slavery & Abolition* 5, no. 3 (1984): 222, 239; The resistance of women to the planter class has been more recently examined in Haiti. See Judith Kafka, “Action, Reaction and Interaction: Slave Women in Resistance in the South of Saint Domingue, 1793–1794,” *Slavery & Abolition* 18 no. 2 (1997): 48-72.

25. Richard Rathbone, “Some Thoughts on Resistance to Enslavement in West Africa,” *Slavery & Abolition* 6 no. 3 (1985): 11-12.

26. Rathbone, “Some Thoughts on Resistance,” 19; Department of History & Welsh History. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/history/staff/rar/index.htm> (accessed June

This avenue of study was also taken up by other scholars like Winston McGowan, professor of history at University of Guyana in Georgetown, Guyana. In his article, “African Resistance to the Atlantic Slave Trade in West Africa,” McGowan noted that there was more than one reason why the Africans resisted the slave trade. Some did it for religious reasons, others thought it was a dirty business, but whatever the reason, Africans took a variety of measures to prevent their loved ones from being enslaved. Some sent their families away with their most valuable goods so they would be out of danger. Once captured many Africans sought ways to escape captivity before being forced to migrate across the Atlantic. McGowan even argues that “Africans were so fearful of enslavement overseas that the threat of sale to Europeans was one of the most effective mechanisms of control employed by slaveholders in African societies over their own slaves.”<sup>27</sup> The author concludes by positing that slave resistance was ultimately, “evidence of the determination of the human spirit to triumph over adversity.”<sup>28</sup> These scenarios all suggest that Africans were anything but passive actors in their fight against the slave trade.<sup>29</sup>

Further evidence that scholarship has moved toward focusing on Africa and the slave trade stems from John Thornton’s *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (1998). Thornton, a professor of African history at Boston University received his Ph.D. under the supervision of Edward Alpers at University of California Los Angeles in 1979. He has published extensively on Africa during the seventeenth century, and has suggested that although many scholars have been “committed to the non-Western world... they still agreed that the non-Western world, including Africa, had played a passive role in the development of the Atlantic.”<sup>30</sup> Thornton has written an entire chapter about general types of resistance strategies that Africans employed both in Africa and in

---

20, 2010).

27. Winston McGowan, “African Resistance to the Atlantic Slave Trade in West Africa,” *Slavery & Abolition* 6 no. 3 (1985): 11-12.

28. McGowan, “African Resistance to the Atlantic Slave Trade in West Africa,” 26.

29. *Ibid.*, 10-14.

30. John Thornton, *Africa and Africans and the Making of the Modern World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 4.

the New World. He suggests that African culture itself may have contributed to the resistance methods utilized by slaves.<sup>31</sup>

Even Bermuda, one of the smallest islands in the Caribbean with a minimal slave-to-planter ratio had several rebellions. In her article “Bids for Freedom: Slave Resistance and Rebellion Plots in Bermuda, 1656–1761,” Virginia Bernhard, a professor at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas, argues that Bermuda is an ideal place to examine the consequences of slave uprisings. The small size of the island meant that there was nowhere to run or hide. She argues that the proximity between slaves and planters caused the severity of the rebellions to be “mitigated by the personal, the individual nature of contacts between the races.”<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that these uprisings occurred definitively shows that there was almost nowhere across the globe where slaves did not become active participants in their quest for freedom.<sup>33</sup>

---

31. <http://www.bu.edu/history/thorton.pdf> (accessed June 20, 2010); See Thornton, *Africa and Africans and the Making of the Atlantic World*, 273-303.

32. Virginia Bernhard, “Bids for Freedom: Slave Resistance and Rebellion Plots in Bermuda, 1656–1761,” *Slavery & Abolition* 17 no. 3 (1996): 203.

33. The changing geographical focus on slave resistance has also become prevalent in the study of other empires. For example, Matt Childs, an associate professor in the history department at the University of South Carolina, has recently released a study of the Aponte Rebellion of 1812. In his monograph, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery* (2006), Childs argues that the Aponte Rebellion is significant for historians because it “offers a critical case to analyze what role the ideas from the Age of Revolution, and the Haitian Revolution in particular, played in catalyzing slave and free people of color revolts in the Americas.” The author emphasizes the importance of understanding how transatlantic notions of freedom are conveyed through both slave rebellions, and the political rebellions in America and France. This study critically recognizes that ideology is not something that was exclusive to the European abolitionists, but was at the very heart of the slave uprisings, as slaves themselves became active agents in conceiving of and obtaining their own freedom from the slave trade. See Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle Against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 14.

