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Introduction

Annually, *Historical Perspectives* publishes papers of exceptional scholarship by the history students of Santa Clara University. Entries were submitted to the Phi Alpha Theta Editorial Board and were reviewed, selected, and edited for publication. Unlike previous editions of the journal, this year's *Historical Perspectives* does not focus on a specific theme. Instead, this publication includes research on a variety of topics: British Individualism in the 1790s, the discrimination of Filipino immigrants in the 1920s, radical environmentalist movements, the Bok Peace Prize, Nixon's Opening to China, and the San Francisco White Night Riots of 1979. The articles highlight the quality of research, writing, and analytical skills developed in the historical writing process of these undergraduates. The excellence of their work serves not only as a testament to the students' hard work, but also to the Santa Clara University History Department faculty who encouraged and supported their endeavors.

Lambda Upsilon Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta has published this volume through the generosity of Mrs. Maria Damon whose gift to the History Department in memory of her late husband Duane enabled this year's journal to be published. The editors would like to thank all the students who submitted their research for consideration. We would also like to thank Judy Gillette for her valuable work in the production and design of this journal.

Brian Hurd
Emily Elrod

Dedication

Professor Dorothea French

The 2004 edition of *Historical Perspectives* is dedicated to Dorothea R. French, a friend, colleague, and professor at Santa Clara since 1986, who will be retiring at the end of this year. Dorothea brought to our department the enthusiasm and pedagogical skills she had developed in the earlier stages of her career teaching high school and junior college. She has been able to blend rigorous scholarship in late Classical and Medieval history with a sensitivity to the specific learning needs of students. This combination has not only made her a fine classroom teacher, but also led her to be the founding director of the History Department's "Subject Matter Preparation Program for Social Studies," a state approved program designed to prepare undergraduates for a secondary school teaching careers. Although retired, she will not be absent from the department since she has volunteered to organize our new history intern program. The department looks forward to many more years of fruitful, if more leisurely, collaboration.

Eleanor Roosevelt and The Bok Peace Prize

Elaine M. Anderson

On July 2, 1923, in headlines three columns wide at the top of the front page, *The New York Times* announced “\$100,000 Prize Offered By Edward W. Bok For a ‘Practicable’ Plan to Enable Us to Co-operate in Keeping World Peace”¹ The announcement created an immediate sensation across the country. Historian Charles DeBenedetti notes that these few words were the beginning of the “most comprehensive single expression of popular thinking on questions of war and peace in American history.”² For a generation of Americans who, only a few years earlier fought the war to end all wars, the enduring question of a lasting peace was paramount.³ Five years after the end of the Great War, the American government was still arguing the pros and cons of membership in the League of Nations and the World Court. To encourage American citizens to become involved in the national debate, Edward W. Bok, the former editor of the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, tendered, what *The Times* called, “the most princely sum ever offered for a non-commercial idea.”⁴ In an era when contests of all kinds were a national obsession, DeBenedetti observes that Bok’s “beneficence electrified the country.”⁵ The response of the American public was immediate. In short order, according to Bok

¹“\$100,000 Prize Offered by Edward W. Bok for a ‘Practicable’ Plan to Enable Us to Co-operate in Keeping World Peace,” *The New York Times*, 2 July 1923.

²Charles DeBenedetti, “American Peace Award of 1924,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 98 (1974): 224.

³Gary Gerstle, “The Protean Character of American Liberalism,” *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994): 1052.

⁴*The New York Times*, 2 July 1923.

⁵DeBenedetti, 224.

biographer, Salme Harju Steinberg, the offices of the Bok Peace Prize received thousands of entries tendered “by a wide variety of people, from scoffing intellectuals to day laborers.”⁶ Ultimately, the Bok Peace Prize created controversy and led to Senate hearings, but in the beginning, hopes were high.⁷

Eleanor Roosevelt’s hopes were high, as well. Although her husband, Franklin, was the politician in the family, by 1923, ER was an emerging figure in New York political circles in her own right. She became an active member of the League of Women Voters, the Women’s Trade Union League and the Democratic State Committee, holding numerous positions within these political organizations. Many of the women with whom she worked were also active in the peace movement that consumed the United States after the end of the Great War. After seeing an entire generation of young men die on the battlefields of France, these women were determined it should never happen again. Lois Scharf, Eleanor Roosevelt biographer, notes that ER had “embraced the peace movement of the 1920s,” particularly, “those women’s organizations like the National Conference on the Cause and Cure of War and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.”⁸ Women’s groups such as these were pacifist in their nature and internationalist in their scope.⁹ Like many of her contemporaries, Eleanor Roosevelt was committed to the cause of world peace. Witnessing first hand the ravages of the Great War, only confirmed her belief in the need for peaceful solutions for the world’s

⁶Salme Harju Steinberg, *Reformer in The Marketplace: Edward W. Bok and The Ladies’ Home Journal* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 141.

⁷DeBenedetti, 224.

⁸Lois Scharf, *Eleanor Roosevelt: First Lady of American Liberalism* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 117-118.

⁹Scharf, 118.

problems.¹⁰ It was ER's conviction that individuals, working together, were the true source of world peace.¹¹ The Bok Peace Prize competition would bring together, for the first time, Eleanor Roosevelt and thousands of Americans from all walks of life in a dialog on world peace.

Roosevelt scholars agree on the importance of the Bok Peace Prize and the work ER performed for the Policy Committee. However, there would be a cost. The controversies that surrounded the Prize were among the first challenges in her public life. For the first time, Eleanor Roosevelt would be exposed to the "kind of public criticism that would remain a feature of her life," notes ER biographer, Blanche Wiesen Cook.¹²

The Bok Peace Prize was the brainchild of retired publisher, and former editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, Edward W. Bok.¹³ The son of Dutch immigrants, Bok was a self-made man. He left school at age thirteen to help support his family and never attended school again.¹⁴ He became a journalist and, ultimately, an editor for the Curtis Publishing Company. After watching amazing changes taking place in Europe after the war, Bok began to realize that Americans were struggling to come to grips with a radically different world and America's place in that world. *The New York Times* reported that Bok believed a "fundamentally changing Europe [meant] a changing America and that the peace of the

¹⁰Eleanor Roosevelt, "Because the War Idea is Obsolete," *What I Hope to Leave Behind: The Essential Essays of Eleanor Roosevelt*, ed. Allida M. Black (New York: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995), 495.

¹¹Joseph P. Lash, *Franklin and Eleanor: The Story of their Relationship, based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co.), 285.

¹²Blanche Wiesen Cook, "'Turn toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs,'" *Without Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984), 112.

¹³*The National Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, *Bok, Edward William*, ed. Henry Suzzallo (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, Corp. 1937), 174.

¹⁴Steinberg, 36.

world [was] our problem."¹⁵ Furthermore, Bok, himself, commented that a note of dissatisfaction with political affairs, both national and international, had crept into his correspondence. In the preface of the book, *Ways to Peace*, Bok wrote that by 1921, he came to realize that "although it was three years since the ending of the war, practically nothing had been done by the United States Government to avoid another war," and that his correspondents were concerned there were no plans to, "preserve the peace of the world."¹⁶ In 1923, looking for a way to give the American people a public forum for their concerns, Edward Bok established the Bok Peace Prize contest.

At the invitation of Bok, Esther Everett Lape, agreed to administer the Peace Prize competition. Lape, an activist for a variety of political causes, impressed Bok with a number of articles she had written for the *Ladies' Home Journal* regarding immigration, women's rights and world peace.¹⁷ With Bok's permission, Lape asked Eleanor Roosevelt to serve on the Policy Committee. Lape and ER had formed a close personal friendship while working together in the League of Women Voters.¹⁸ When her friend asked her to be a member of the Bok Peace Prize Policy Committee, Roosevelt readily agreed. She would be able to work with trusted colleagues toward a common goal that held real significance for all humanity. In addition, to Eleanor Roosevelt, Lape asked another of their colleagues from the League, Narcissa Vanderlip to join the prize committee. According to Joseph Lash, Vanderlip, a Republican, was invited to join the group to help

¹⁵*The New York Times*, 2 July 1923.