In 2004, historian Martin Klein gave a speech at the annual conference of the Organization of American Historians. Several scholars, including Klein, gave a state of the field of slave studies that outlined where the field was currently at, and what direction it seemed to be going in the future. Europe, and the American colonies were not on the agenda. Klein, who is now an emeritus professor of history at the University of Toronto, began his speech with an analysis of the field's current status: "The study of slavery in Africa is a relatively recent phenomenon, to some degree a spinoff of the concern with slavery in other parts of the world." This trend is ironic because the study of the slave trade and abolition has been investigated for a lengthy amount of time, but for Africa to come in the picture only recently signaled that a fundamental shift in the study of slavery is underway. Klein added that the latest "scholarship on African slavery has increasingly focused on women." He suggested that the reason why scholars have only recently begun studying Africans role in slavery is because there was an artificial "division between predators and prey," and historians had largely been looking "at the predators," because "they were easier to research, [and] more visible in archival record." Looking at African resistance to slavery has become increasingly more prevalent in recent scholarship. By reading government and other documents against the grain, and using narratives and biographies of the former slaves, historians who study resistance have uncovered a vast amount of new material. Klein listed at least two new studies that showed how villagers built walls and fortresses from which they could defend their families from being kidnapped into slavery. This exciting new work is giving historians a fuller picture of how slaves were historical actors in ending the slave trade. He attributed the new scholarship as resulting from a number of trends including, "the challenge of teaching," because professors commonly "look for theoretical models... rooted elsewhere," which have provided such theoretical frameworks as "dependency theory in the 1970s, subaltern studies, post-modernism and post-colonialism in the 1990s." Klein successfully shows that above all else, the study of slavery has moved in a new and more inclusive direction, one that shares agency between slave and abolitionist.<sup>34</sup>

At the same Organization of American Historians conference that Martin Klein presented the most recent studies on slave resistance, David Brion Davis also gave a presentation on African slavery. Davis highlighted that the "greatest

---

34. Martin Klein presented this paper at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in 2004. *State of the Field: Slavery — Martin Klein*. <http://www.oah.org/meetings/2004/klein/html> (accessed June 20, 2010).

gain in the conceptualization of slavery has been in the remarkable extension of both temporal and geographic boundaries.” Local studies also revealed interesting new data that had escaped the grand narratives many of the prominent historians had constructed over the years. Acknowledging the importance of crossing borders is a crucial step in reconciling the old views of the slave trade with the new.<sup>35</sup>

The study of abolitionist ideology is nevertheless still prevalent in the scholarship of the Atlantic slave trade. Most recently, Christopher Brown has examined how moral perceptions were spread between England and the American colonies in *Moral Capital* (2006). Brown, who received his doctorate from Oxford University in 1994, is particularly interested in antislavery in the eighteenth century. He argues that in Britain emerges “shifting definitions of imperial purpose,” of which created “new ways to conceive relations among subjects of the crown, and between overseas colonies and the imperial state.”<sup>36</sup> The American Revolution therefore provided an intellectual springboard to create new ideas of humanitarianism within the greater empire. The author concedes that scholars have largely neglected “how changing perceptions of what antislavery organizing could mean... to the prospects for the antislavery movement itself,” and emphasizes that the antislavery ideology the British abolitionists espoused was equally as powerful as any slave uprising.<sup>37</sup>

Though Brown’s work has breathed new life into the study of antislavery ideology, the vast majority of recent scholarship still focuses on the resistance of Africans. Recent dissertators have unveiled the complicated nature of studying slave resistance and the difficulties of incorporating this work into the traditional historiography. Catherine Adams’ completed her dissertation ““What I did is who I am”: African American women and resistance to slavery in colonial and revolutionary New England,” at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2004. She argues that slave resistance strategies were not isolated to areas where

---

35. David Brion Davis presented this paper at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in 2004. State of the Field: Slavery — David Brion Davis. <http://www.oah.org/meetings/2004/davis.html> (accessed June 20, 2010).