¹⁶Esther Everett Lape, ed., *Ways to Peace: Twenty Plans Selected from the Most Representative of Those Submitted to the American Peace Award* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), vii-viii.

¹⁷Maurine H. Beasley, Holly C. Schulman and Henry R. Beasley, ed., *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2001), 301-302.

¹⁸Cook, *Without Precedent*, 111.

“establish the nonpartisan character of the competition.”¹⁹ Even though the majority of the twelve-member committee was men, it was this small coterie of women who ran the day-to-day operation of the Policy Committee. Bok was pleased with the selection and distribution of power among committee members. DeBenedetti notes, the make up of the Policy Committee “wholly coincided with [Bok’s] belief that ‘peace is primarily a woman’s problem: she takes it as her own more than does a man.’”²⁰ For Eleanor Roosevelt, this statement rang true.

In 1923, the horrors of the Great War were still painfully fresh in the hearts and minds of the American public. Like many women, Eleanor Roosevelt had done her share for war relief. She worked several shifts a week in the Red Cross Canteen among other endeavors. Historians, Meirion and Susie Harries describe St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. where Eleanor Roosevelt made regular visits to the ward that housed shell-shock victims: “To be allowed to talk to the men, she had to be locked into the ward,” once inside, she saw “battle-shocked sailors, ‘some chained to their beds, others unable to stop shouting of the horrors they had seen.’”²¹ It was an experience she never forgot.

ER also visited war-torn Europe with her husband in 1919. In France, she was able to see first-hand the total destruction war had brought to the land and the people. Eleanor Roosevelt came away from these experiences with an overwhelming desire to find a way to prevent another devastating war. To this end, ER actively supported the League of Nations and the United States participation in the World Court in the hope that these entities could help secure a lasting world peace.²² She joined several women’s peace organizations and wrote numerous articles on peace-related issues.

¹⁹Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 283.

²⁰DeBenedetti, 226.

²¹Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *The Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918* (New York: Random House, 1997), 453.

²²Beasley, Schulman and Beasley, 396.

Lape’s invitation to join the Bok Peace Prize Policy Committee was extended to Eleanor Roosevelt at just the right time.

The Policy Committee had several tasks in addition to the day-to-day management of the competition. The committee read and vetted all submissions, selected the Jury of Award and prepared the terms and conditions of the contest. The deadline for submission of peace plans was to be November 15, 1923. Any American citizen could submit a plan, which was not to be in excess of five thousand words along with a summary of five hundred words.²³ Eleanor Roosevelt was given the job of promoting the American Peace Award, as the contest was now known, in *The Ladies’ Home Journal*. In the October 1923 issue of the *Journal*, ER wrote about the desire of Americans for world peace. She acknowledged that most citizens said the same thing, “I am not sure to what degree I want American cooperation with the rest of the world, but I am very sure that I want something more than we now have.”²⁴ ER went on to say that the \$100,000 prize was not intended to buy a peace plan. “All the award can do is to open a new avenue through which plans can be offered for public consideration,” she noted.²⁵ The prize money for the winning plan was to be awarded in two payments. The first payment of \$50,000 would be made when the winning plan was chosen. The second payment would be made when the plan was approved by either the Senate or by popular referendum of the American people.²⁶

Even before Roosevelt’s article appeared in the *Journal*, plans began to pour into the Peace Prize headquarters in New York City. The competition was officially announced on July 2, 1923. By July 8, *The New York Times* quoted a statement from the Policy Committee noting that already, “several hundred plans” had been

²³*The New York Times*, 23 July 1923.

²⁴Eleanor Roosevelt, “The American Peace Award,” *The Ladies’ Home Journal*, October, 1923, 54.

²⁵Roosevelt, *The Ladies’ Home Journal*, 54.

²⁶DeBenedetti, 230.

submitted “prematurely” to the Award offices.²⁷ During the time allotted for the submission of plans, from September 1 through November 15, 1923, the Committee received 22,165 entries, which DeBenedetti called the “fullest expression ever made of the country’s popular attitude toward matters of war and peace.”²⁸ The national dialogue on the issue of peace that Edward Bok hoped to start among American citizens had begun.

The plans were as varied as the people who wrote them. Housewives and shopkeepers submitted their ideas for consideration. Diplomat Christian Herter submitted a plan, as did Gutzon Borglum, the creator of the presidential carvings at Mt. Rushmore. Even Franklin Delano Roosevelt drafted a peace plan. According to Eleanor Roosevelt biographer Blanche Wiesen Cook, FDR’s plan was a “variation of the current League, which he called a Society of Nations (heralding the United Nations).”²⁹ Most plans were thoughtful, some were outlandish, but all had the same theme – lasting world peace.

On September 17, 1923, as Lape and Roosevelt poured over thousands of entries, *The New York Times* announced the Jury of Award for the Bok Peace Prize. Selected for their varied backgrounds, the seven members of the panel understood the complex issues of international relations.³⁰ Elihu Root, a widely respected elder statesman, agreed to chair the Jury of Award. Root, a Republican, had served Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft and Harding. In 1912 he had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his many contributions toward world peace. However, in spite of the care taken to select a non-partisan panel, the general perception was that the judges favored the League of Nations and the World Court. It was this perception of a pre-determined outcome that set

²⁷*The New York Times*, 8 July 1923.

²⁸DeBenedetti, 230

²⁹Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt, Volume 1, 1884-1933* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 343.

³⁰*The New York Times*, 17 September 1923.

nationalistic groups on edge and laid the groundwork for the controversy that would engulf the Bok Peace Prize.³¹

On January 7, 1924, the winner of the Bok Peace Prize competition was announced in *The New York Times*. Again, the headlines were three columns wide and proclaimed, “\$50,000 Bok Peace Plan Announced; Provides For Entry Into World Court, Conditional Help to League of Nations.”³² The full text of the winning plan was also included in the article. The author of the winning plan was Charles Levermore, the retired president of Adelphi College, Garden City, New York. However, in accordance with the conditions of the competition, the Policy Committee and Jury withheld the name of the author of peace plan #1469 until the completion of the nation-wide referendum in February 1924.³³

Plans were immediately set into motion regarding the promised national referendum on the winning plan. Months earlier, the Policy Committee had formed a Co-operating Council composed of a wide variety of organizations to assist the Policy Committee in its work. Ninety-seven national organizations had stepped forward offering their services in advertising the Bok Peace Prize to their constituents and assisting in the referendum.³⁴ This was an amazing offer. The groups that made up the Council were diverse in their make-up. There were business and labor organizations, religious groups, women’s clubs, community service organizations and fraternal orders. According to an article in *The New York Times*, these groups had an estimated membership of between forty and fifty million.³⁵ By December 1923, the Committee announced in *The New York Times*, that “over 4,000 daily and weekly newspa-

³¹DeBenedetti, 229.

³²*The New York Times*, 7 January 1924.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴DeBenedetti, 228.

³⁵*The New York Times*, 20 October 1923.

pers” had agreed to carry the official ballot along with a “digest” of the winning plan.³⁶

The referendum had an extraordinary scope. Every community across the country, no matter the size, received a share of the ballots. State governors and town mayors joined colleges and universities in support of the peace plan referendum. Short of a full-scale national election, nothing like this national referendum for peace had been done before.³⁷

The beginning of the referendum coincided with an upswing in criticism of the winning plan and the Bok Peace Prize competition itself. From the start, there were concerns about the impartiality of the jurors. As individuals, they were above reproach, however, some critics duly noted their political opinions. According to DeBenedetti, suffragist and avowed pro-League advocate, Carrie Chapman Catt, commented favorably on the jury members because they were, “all, or nearly all, in favor of the League of Nations.”³⁸ However, ugly and potentially more dangerous accusations were now being made in higher political circles. Because the selected plan encouraged the United States to join the World Court and cooperate in League matters, the political debate over United States entry into the League of Nations flared up with renewed intensity. Blanche Cook comments that in regard to the chosen plan, “Senate isolationists were outraged and called for an investigation into the un-American and potentially treasonous nature of the Bok Award.”³⁹ As public skepticism of the competition grew, the motives of Bok, Lape, the Policy Committee and the Jury of Award became suspect.

On January 17, 1923, just one week after announcing the winning peace plan, an article in *The New York Times* noted that Missouri Senator James Reed had directed the Senate Special

³⁶*The New York Times*, 9 December 1923.

³⁷DeBenedetti, 240.

³⁸DeBenedetti, 229.

³⁹Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt, Volume 1*, 344.

Committee on Propaganda to investigate the Bok Peace Prize competition. The Policy Committee was charged with trying to influence both foreign and domestic policies of the United States through the use of propaganda, advertising, money or publicity.⁴⁰ Bok was called before the Committee on January 21, 1924. “The ill-educated immigrant, more than held his own before Moses and Reed,” who were, according to DeBenedetti, “two of the Senate’s most relentless interrogators.”⁴¹ Bok deflected questions regarding funds spent on promoting the Prize, managed to get Reed to refuse to define “propaganda,” and even offered another \$100,000 to find a better plan among those submitted.⁴² After the Senators had finished with Bok, the Committee called Esther Lape to testify.

Accompanied by her friend and colleague, Eleanor Roosevelt, Lape appeared before the Senate Committee on January 23, 1924. The primary charge against Lape was that the Bok Peace Prize competition had been rigged. The Senate Committee tried to prove the Policy Committee and the Jury had been packed with known advocates of the League of Nations. *The New York Times* reported that Reed asked Lape if she knew that Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt was a supporter of the League. Lape replied that “from her character, training and education I should say she favored some kind of a League.”⁴³

It was at this point in the investigation that the unexpected, perhaps the unthinkable, happened. Reed demanded to know how the Policy Committee was chosen. Lape replied that ER had been chosen first, then, Vanderlip, with the remaining Committee members, as well as the Jury selected by the three women. Senator Reed was completely taken aback. According to Joseph Lash, Reed “was not alone in his outrage at such female presumption.”⁴⁴

⁴⁰*New York Times*, 18 January 1924.

⁴¹DeBenedetti, 243.

⁴²DeBenedetti, 243-244.

⁴³*The New York Times*, 24 January 1924.

⁴⁴Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 284.

The Bok Peace Prize had been organized, managed and operated by women. The significance of this was not lost on critics of the Prize. Blanche Wiesen Cook comments that some of the criticism ER, Lape and Vanderlip endured was the same criticism that women always encountered when crossing the line into the masculine sphere.⁴⁵

The Senate hearings into the Bok Peace Prize dampened public enthusiasm for the project. In an effort to bolster interest in the referendum, the Policy Committee announced the name of the winning peace plan author.⁴⁶ In addition to being the former president of Adelphi College, Charles H. Levermore was a long-time pacifist. Levermore's background did nothing to inspire confidence in the competition or the referendum. Due to close on March 15, the referendum limped along hampered by public skepticism and political criticism. The return of ballots was a disappointment. In addition to the nine million ballots distributed directly to the public, ballots were also published in a wide variety of periodicals having a combined readership of over thirty million. Of the 610,558 ballots returned, 87 percent were cast in favor of the Levermore plan.⁴⁷

In spite of the controversy and disappointing referendum result, Edward Bok and Eleanor Roosevelt had each been a part of something of great importance. Each one gained something of value by their participation in the Bok Peace Prize. Edward Bok wanted to open a dialogue among his fellow Americans regarding world peace. In 1923, the United States was still trying to come to grips with its newfound position in world affairs. Even though the Great War had thrust the United States onto the world stage, most Americans did not perceive America as a world power. The outpouring of peace plans renewed and stimulated the national

⁴⁵Cook, *Without Precedent*, 112.

⁴⁶DeBenedetti, 244.

⁴⁷Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media: A Public Quest for Self-Fulfillment* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 13.

debate on the issues of peace and the United States' place in international relations. According to DeBenedetti, in spite of everything, Bok's "faith in the pacific world-mindedness of the American people," was unshaken.⁴⁸ Bok accomplished what he set out to do. Never before had Americans, from all walks of life, taken the time to consider what a real and lasting peace meant or to consider the world beyond our borders.

The dialogue that began in July 1923 was still going strong in February 1924. Letters to the Editor, commentaries and op-ed pieces filled newspapers and popular journals for months. Everyone had an opinion on the benefit of the Bok Peace Prize. Some people, like Anna Liebert, who wrote a letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, suggested that America did not need a new peace plan because the League of Nations was already in place and perhaps we should give the League a try.⁴⁹ Others saw the Bok Peace Prize as nothing more than a ploy to drag the United States into the League of Nations. Anti-League Progressive, Oswald Garrison Villard called the Peace Prize the "Great Bok Humbug." Villard went on to say that the competition was, "a deliberate attempt" to get Americans to vote, "in favor of the League without knowing it."⁵⁰ For Bok, a person's political stance was less important than the discussion that was taking place among his fellow citizens. As Edward Bok wrote in regard to the Peace Prize, "the American people have had time to think, and they have thought, and the national voice is being heard."⁵¹

The Bok Peace Prize also helped Eleanor Roosevelt to find her place in the peace process. During the 1920s, Roosevelt embraced the quest for world peace. During this period, she continually worked toward America's entry into the League of Nations and

⁴⁸DeBenedetti, 247.

⁴⁹*The New York Times*, 5 July 1923.

⁵⁰DeBenedetti, 241.

⁵¹Lape, xv.

World Court.⁵² For ER the experience with the Bok Peace Prize competition was an education in the issues and politics of international affairs.⁵³ Even after the Bok competition officially ended and her work for the Committee was over, ER continued to work for peace. Historian Allida Black observes that, “ER’s ability to see the complex relationships between war and peace,” would often put her, “in an uncomfortable position politically and personally.”⁵⁴ Roosevelt’s work for the Bok Peace Prize was her “first specifically ‘un-American’ activity,” and, “resulted in the first document entered into her voluminous FBI file,” according to Blanche Wiesen Cook.⁵⁵

Eleanor Roosevelt, whatever the criticism, would never back away from her work for international peace. Her work for the Bok Peace Prize was one of her earliest national endeavors, yet ER is remarkably silent about her work for the Policy Committee. In her 1949 autobiography, *This I Remember*, she mentions the Bok Peace Prize almost in passing. She briefly notes that, “at Mr. Bok’s request, I helped her [Esther Lape] to organize the committee and this work.”⁵⁶ Her modesty is deceiving; during the 1920s, ER was active in a number of women’s peace organizations. She wrote numerous articles and columns regarding peace throughout her long public career. As the decade of the Twenties wore on, Eleanor Roosevelt became increasingly focused on international peace movements. According to Cook, ER would become one of the “most prominent antiwar women in the United States.”⁵⁷

⁵²Allida M. Black, *Castling Her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 137.

⁵³Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 284.

⁵⁴Black, 139.

⁵⁵Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt, Volume 1*, 345.

⁵⁶Eleanor Roosevelt, *This I Remember* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 23-24.

⁵⁷Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt, Volume 1*, 364.

According to Joseph Lash, Eleanor Roosevelt, “had her own vision of a better world and was attracted to the people who shared that vision.”⁵⁸ Her work for the Bok Peace Prize was a part of that vision for a better world. She would work tirelessly for the cause of international peace for the rest of her life, always keeping in mind the role of the individual’s responsibility in the peace process. In 1938, as the world moved toward a second world war, she wrote, “if peace is going to come about in the world, the way to start is by getting a better understanding between individuals.” She would go on to say, “from this germ a better understanding between groups of people will grow.”⁵⁹ ER would spend the rest of her life working toward peaceful solutions to the world’s troubles. She would be named a delegate to the first United Nations General Assembly in 1946 and go on to be the “moving spirit” behind the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.⁶⁰ These are among the crowning achievements in Eleanor Roosevelt’s lifelong commitment to world peace.

⁵⁸Joseph P. Lash, *Love, Eleanor: Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1982), 104.

⁵⁹Eleanor Roosevelt, “This Troubled World,” *What I Hope to Leave Behind*, 482.

⁶⁰Beasley, 165-167.