36. Brown, *Moral Capital*, 2; Also see Christopher L. Brown, “Empire without slaves: British Concepts of Emancipation in the Age of the American Revolution,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (1999): 273-306.

37. Brown, *Moral Capital*, 29.

slavery was the harshest. Even in New England, where the institution was minimal compared to other parts of the empire, slaves found ways to rebel against the authority of their masters everyday. Through the examination of their own identity formation, and their adoption of particular elements of the Christian religion, Adams' focus on the resistance of slave women has illuminated an area of historiography that has until recently been largely neglected.<sup>38</sup>

Resistance was not limited geographically. Even before they arrived in the New World slaves were actively resisting their captivity. Eric Taylor, wrote his doctoral dissertation on uprisings aboard slave ships in the Atlantic while studying at UCLA. It was published in 2006 as *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*. He argues that historians have neglected studying shipboard insurrections which "consequently trivializes the actions of Africans during the slave trade." Taylor's research has uncovered nearly five hundred insurrections on board slave ships, the evidence of which "demonstrates beyond a doubt that shipboard insurrections were far more than merely episodic."<sup>39</sup> In fact, they seemed to be arise in a ratio similar to the overall fluctuations of slave ships crossing the Atlantic. Though Taylor has left academia he has nevertheless left an important work for historians that challenges the perception that Africans laid down passively on the hellish journey from Africa to the Americas.<sup>40</sup>

---

38. Catherine Adams, "'What I did is who I am': African American women and resistance to slavery in colonial and revolutionary New England" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2004), iii; Other recent scholarship by graduate students on slave resistance include: Michael Goleman, "To become men: Resistance, revolt, and masculinity in antebellum rural slave communities" (PhD diss., Mississippi State University, 2006); Katherine Smith, "Forging an identity: British Virgin Islands' slave society 1672–1838" (PhD., diss., Howard University, 2009).

39. Eric Robert Taylor, *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 6.

40. *If We Must Die* by Eric Robert Taylor.  
<http://www.lsu.edu/lsupress/bookPages/9780807131817.html> (accessed June 20, 2010).

Perhaps no other event has shown the evident shift in historical thinking than the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture's decision to hold a conference about the slave trade in Ghana at the University of Cape Coast in August 2007. The conference was entitled "The bloody Writing is for ever torn': Domestic and International Consequences of the First Governmental Efforts to Abolish the Atlantic Slave Trade," and the keynote address was not given by an American or European historian but by an African scholar, Adiele E. Afigbo, a professor of History at Ebonyi State University in Abakaliki, Nigeria. He began his speech by suggesting that the slave trade has been a severely understudied element of African history, even within Africa. More importantly, he argues that the popular term "Atlantic slave trade" does not accurately reflect the phenomena that depopulated the continent because "the Atlantic never had any human populations of its own... never recruited or sold any slaves, never used the product of slave labor and so never ran any risks of such products damaging its economy in the long run." He reminded his audience that "the Atlantic was only a passive, inanimate channel in the whole business," and historians who have used the term "Atlantic" have been effectively denying Africa's role in the slave trade.<sup>41</sup> Afigbo's analysis of the slave trade underscores the need for further study of how the slave trade affected Africa.<sup>42</sup>

It seems clear that historians felt threatened enough by Williams' Decline Theory that they essentially felt the need to protect the traditional European-centered, moral-ideological interpretive framework. One common theme that has divided the two schools has been geography. The humanitarian school generally stays strictly within the realm of Europe and the American colonies. In a trade that originated in Africa, was dependent on Africans for supplying it, sustaining it, and adjusting it according to demand, the Eurocentric viewpoint makes little sense. In many of these works, the authors acknowledge the fact that there are external factors caused by Africans in ending of the slave trade. They suggest that these factors are not unimportant, but they simultaneously neglect them to the degree that one would assume they are trivial. Simply acknowledging something does not make ones work inclusive of other perspectives. In fact, it does the opposite. It

---

41. Adiele E. Afigbo, "Africa and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 66 no. 4 (2009): 707.

42. Afigbo, "Africa and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," 705-706.

says that if the author thought these things were important enough they would have talked about them in their voluminous texts.<sup>43</sup>