Images from the Past: Stereotyping Filipino Immigrants in California

Melissa G. Flores

“Stupid.” “Morally Inferior.” “Savages”; these were words that Americans used to describe Filipino immigrants who came to the United States in the 1920s and 30s.¹ In California, where most of these men settled, the public was outraged to see them gallivanting with young white women in taxi-dance halls that regularly employed women who were paid by patrons to dance with them. Critics also condemned the immigrants for their organization of strikes in the fields of Watsonville and Salinas during the 1930s. These actions reinforced the idea that these aliens were rebellious and innately difficult. What prompted this harsh judgment? Evidence suggests that although this disapproval was provoked by contemporary events, the roots of this discrimination can be traced to the not-too-distant past.

Scholars have extensively researched several aspects of Philippine-American relations at the beginning of the century, from the media’s portrayal of Filipinos during the “Philippine Insurrection” (a euphemism for the Philippine-American War during the time of the war that insinuated that the Filipinos were the transgressors and that it was their actions that prompted American response) to the treatment of Filipino men in the 1920s

¹*The Washington Star*, quoted in Christopher A. Vaughn, “The ‘Discovery’ of the Philippines by the U.S. Press, 1898–1902,” *The Historian* 57 (1995): 310; Edwin B. Almirol, “Exclusion and Acceptance of Filipinos in America,” *Asian Profile* 13 (October 1985): 401; Emory S. Bogardus, “American Attitudes Towards Filipinos,” *Sociology and Social Research* 14 (September–October 1929): 64.

and 30s.² However, research on the link between the earlier and later stereotyping has yet to be done. Close inspection of the images of Filipinos presented by the press and government during their struggle for independence and examination of stereotypes during their first large wave of immigration to California during the 1920s and 30s suggests that there is an important correlation. In fact, the categorizing of the late 1890s and early 1900s laid the foundation for the distortions that came later. Indeed, the later stereotypes closely mirrored the early descriptions of Filipinos in government records, newspapers, and periodicals. Tracing back the origins of this discrimination is essential to understanding why these men were subjected to poor conditions and maltreatment. The negative perceptions and discriminatory treatment of Filipino immigrant men in California during the 1920s and 30s were greatly influenced by the negative images and information supplied by the government and media to the American public during the Philippine-American War from 1898–1902.

This association between the Philippines and the United States began after the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Suffering defeat at the hands of the Americans, the Spanish surrendered the Philippines to the United States for twenty-five million dollars.³ Although only Manila and its surrounding area were controlled, the American government chose to exert control over all of the islands. However, the native Filipinos resisted this decision and staged a revolt that started in 1898 and lasted until their pacification by American forces in 1902.

During that period, in America, the government and public were involved in a heated debate over whether the United States should annex the Philippines as a colony. Reports from govern-

²Richard E. Welch, Jr., “‘The Philippine Insurrection’ and the American Press,” *The Historian* 36 (1973): 34.

³Antonio J.A. Pido, *The Pilipinos in America: Macro/Micro Dimensions of Immigration and Integration* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1986), 48.

ment officials and journalists who had been to the islands conveyed images of savages in need of being Christianized, educated, sanitized, and above all, civilized. To those interested in the economic opportunities of the islands, the Philippine Islands were viewed as a rest stop and fueling station for United States warships in the Pacific and as a stepping-stone to profitable markets in East Asia. Thus, the United States decided that the Philippines would become a worthwhile territory of the United States and prepared it for its eventual independence.⁴ As wards of the government, Filipino immigrants would enjoy privileges other immigrant groups did not have, yet would also face several challenges because of their status.

Regarded as nationals rather than aliens, Filipino émigrés were protected by the United States government from deportation if they ever caused problems, a luxury other immigrant groups did not have.⁵ Yet this would not be necessary for the next two decades because from 1902 to 1920 Filipino immigrants were not a cause for concern. During this period, the United States government sponsored a program that brought young men and women to the country in order to study at American institutions, several of which were in California.⁶ These *pensionados* were generally unnoticed due to their resemblance to the numerous Latinos who inhabited the state and the fact that they came in small, manageable groups.

However, the 1920s and 30s saw a large increase in Filipino immigration. Many men came to the United States through recruitment by the government. Anti-Japanese immigration laws had left a void in the farm labor market and the United States government looked to the Filipinos, “our little brown brothers,” as many officials called them, for help. Supported by their families

⁴Pido, *The Pilipinos in America*, 48.

⁵Pido, *The Pilipinos in America*, 65.

⁶Lorraine Jacobs Crouchett, *Filipinos in California: From the Days of the Galleons to the Present* (El Cerrito, California: Downey Place Publishing House, Inc., 1982), 31.

in the Philippines, thousands of men jumped at the chance to come to America. Their goal was to find a good job using the skills they had attained through years of Americanization at home. Not too long after their arrival, though, they were confronted with the same prejudice that previous Asian immigrants, the Japanese and Chinese, had faced. In some cases, it was worse. Legislation, such as denying the right to marry outside one’s “race,” and acts of vigilantism were directed specifically at Filipinos.⁷ These men had come to America in hopes of finding success, but instead they found inequality and hatred.

Discrimination in the 1920s and 30s was fueled by the constant negative portrayal of Filipinos in the past. At the time of the Philippine-American war, government documents, news articles, and political cartoons transmitted a variety of pejorative images of the people in the Philippines in order to garner support for the United States’s occupation of the islands. Natives were depicted in cartoons in newspapers and magazines as sullen, dark-skinned babies or toddlers. This portrayed them as helpless, mischievous children while the United States played the much-needed part of the adult shouldering the burden of caring for and disciplining them.⁸ In a *Chicago Record* cartoon from 1899, President William McKinley was shown spanking a Filipino child with a paddle labeled “benevolent assimilator.”⁹ As the headmaster in an 1898 *Harper’s Weekly* cartoon, Uncle Sam looked over a classroom full of dark skinned children. Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the insurgent Philippine forces during the war, sat in the corner wearing a dunce cap.¹⁰

⁷H. Brett Melendy, “Filipinos in the United States,” *Pacific Historical Review* 43 (1974): 540-541.

⁸Vaughn, “The ‘Discovery’ of the Philippines,” 314.

⁹*The Chicago Record*, 28 November 1899, in “Colored: Black n’ White,” private cartoon collection of Abe Ignacio, Jr., San Leandro, California (hereafter cited as Ignacio Collection).

¹⁰*Harper’s Weekly*, 27 August 1898, Ignacio Collection.

This adult-child portrayal revealed the hesitation of Americans to accept the call of what writer Rudyard Kipling termed “the white man’s burden.” One cartoon that adorned the cover of an issue of the conservative magazine *Judge* in 1898 depicts this attitude perfectly. Figure 1 shows the caricature in which Uncle Sam flashed a bewildered look as he held a crying, incredibly fussy, dark-skinned child in tribal clothing with a tag attached to his leg. On the tag it was written, “Philippines with compliments of Dewey.” In the caption, Uncle Sam said, “Now that I’ve got it, what am I going to do with it?”¹¹ To many Americans, the Philippines were seen simply as a burden. [see *Figure 1*]

During a period in which darker skin was a sign of unrefined laborers, the Filipinos were lumped into this group as portrayed by caricatures that exaggerated the darkness of their skin. They resembled blacks, Cubans, and Hawaiians, who were all subjects of discrimination and believed to be in need of civilizing by the government. In one cartoon, Aguinaldo was depicted as the mischievous Topsy from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. “I’s so awful wicked there cain’t nobody do nothin’ with me,” he declared. “I keeps Miss Feeley [Uncle Sam] a-swearin at me half de time, ‘cause I’s mighty wicked, I is.”¹² This cartoon alleged two characteristics of both blacks and Filipinos: impishness and ignorance.

The poor sanitation conditions of the Philippines also greatly concerned the American public. Americans envisioned the Philippines as a wretched, bug-infested wasteland, and inhabited by animal-like Filipinos who relished this way of living. Figure 2 depicts President McKinley standing in a river with a scrubbing brush while holding a Filipino child. “Oh, you dirty boy,” he reprimanded.¹³ [see *Figure 2*]

¹¹Grant Hamilton, *Judge*, 11 June 1898, Ignacio Collection.

¹²*Judge*, 11 February 1899, Ignacio Collection.

¹³*Judge*, 10 June 1899, Ignacio Collection.

Most of all, these cartoons and articles depicted the Filipinos as being in need of civilizing. This meant receiving an American education, taking part in American pastimes, becoming Christianized, and abandoning their savage tendencies. The ultimate goal of the United States was to bring civilization to the Philippines by forcing American ideals upon the people. The government emphasized the importance of education in the islands and educated Filipino children in the teachings of the American way. Children were taught to value individualism and admire heroes such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.¹⁴ According to the caption in one cartoon, the “American school-

¹⁴Pido, *The Pilipinos in America*, 49.



Figure 1

A confused Uncle Sam cradles a temperamental Filipino child.

Reprinted from Grant Hamilton, "Information Wanted." *Barewalls.com*, 11 June 1898. <[http://artwork.barewalls.com/product/artwork.exe ?ArtworkID=54168&thumbs=1](http://artwork.barewalls.com/product/artwork.exe?ArtworkID=54168&thumbs=1)> (3 December 2002).

house in the Philippines [would] destroy superstition, ignorance, vice, etc. and eventually end the war and bring civilization."¹⁵ Americans believed that participation in American activities would help refine them. One cartoon depicted a Filipino who had undergone the civilization process. It stated that his "old habit of running amuck [sic] will aid greatly on the football field."¹⁶

And although not all depictions of Filipinos were meant to be discriminatory, their descriptions still imprinted an image of savagery. Congressional articles often commented on the physical appearance of Filipinos, emphasizing the strong structure of their bodies. One such document includes a letter written by the Division of Insular Affairs of the War Department to be distributed to the House of Representatives, Senate, and rest of the Department that expressed Filipinos as "attractive in neither form nor feature, having strong jaws, thick lips, and flat noses... [but] they are fierce, dark, and strong, of rather fine appearance."¹⁷ The detailed descriptions suggested that officials treated the people like commodities. These images of Filipinos hearkened back to the views of Native Americans, who were also admired for their bodies and then forced to work their native land by the Spanish in the West in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even more barbaric than their physical appearance was the attitude of the Filipinos. According to one American legislator, Filipinos were angry beasts who were ungrateful to the "heroically philanthropic" efforts to civilize them. This was a widespread sentiment since several cartoons depicted them with looks of anger on their faces while the government continued to bestow the gift of civilization upon them. The Filipinos were "discontented people, at heart

¹⁵ *Judge*, 24 December 1900, Ignacio Collection.

¹⁶ *Boston Sunday Globe*, 5 March 1899, Ignacio Collection.

¹⁷ Congress, *Letter from the Secretary of War*, 56th Cong., 2nd sess., 1902, S. Doc. 218, Serial 4043.

disloyal and hostile,” as one Congressman stated.¹⁸ Americans recalled these images once Filipinos began arriving to the country.

The first group of Filipinos that arrived to America after the United States took possession of the islands were the *pensionados*, who began came to the country as early as 1903 Those in California faced little discrimination because they blended into the Latino population already living in the state. Furthermore, because they kept to themselves, spent most of their time studying, and were few in number, they were little noticed. In 1912, there were only 209 Filipino men and women in the entire *country* receiving degrees or vocational training.¹⁹

However, the arrival of thousands of Filipino men in the United States as agricultural workers alarmed many Americans. From 1920 to 1929, over 31,000 Philippine immigrants arrived in California through the two cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles.²⁰ Disconcerted by the legion of immigrants coming from the Philippines, many Americans reacted by mistreating them. These comments and complaints made against the men echoed some of the same objections first presented to Americans during the time of the Philippine-American War. This unfavorable first impression of Filipinos combined with the stewing racial hatred towards these new “Orientals” prompted a new wave of racism towards this group. Views of Filipinos were largely negative and expressed the fear and intimidation Americans felt towards this group. For example, a geography professor from Stanford University during the 1920s observed, “they arrive green and simply as babes in the woods They evolve . . . into big-time gamblers, knife-fighters, and first-rate, brown-skinned Apaches. They show great aptitude in becoming acquainted with institutions

¹⁸Congress, *Will the Philippines Pay?*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, S. Doc. 273, Serial 4239.

¹⁹Crouchett, *Filipinos in California*, 31.

²⁰Adam S. Esterovich, *Facts About Filipino Immigration Into California* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1930), 47.

of a disorderly character.”²¹ This view merged images created by the earlier media (babes emerging from the wilderness and violent, dark-skinned Native Americans) with activities Filipinos at the time were known to enjoy (gambling and patronizing “institutions of disorderly character” such as pool halls).

²¹Almirol, “Exclusion and Acceptance of Filipinos,” 399.

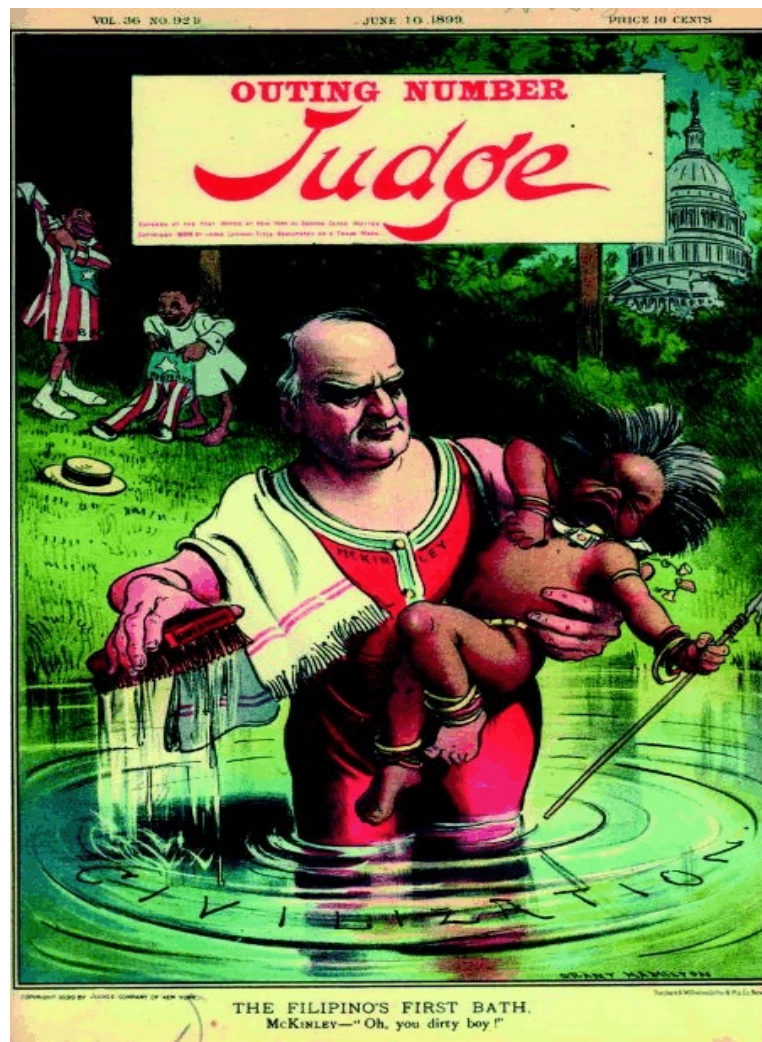


Figure 2

President McKinley washes a dirty Filipino baby in the foreground while clean Filipino children dress in American clothing.