It is also important to remember the time period in which these often polemical works are being written. From Davis's and Anstey's interpretations in the 1960s to Drescher's early work in the 1970s, all of it was happening during the Cold War. As ideology was the driving force that fueled the U.S. and the Soviet Union to compete for world hegemony, it was also ideology that became most important to the scholars of slave trade abolition. Emphasizing the moral qualities of those that lived under that economic system was an attempt to buttress the conservative element in American historiography. Their defense of the abolitionists was simultaneously a defense of American capitalism. Conversely historians of the emerging New Left often challenged traditional notions of Eurocentric history and advocated the New Social History which steered away from elites to look at those who had previously been ignored.<sup>44</sup>

Though these conservative historians firmly entrenched themselves for a long and arduous intellectual battle over the slave trade, their position in the end proved to be untenable for a number of reasons. First, their interpretation of the end of the slave trade was limited to the ideological viewpoints of a few elite abolitionists. As liberalism advanced into American culture in the 1960s and 1970s, the emergence of social history, and its popularity showed that both students and the populous were tired of the traditional elitist versions of history. With the communication revolution, and a more globalized economy as the norm, geographic limitations to the West (Europe and the United States) denied the dynamism of non-Western contributions to the slave trade. Finally, it was the undeniable evidence of slave resistance that countless historians have uncovered which made the conservative histories effectively obsolete.

It should also be recognized that this change in the historiography did not come easily. Williams' and other historians with more liberal interpretations have received serious criticism for their works. Social historians have only relatively recently moved Africa and the slaves themselves to the center of the debate. Though there is certainly a clear path for future graduate students to travel down, some areas of scholarship that have been more neglected than others. In another

---

43. Brown, *Moral Capital*, 30.

44. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 417-420.

address to the Organization of American Historians, Jennifer Morgan, Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University, and author of *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in New World Slavery* (2004), reminded the audience that “there remains plenty of work to be done,” particularly on the understudied subject of women in slavery.<sup>45</sup> The direction of future research appears to be revealing itself in the recovery of the lost voices of the enslaved

---

45. Jennifer Morgan presented this paper at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in 2004. State of the Field: Slavery — Jennifer Morgan. <http://www.oah.org/meeting/2004/morgan.html> (accessed June 20, 2010).

## Book Reviews

Karen B. Graubart, *With Our Labor and Sweat: Indigenous Women and the Formation of Colonial Society in Peru, 1550-1700*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

Karen Graubart's *With Our Labor and Sweat* examines pre-Hispanic and early colonial socio-economic relationships in the Andean region. Her focus on women, in both urban and rural areas, demonstrates indigenous female and male roles under Spanish rule were not entirely new, but instead adaptations from previous gendered divisions of labor and power. Material culture supports Graubart's argument that indigenous women initially contested, yet generally adjusting to, the new legal and economic structures of Spanish colonialism. While social status overtly shaped indigenous women's lives, Graubart argues, ethnicity played a part in different and less obvious ways.

The creation of a market economy created different opportunities for indigenous women. Although legal barriers existed, indigenous women's participation in this new economic system challenges the idea of separate Spanish and Indian worlds. Graubart notes that indigenous adjustment to colonialism was gendered, thus women experienced and adapted Spanish rule differently than men. The establishment of tribute in Andean regions, the *mita* labor system, was crucial for Spanish settlers in the region. Graubart, however, believes tribute in the form of cloths became fundamental and necessary to fulfill the demands of the required tribute. Spanish norms established individual tribute and in effect increased household economic pressures. Before conquest, when Incan tribute was extracted per household, the labor to meet imperial requirements was complementary and met by men and women. Iberian gendered division of labor and notions of weaving as being female work enforced clothing production as held mainly by women and in the home. However, the increasing indigenous women clothing production allowed them to participate in the nascent market economy and with the revenue became more and more integrated within the system.