Reprinted from "The Filipino's First Bath," *Black'n White Filipinos in American Popular Media: 1896-1907*, 10 June 1899, <<http://www.bwf.org/pusod/events/TMPrc8exscy5.htm>> (3 December 2002)

An example of the Filipinos's bawdiness was their attendance at taxi-dance halls, where ten cents entitled them to one dance with a white woman. As sociologist Edwin B. Almirol reported, the public was aghast to find out that these "little brown monkeys" (an obvious play on the phrase, "little brown brothers," that government officials used at the turn of the century) were socializing with racially pure women. Their actions were questioned since these men were "jungle folk" with obviously a "primitive moral code." These perceptions were influenced by the past images, which depicted Filipinos running around the jungles of the Philippines, unaware of what was right or wrong before the Americans came in and disciplined them. The thorough civilizing that they had endured before their arrival in the United States was clearly not enough to make them accepted. Thus the public was warned that an invasion of Filipinos, the "hordes of little brown men," had already begun.²² President Calvin Coolidge cautioned the American public to beware of the "unassimilated alien child [who] menaces our children, as the alien industrial worker, who has destruction rather than production in mind, menaces our industry."²³ Filipinos were stuck with the stereotype that they were these brown savages, preparing to attack their unsuspecting hosts.

Another image that appeared often during this period and was influenced by the views from the past was that of the "unassimilated alien." Almirol used this phrase several times when he wrote about Americans' views of Filipinos during the late 1920s. By referring to Filipinos as unassimilated aliens, people at the time believed that these immigrants were stubborn and problematic and refused to accept American ideals. This was the grown-up version of the surly Filipino child who rejected the

²²C.M. Goethe, "Filipino Immigration Viewed as a Peril," in Almirol, "Exclusion and Acceptance of Filipinos," 397.

²³Lewis Carlton and George Coburn, *In their Place: White America Defines her Minorities*, in Almirol, "Exclusion and Acceptance of Filipinos," 397.

generous gifts of education, Christianity, and most of all, civilization, bestowed upon the Philippine people by the United States.

Though many Americans saw Filipinos with suspicion, fear, and dislike, not all people felt this way. Some Americans had what *they considered* fairly favorable impressions of these immigrants. However, most individuals who held seemingly positive perceptions of Filipinos often saw them with condescension, and many of these views were influenced by previous reports made during the time of the Philippine-American War. They felt sympathy for their “brown brothers of the Pacific,” as one woman called them, when they heard about the plight of the people of the Philippines and their desire for independence. And citizens were surprisingly pleased with the behavior and physical appearance of the Filipinos they came across. They observed that the Filipinos were trustworthy and good workers. Americans were also impressed with the politeness and dapper appearance of Filipino men who worked in restaurants and hotels. One woman said that she “was drawn to them by their appearance, good looks, and manners. Their silence and self-control drew me to them.”²⁴ Apparently many Americans did not expect Filipinos to act in such a manner, testament to the fact that they thought of their “little brown brothers” as dark-skinned, pugnacious creatures, images that were thrust upon them earlier in the century.

Why did negative images leave such a lasting impression on the American public and affect their perceptions *twenty years* after they were first published? There are a few explanations for this. Many Americans knew very little about the Philippines prior to the Spanish-American War. Thus, they were first exposed to Filipinos by the United States government, which strove to portray American actions in the islands in a positive light, and by the press, the majority of which catered to the conservative views and framed the war in terms of “discipline and national honor.”²⁵ For several

²⁴Bogardus, “American Attitudes Towards Filipinos,” 60-61.

²⁵Vaughn, “The ‘Discovery’ of the Philippines,” 314.

decades, these descriptions would be the only ones supplied to the American public, so the only way they could understand these people were through these images. Until World War II, any other report from the Philippines simply confirmed the poor conditions of the islands and the people. For example, in a 1928 article for the popular magazine *Forum*, Katherine Mayo, an expert on Asia (and a resident of India for several years), commented on the “malignant cesspool” that was Manila and the natives’ hatred of “this new foreign devil called Sanitation.”²⁶

These unfavorable reports worked in conjunction with the sentiment of Americans who were unhappy with the influx of immigrants coming to America. Clinging to demeaning and racist images provided ammunition to their nativist mission to exclude Filipinos. Although Philippine immigrants were allowed by the government to come to America as wards of the state, the public ultimately saw them as “Orientals.” Thus, they were subjected to the same discriminating practices that the Chinese and Japanese immigrants had faced before the Filipinos arrived in the United States. This included the prohibition from owning land, voting, and becoming citizens.²⁷

The association with other Asians became dangerous for Filipinos because it stirred-up anti-Asian beliefs. Many white agricultural workers feared that they would lose their jobs to the new wave of immigrants from “the East.” This sentiment was especially shared by numbers of people in California, where a large number of men from the Philippines worked in the fields of the Central Valley. The build-up of resentment due to the organization of farm workers into labor unions and the fact that they socialized with white women in taxi-dance halls during their free time led to vigilantism and riots. One well-known riot broke out in 1930 in Watsonville. During a four-day attack, mobs numbering

²⁶Katherine Mayo, “Sanitation at the Sword’s Point,” *Forum*, February 1928, 222.

²⁷Almirol, “Exclusion and Acceptance of Filipinos,” 396.

up to seven hundred chased Filipinos down the streets and attacked and shot at them randomly, killing twenty-two-year old Fermin Tobera²⁸ The next few years were tumultuous for Philippine immigrants since they ran into trouble merely by participating in everyday activities. "In many ways it was a crime to be a Filipino in California," observed the famous Filipino-American writer Carlos Bulosan.²⁹ The actions of the government and press certainly did not make the situation any easier for these men. Originating from newspapers, magazines, and Congressional records, the idea that Filipinos were savages that deserved maltreatment permeated the minds of the white American public.

Obviously this is not the only case in United States history in which a group of people were discriminated against and faced maltreatment. However, despite several studies on many dimensions of Philippine-American relations, little has been done to dig deep into the origins of the initial reactions to Filipinos in America. After exploring the circumstances in which the United States entered the Philippines and sought to civilize its inhabitants and the reasons that ignited the violence against Filipinos in the 1930s, one can see that events from the earlier period had a tremendous impact on what happened during the later period. Newspapers and government documents promoted their actions in the islands as necessary because, as they successfully convinced Americans, these were a surly people in need of the guidance of the United States. Without any previous knowledge of the native Filipinos, these were the images that came to mind when citizens thought of the Filipinos. The first large wave of emigrants from the Philippines to the United States during the 1920s and 30s faced the brunt of the abuse and violence from a public that could not help but

²⁸Howard A. De Witt, "The Watsonville Anti-Filipino Riot of 1930: A Case Study of the Great Depression and Ethnic Conflict in California," *Historical Society of Southern California* 61 (1979): 297

²⁹Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1943), 121.

hearken back to the press and governments' images from the past when confronted by these foreigners. Although relations between not just recent immigrants but also those who arrived during the beginning of the twentieth century and Americans have drastically improved (though some may argue that complete acceptance has yet to be achieved), the study of the origins of discrimination against Filipinos should not be ignored in order to prevent such an occurrence to them or any other immigrant group in the United States from happening again.

The San Francisco “White Night” Riots of 1979

Bruce Martinez

The morning of November 27, 1978 was a quiet one in San Francisco. The quiet was soon shattered as a devastating story broke throughout the city. There had been a double murder in city hall, and both the mayor and a supervisor had been assassinated. The police soon announced the suspect was Dan White, a former supervisor, police officer and fireman. Mayor George Moscone and supervisor Harvey Milk, the first openly gay man elected to public office in the United States, were the victims.¹

White was soon apprehended, and the city entered a difficult trial period that in many ways tore the city in two. Milk and Moscone represented liberal San Francisco; Milk was the most prominent gay leader in the city, and Moscone had time and again sided with liberal causes.² White represented the conservative forces within the city, specifically the police department and members of the working class.³

White’s defense centered on psychological and moral argument and ultimately it was argued that he was of a diminished capacity at the time of the murders. In addition to this, White was portrayed as an honest decent man who was incapable of cold blooded first degree murder. This is best seen in Douglas Schmidt’s opening arguments: “Good people, fine people, with fine backgrounds, simply don’t kill people in cold blood.”⁴

¹Randy Shilts, *The Mayor of Castro Street, The Life and Times of Harvey Milk* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1982), 263-267.

²Richard DeLeon, *Left Coast City, Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 48-51.

³Mike Weiss, *Double Play, The San Francisco City Hall Killings* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1984), 91-101.

⁴Shilts, 310.

Schmidt’s combination of psychological and moral arguments led the jury to a verdict of double manslaughter instead of the much anticipated double first degree murder. White was sentenced to eight years in prison.⁵

The night the verdict was read there was a large scale riot within the gay community. By the late 1970s the gay population in San Francisco was estimated at close to 150,000. This community historically had been large in San Francisco because the city had become a dumping point for men rejected from the armed services for homosexuality in World War Two. A march on city hall turned violent with over one hundred injuries reported, twelve police cars burned, and nearly one million dollars in damage done to city hall and the largely gay Castro neighborhood.⁶

The perceived absurdity of the verdict triggered the riots, but there were several other factors that also lead to the disturbance. Conventional wisdom, which states that the largely peaceful gay community had a spontaneous evening of anger, misses the multiple reasons behind the riot. There were major political and social forces that came to a boiling point that evening. The writings on the murders, the trial, and on Milk and Moscone largely gloss over the complex reasons for the riots, seemingly ignoring the historical evidence that suggests a deeper reason for what happened.

The riots on the evening of May 21, 1979 occurred both as a reaction to the verdict in the Dan White double homicide case and also because the murder of mayor George Moscone changed the balance of power within the city’s police force. Earlier gay rights marches and vigils had been held without police intervention and violence. What made this night different were three things: Police Chief Charles Gain had lost control of his rank and file officers following Moscone’s death, there had been an upswing in violence

⁵Shilts, 325.

⁶Maitland Zane, “Battle’s Debris At Civic Center,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 February 1979, sec. A, final edition.

and harassment against the gay community in the time since the city hall murders, and Harvey Milk was not available to keep the peace within the gay community as he had during earlier marches.

One reason for the violence during the riot was the beleaguered San Francisco police department. There is ample evidence to suggest that some members of the police department were sympathetic to Dan White. After he was arrested on the day of the murder's, several police officers came up to him while he sat in custody and nodded their approval, some went as far as to pat him on the back.⁷ While there is no historical evidence to support the widespread rumor that the police and fire departments raised \$100,000 for White's defense, the mere proliferation of such a rumor suggests a certain support for White among law enforcement. This support was cemented when the eventual verdict was read over the police radio band and several officers began to sing "Danny Boy," a popular Irish song, in celebration of White only being convicted of manslaughter.⁸

Police Chief Gain was also hugely unpopular with the rank and file police force. He had been appointed by Moscone in early 1975 to clean up and unify the department. Some of his first moves were to ban any drinking of alcohol while officers were on duty, to take down a large American flag in the hall of justice that he felt could alienate the city's international population, and order squad cars painted a modest sky blue and white instead of the traditional black and white. These largely symbolic changes still irked the general police force. Gain's most notorious change was to stop the enforcement of small infractions against minority communities.⁹

For the gay community this meant not being arrested and harassed for infractions such as blocking a sidewalk. Harvey Milk commented on this in an unpublished manuscript for a political speech in 1974: "When the Geary Theater empties the sidewalks

⁷Weiss, 273.

⁸Shilts, 326, Weiss, 405.

⁹Shilts, 120.

are impossible to pass. When the Police Athletic League circus empties the sidewalks are chaos. These cases are fine. Yet when the gays leave the bars at the 2 a.m. closing time, we find that some of our police object to it and make arrests for blocking the sidewalks."¹⁰

Harassing the gay community had been a near tradition within the SFPD, who were largely conservative Catholics with a built-in sense of homophobia.¹¹ While Gain's easing up on minor infractions gave the gay community a new sense of freedom, his stance on homosexual officers gave them a new ally. When asked by a gay newspaper what he would do if an officer came out, Gain responded, "If I had a gay policeman who came out I would support him one hundred percent."¹²

This statement was confirmed to the *San Francisco Examiner* in a story appearing on April 18, 1976. In reference to a closeted gay police officer coming out, Gain said, "It will be hard for them, I know that, but they'll have the full support of the police chief."¹³ Soon graffiti saying "Gain is a Fruit" began appearing in station houses and in the Hall of Justice. As early as July 1977, the leadership within the police officer's association were calling for Gain's removal from his post.¹⁴ The opposition against him within the department was so strong that there were some officers who may have conspired to murder him while he was off duty. An officer with the nickname Joe the Pig had said to Margo St. James, a famous prostitution union organizer that a plot was in the works,

¹⁰Harvey Milk, 1974. Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center in the San Francisco Public Library.

¹¹For more a more in depth report on police brutality against gays see Shilts, pgs 49, 57-59 and 91-93.

¹²Shilts, 120.

¹³Raul Ramirez, "Gain to Cops: Come out of the closet," *San Francisco Examiner*, 18 April 1976, sec A, final edition.

¹⁴Michael Taylor, "POA Leader Wants Chief Gain Out," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 July 1977, sec A, final edition.

“It would be easy...Gain leads an active social life, remains unarmed when he was off duty, and does not keep a bodyguard.”¹⁵

Gain was protected from being removed from office despite the dissent from officers below him because he had the unwavering support of Moscone, who had appointed him and was committed to the liberal causes Gain was espousing. Moscone wanted the police force integrated and had the political support of San Francisco gays, who treasured the calm within their community during Gain’s tenure. Wayne Friday, in a column in the *Bay Area Reporter*, captures the support held by Gain: “Would one reader in the gay community tell me when the gay community has had a better friend as the top cop in town?”¹⁶

Moscone, who had received near unanimous support from the gay community during his 1975 election, was not about to remove Gain from his post.¹⁷ Upon Moscone’s death Gain became the ultimate lame duck. The new mayor, Dianne Feinstein, had repeatedly criticized him during his time as chief from her position of president of the Board of Supervisors.¹⁸ Even though Feinstein pledged to keep Gain through what would have been the rest of Moscone’s time in office, the writing was on the wall for Gain and the police department.¹⁹

Without Moscone behind him, Gain lacked the political power to hold his officers in line. Assuming that Gain was on his way out, the rank and file officers took this as an invitation to revert back to previous tactics used against the gay community. The old guard within the police department would be able to operate as they had before the new rules had been implemented.

¹⁵Shilts, 201.

¹⁶Wayne Friday, “Political Poker,” *Bay Area Reporter*, 20 January 1977. Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center in the San Francisco Public Library.

¹⁷Shilts, 109.

¹⁸Shilts, 278.

¹⁹Shilts, 292-293.

Quickly reports of violence against the gay community began to surface again. Gay journalist Bruce Pettit commented on this in a column for the *Bay Area Reporter* which attempted to explain the reasons behind the riots: “Almost immediately after the murders, there was an upsurge of increased police harassment and street attacks on gays, which bred anger within gays.”²⁰

Further evidence of this upswing in enforcement of petty laws is found in the March 21, 1979 *San Francisco Chronicle*. An article describes Gain being booed at a meeting of the Golden Gate Business Association because the police recently attempted to close six gay bookstores and theaters. The owners of the establishments were charged with operating public nuisances.²¹ Events like these tore at the fabric of the gay community; they hindered gays in their pursuit of happiness and gave them a reason to be angry with the police department. Within the Castro, the center of gay politics and culture, there was considerable outcry against the actions of the police.²²

The problem was further exacerbated when the police raided a lesbian bar called Peg’s Place. Ten police officers, some on duty, some off duty, ran into the bar and shouted, “Let’s get the dykes.” They began to beat the bars owner and several patrons with their nightsticks. There were no arrests and the officers had covered their badge numbers which made prosecuting them difficult. Gay newspapers heavily reported the incident while the two city dailies ignored it. A news article that ran in the *Sentinel* in May 1979 reported, “Michael Kelly is accused of physically assaulting the

²⁰Bruce Pettit, Column, *Bay Area Reporter*, 24 May 1977. Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center in the San Francisco Public Library.

²¹Steve Rubenstein, “S.F. Gay Businessmen Boo Gain in Meeting,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 March 1979.