Graubart argues that indigenous strategies increasingly utilized gender to manipulate Spanish colonial rule and gain socio-economic advantages. Spanish-created urban centers demanded an enormous amount of domestic service generally filled by indigenous women. This service introduced indigenous women to the Spanish world, their culture, expectations, and everyday lives. Although Graubart doubts the existence of fair job agreements for domestic workers existed, she does present evidence that their skill at daily domestic services soon placed

indigenous women in textile and food businesses. Landownership also, obtained through inheritance or purchase, gradually gave both status and wealth to indigenous women. Indigenous women at times strove for economic advancements and acquired wealth utilizing Spanish legal structures. Graubart explains that by the seventeenth century Spanish American society was already a ‘creole’-based universe in which rather than hispanization, both Spanish and Indian worlds had transformed and created new gendered and class-based socio-economic structures. Spanish early conceptions of indigenous political organization, with an overall confusion regarding indigenous gendered roles, enabled elite indigenous women to participate in the first negotiations for settlement. In this case, class-based Spanish power relations as well as the “colonial government’s desire to codify ‘traditional’ practice” allowed elite indigenous women to position themselves for community rule succession in the case of men absenteeism (Graubart 2007, 174-175). Spanish gendered notions of labor extracted a great amount of men from different Andean communities to work in the mines and this process aided elite indigenous women’s acquisition of power and status with regard to communal property and political decisions during the colonial period. Both former ideas of social status and gendered notions of power determined indigenous women participation in politics alongside elite indigenous men.

The sources utilized in this study, mainly female wills and both household and businesses inventories, are typically not used to explain women’s extensive economic participation during the Andean colonial period. Graubart argues that far from being invisible, female production was extensively included in censuses and *visitas* during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. She calculates indigenous women’s textile production market value and explains the appraisal of these products. Although highlighted by the author as evidence of political participation, women as *cacicas* remains, however, less visible in the sources.

*With our Labor and Sweat* contributes to current scholarship on female participation in the economy by examining household production and indigenous women use of Spanish legal forms such as marriage and inheritance codes. Graubart examines socio-economic and political transformations at the turn of the sixteenth century, and argues that colonial experiences in the Andes differed for the Incas and the Spaniards, yet for both their everyday lives and practices were gender-constructed and reinvented.

Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Louis A. Pérez Jr.'s most recent work on Cuba, *Cuba in the American Imagination*, finds the author in familiar terrain. His investigation of American perceptions of Cuba, however, is both novel in approach and methodology. In this work, Pérez argues that the United States formulated various metaphors concerning Cuba and its inhabitants during the nineteenth century that lingered and transformed throughout the twentieth century. According to Pérez, the prevalence and inculcation of these metaphors in "mass media" ultimately retained great political and social currency in the minds of Americans throughout the years. The metaphors manifested into a sort of moral justification in the minds of Americans. He argues this phenomenon warranted—and excused—the United States' long history of involvement on the island. Pérez analyzes the U.S.-Cuba relationship to determine the foundation of American imperialism in Cuba and, ultimately, elsewhere. With this breakthrough in cultural and intellectual history, Pérez identifies metaphors in the American psyche as a powerful force behind U.S. imperial hegemony.

Pérez begins this work by identifying the historical significance of metaphors in the human imagination. Borrowing heavily from works in the fields of linguistics and literature, Pérez argues that metaphors carry potent messages that influence social and political action. These metaphors, which he claims are carefully and strategically created, are instrumental in the formulation of popular opinions. This work, much like the majority of Pérez's past scholarship, heavily focuses on the 1898 "Spanish-American" War. Pérez investigates numerous contemporary cultural representations of Cuba in the United States—including periodicals, caricatures, songs, plays, films, novels, political speeches and commentary, and monuments—to determine the common metaphors that represented Cuba in the American psyche. The author notes that it was through these manifestations that Americans received the majority of their knowledge of the island.

According to Pérez, the American metaphors associated with Cuba took on various forms, depending on the United States' own needs. When the United States first had vested political interest in annexing the island, it frequently portrayed Cuba as its natural appendage which was necessary for the success of the Union. As Cuban insurgents mobilized in larger numbers in retaliation against Spanish colonial rule, particularly in 1895, Americans depicted Cuba as a neighbor in need of foreign aid. Pérez notes that the U.S. served as the "Good

Samaritan” in this narrative, justifying its intervention in the Cuban war against the Spanish. Much like the other metaphors, the symbolism of the “neighbor” would take on new forms in later periods, such as with President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “Good Neighbor” policy.

The United States also created potent metaphors in regards to its involvement in the “Spanish-American” War and the American occupation that followed. These included that of the parent-child relationship, in which the U.S. served as the adult and guardian to the infant and immature Cuban republic. In a similar fashion, a metaphor also emerged that portrayed the U.S. as the prime educator of the naïve and politically ignorant island. Building largely on Kristin Hoganson’s *Fighting for American Manhood* (1998), Pérez also notes that the U.S. frequently fashioned Cuba as a woman. This metaphor also took variant forms. In the late nineteenth century, Pérez argues, the metaphor of Cuba as woman was that of damsel in distress. This served as a means to justify the United States’ presence on the island. When Cuba was transformed into an American playground for gambling, vice, and sexual promiscuity in the 1920s and 1930s, however, the metaphor of the Cuban “woman” took the form of the whore.

Channeling Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (1962), Pérez argues that through time, these metaphors underwent “paradigm shifts” that were compatible with American interests. According to Pérez, these metaphors held significant currency which validated U.S. intervention in the country. Through the use of these popular and accessible metaphors, notions that served U.S. interests—such as the Platt Amendment and efforts to guarantee tax breaks on import products—were validated and appeared reasonable in the American psyche. Following the 1959 Cuban Revolution, for example, one of the prevalent metaphors that emerged was that of the Cuban or Communist “virus.” In this sense, the U.S. noted the dangers of Fidel Castro and Communism, linking them to a contagious disease that needed to be contained and quarantined. According to Pérez, American failures to thwart Castro’s regime was ultimately a failure of contemporary metaphors. He argues that metaphors failed to take Castro’s regime seriously, or recognize its popular anti-imperialist base. Before 1959, the metaphors had defined Cuba in terms that best suited the United States, ultimately failing to realize the resentment the new generation of Cubans had inherited towards the U.S. Americans and their respective metaphors had failed to realize that the Cubans had come to define themselves in new, self-assuring terms that focused on sovereignty detached from U.S. influence.

Pérez’s research is impressive. He animates his narratives with the speeches of familiar characters in U.S. history, such as Senators Albert Beveridge and

Orville Platt. He offers the reader several dozen reprints of images and caricatures from contemporary periodicals. These figures bring the metaphors to life. While Pérez should be applauded for bringing his argument on the foundation of metaphors in creating American hegemony full-circle, it is at times a bit facile. His suggestion that similar metaphors helped influence popular opinion for George W. Bush's war on terror and the U.S. occupation of Iraq is both unconvincing and unfounded. It suggests Pérez does not always distinguish metaphorical presentations from propaganda. In addition, while Pérez suggests that the motives that defined the American imagination and those belonging to the "opinion makers and power brokers" are commonly at odds, he often blurs these lines and seems to imply that they are one and the same. In this sense, the reader is occasionally abandoned and left to wonder how this ministry of metaphor-constructors crafted its politics in what can easily be misinterpreted as a mass conspiracy. It is also unfortunate that Pérez glosses over American opinion of the island during Cuba's seriously understudied 10 Years' War (1868-78). Despite these quibbles, Pérez's work is a welcomed addition to the growing historiography on U.S.-Cuba relations. It also stands out as a stellar contribution to American imperialist studies. His reinterpretation of popular—and often overused—sources reveals a hidden history of the era; one that past scholars have taken for granted without proper exploration. With this work, Pérez duly notes the importance of metaphorical language and imagery in forging political and social power.

Julio Capó

Florida International University

Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook, *The Plague Files: Crisis Management in Sixteenth-Century Seville*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8071-3404-07.

*The Plague Files: Crisis Management in Sixteenth-Century Seville* is the result of the fortuitous discovery of a special volume of bound papers that dealt with a suspected outbreak of the bubonic plague in sixteenth-century Seville. Alexandra Parma Cook, independent scholar, and Noble David Cook, professor of history at Florida International University, found the collection of documents in Seville's Municipal Archive in 1990, while they were researching the social and economic history of Triana, the maritime district of Seville. Although the finding "fired up" the Cook's imaginations it did not divert them from their original project on Triana, or from other engagements (ix). As a result *The Plague Files* has been published after almost two decades.

The Cook's scholarship centers on the study of Spanish America and the Atlantic World. Their familiarity with the archives in Spain, in Peru, in the United Kingdom, and in the United States is evident in their rich bibliography, founded on accurate research and on an expert use of archival data. In addition, they are not new to research on epidemics and disease.<sup>1</sup> The Cook's effectively use the trove of municipal council records, letters, notes from physicians, barbers, and apothecaries, royal provisions, petitions, and bills to present the voices, daily routines, and interactions of everyday people dealing with crisis in early Modern Seville's complex social texture.

As if gradually setting a lens to the correct focal point, the two authors begin by describing Seville: the crest of *Castilleja de la Cuesta*, the *Guadalquivir* River Basin, the outline of the city's buildings, the plain, the vineyards and the gardens. They then reduce the depth of field: the city's filthy streets, the garbage, the thick smoke of the furnaces, the vessels that clutter the *Guadalquivir* River; and the Castilians, Basques, Galicians, Catalans, Italians, Greeks, French, Germans, English, and Portuguese traders and merchants pullulating the picture. Finally, they converge on the focal point: Don Fernando de Torres y Portugal, the Count of Villar and Seville royal governor from 1579 to 1582.

From the book's introduction to its conclusion, the Count of Villar's voice in the narrative sounds loud. Detailed accounts of municipal council records, and his letters to and from King Philip II, re-create his thoughts and deeds. A thorough treatment of documents about him and his endeavors scattered in three different archives (the *Archivo General de Indias*, the *Biblioteca Nacional* in Madrid, and the British Library in London), demonstrate how this nobleman was a capable administrator who directed public policy in many situations of emergencies.

Indeed, Seville went through misfortune in the period 1579-1582, covered by *The Plague Files*. The book opens with the disastrous explosion of a gunpowder factory in Triana, also recounted by the contemporary historian Alonso de Morgado, and continues with the 1580 Portuguese campaign that led to Philip II's coronation as king of Portugal. When the plague arrives in 1579, after a locusts' invasion, and few months before a threatened rising of Moriscos, the petitions, the testimonies, and the memoirs of the people living in Seville and in the neighboring villages hit by the epidemic resound like laments. Doctors,

---

1. See David Cook, *Secret Judgments of God" Old World Disease in Colonial-Spanish America*, with W. George Lovell. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992; David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

healers, and pharmacists talk about poverty, diseases and remedies in their notes and medical treatises, and we share their apprehension and repulsion for the bodies “covered with blackish spots” (224). Besides setting the tone for the chapter content, Parma Cook’s and Cook’s choice of opening each of the thirty-four chapters with a quote by one of the protagonists of this micro-history well serves their purpose of establishing an exchange with readers.

The Cooks also include Francisco Pacheco’s portraits of “ilustres varones” – famous people - in Seville in 1599, in the central pages of the book. The pictures, frozen in compunction, along with maps and details from Hoefnagle’s plates, or from A. Sanchez Coello’s work on Seville, also contribute to the reconstruction of sixteenth-century Seville. The authors explain that Seville’s role in the sixteenth century transatlantic trade remained unchallenged until the mid-seventeenth century, when Cadiz replaced Seville as the principal port for the Indies trade. Seville, and its trades, constitutes an important chapter in Atlantic history; in fact, the historiography on this city is rich. *The Plague Files*’s authors use these secondary sources to further detail and support their account and interpretation. We see this, for example, in chapter twelve, which deals with the case of Juan Alonso Negrón, a negligent worker who was absolved by charges and fines because “it would seem that the right connections at city hall protected negligence even at a critical time” (98). The reference for this statement is to Pike’s *Enterprise and Adventure*, which provides the necessary background information to understand Negrón’s status and his prominent connections in society.

Parma Cook’s and Cook’s goal is to contribute to the existing historical field, which cannot be identified just by one label. *The Plague Files* is medical history, social history, anthropological history, ethno history, and micro history. Its value rests on its ability to guide readers to look at the events and the lives of the people in Seville, in a specific time frame, through all these perspectives. This, and the language and the tone of the prose will allow an audience of students and scholars alike to understand more about the lives of ordinary people and on the decisions that city officials had to make for the good of the community in early modern Seville.