²²Gayle Rubin, *The Miracle Mile*, ed. James Brook et al. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 258.

bar's owner, Erlinda Symers by wrestling her to the floor with a headlock."²³

This incident of violence was among the first that saw members of the gay community begin to fight back against the police: "A melee broke out between the men and women patrons who rushed to the bar employee's defense, beating the intruders with pool cues."²⁴ Previous to this night, gays had almost always docilely submitted to police instructions and violence.²⁵ The pre-riot move towards active resistance undercuts the argument that the gay response during the riot was surprising in its violence. Gays had already begun to oppose police intimidation tactics violently, and there is ample evidence of growing resentment within the gay community.

The best example of this bitterness was the afternoon of May 12, 1979, nine days before the riots. A gay man was hanging fliers on telephone poles outside of a gay bar in the Castro. A beat officer approached him and stated that tacking up posters violated a city ordinance. He handcuffed the man and called for the paddy wagon. Within minutes a mob of gay men had pored out of the bars and stores and surrounded the officer. The officer who was being taunted and jeered radioed for backup and soon a half dozen police cars had arrived. By this time the mob had grown to three thousand people who were throwing change at the police and chanting, "Dan White was a cop." The paddy wagon arrived and inched its way through the crowd, and as it did some individuals slashed at its tires. The police quickly vacated the scene, leaving the throng with no one to shout at.²⁶

²³"Battle at Peg's Place," *The Sentinel*, 4 May 1979. Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center in the San Francisco Public Library.

²⁴Shilts, 306.

²⁵Shilts, 57.

²⁶Shilts, 320-321; *The Sentinel* 18 May 1979. Courtesy of the San Francisco History Center in the San Francisco Public Library; "Castro Street gays confront cops," *San Francisco Examiner*, 13 May 1979, final edition.

This second instance of gay resistance to the police suggests the speed with which the gay community could move out of the bars and shops and onto the streets to respond in anger. The chanting of "Dan White was a cop" demonstrates the angry association made between the police force and the man who murdered the unofficial mayor of Castro Street.

After an earlier increase in police violence and persecution against gays that followed the double murder, the gay community was now beginning to find its will to fight back. The incident described above would certainly discourage any one officer from enforcing minor violations of the law in an unfair manner. In the weeks leading up to the riots the gay community reached a critical mass of anger and belligerence. What was lacking was any kind of leadership to direct the growing anger. This became most apparent the night of the riot.

Gays had marched on city hall during other crises in the late 1970s. These marches had always ended in a peaceful way. The most striking example of a gay march that could have ended in violence was the Orange Tuesday march on June 7, 1977. After Dade County Florida had repealed a gay rights law by a two to one margin, a large crowd of gays estimated at over five thousand gathered on Castro street and began to chant militant slogans calling for gay rights nationwide.²⁷ The police, shocked over the sudden appearance of so many homosexuals feared a riot and called upon Milk to calm the crowd. He led them on a lengthy march which ended in a peaceful sit down in the middle of the Castro and Market Street intersection. The gay community had turned out in force but had remained peaceful due to Milk's leadership.²⁸

If the gay community was ever to have a violent riot it would have been on this night. The Dade county gay rights referendum

²⁷Shilts, 158.

²⁸Steve Rubenstein, "Defiant Gays March in S.F." *San Francisco Examiner*, 8 June 1977, sec A, final edition.

was being watched around the country and its defeat was a real blow to gay rights organizers and their followers.²⁹ Milk was able to steward the marchers through the city and provide peaceful leadership. He was even able to portray the march as a completely peaceful one to the newspapers when in reality it was on the brink of turning violent. He stated to the *San Francisco Examiner*: “What’s happening is an out pouring of love and warmth for all gay people.”³⁰ This account differs from the one given in Randy Shilts’s *The Mayor of Castro Street*, which implies a much greater threat of violence: “For three hours, Harvey led the crowd over a five-mile course, worried that any pause might see that first rock hurled through a window or at a cop.”³¹

Milk had managed to bolster the gay community in the newspaper and to also lead it through the crisis during the march. His leadership was seen in similar marches up until his death. The night of the riots there was not a capable gay leader to step forward and keep the night peaceful. Milk’s successor to the Board of Supervisors, Harry Britt, attempted to quell the violent crowd which gathered at city hall after the verdict had been read. He shouted “Harvey, remember Harvey Milk. He’d be ashamed of us.”³² Britt was soon shouted down and the riot commenced.

The moment the gay community began the assault on city hall was captured in the next day’s *San Francisco Chronicle*. “‘We are not Dan White! No violence tonight!’ somebody cried through a bullhorn. ‘Bullshit!’ came the response, then the sound of glass breaking, and a cheer went up from the crowd.”³³

After city hall had been heavily damaged, the rioters eventually moved to Castro Street where police officers descended on the

²⁹Shilts, 159.

³⁰Steve Rubenstein, “Defiant Gays March in S.F.” *San Francisco Examiner*, 8 June 1977, sec A, final edition.

³¹Shilts, 159.

³²Shilts, 330.

³³Katy Butler, “Anatomy of a Gay Riot,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 May 1979, sec. A, final edition.

gay bars in the late night hours. As they then began arriving they were greeted with thrown bottles and more jeers. The night ended only after the police had raided the Elephant Walk, a bisexual bar on Castro and 18th Streets. While there they brutally beat patrons and “won” a figurative battle. Warren Hinckle wrote in the *Chronicle* the day after the riots, “In the corner of my eye I could see cops chasing gays with sticks. Captain Jeffries put on a firm jaw: ‘We lost the battle at city hall. We aren’t going to lose this one.’”³⁴ The price of winning the battle was steep for some members of the Castro who suffered brutal beatings at the hands of the officers who were not following any standard protocol. “The police swooped into the bar, swinging and beating people. They were down there to crack a few heads open,” bar patron Donald Sagim said. Sagim had his right ear and chin split open, suffered five broken ribs, and a partially collapsed lung.³⁵

The violence at city hall and on Castro Street occurred both as a spontaneous angry reaction to the perceived injustice of the White verdict but also for other deeper reasons. Gays had become used to a relative amount of calm in their social lives after Gain had been appointed police chief by mayor Moscone. The random police violence had almost stopped. Within a period of six months, from November 1978 to May 1979, the gay community’s most prominent leader had been assassinated, police had stepped up persecution and violence to near unprecedented levels, and no one stepped into the leadership vacuum left by Milk. There was much to be angry about.

If Gain had been able to maintain control of his police force and the violent attacks and persecution had not immediately

³⁴Warren Hinckle, “How Cops Waded Into Castro Street,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 May 1979, sec. A, final edition.

³⁵Bill Soiffer, “The Sorry Saga at Elephant Walk Bar,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 May 1979, sec. A, final edition; also “The Times of Harvey Milk,” produced by Robert Epstein, 88 Minutes. Black Sand Productions, 1984, 1 videocassette.

restarted after the assassinations, the violence of the White Night Riots would have been mitigated. If a real leader had stepped forward to lead the community, there may have been a peaceful march instead of a violent protest. These forces all played together to bring the gay community to a critical level of anger that boiled over against both the police force and city hall, the very essence of San Francisco.

Radical Self: Greenpeace and Earth First! Identity in the 1980s

Maggie Penkert

The images of women and men in tie-dye gathering at outdoor rallies, climbing trees about to be cut down, or moving their rafts in front of whaling harpoons are familiar after three decades of environmental activists gaining headlines with their extreme earth-saving efforts. Since the 1970s there has been a new radicalism within environmentalism that has taken beliefs about nature and actions to save it beyond previously recognized environmental protection measures. While the radicals created divisions in the larger movement between themselves and “mainstream” environmentalists, they had divisions of their own as well, based on the degree of the groups’ radicalism.¹ Greenpeace and Earth First! are two groups that, during the 1980s, demonstrated these differences.

A difference in the extreme ideologies between Greenpeace and Earth First! led to some differences in their actions, which prompts the question, why did the groups’ basic ideologies differ? One explanation is that Earth First! was more ideologically and actively radical than Greenpeace because of a difference in the self-identities of their members. Generally Earth First!ers identified themselves as insignificant, while Greenpeace members generally identified themselves as significant in the grand order of life. Essentially, the self-perceived modesty of Earth First!ers pushed them to radical limits that Greenpeace members, with their self-perceived importance, fell short of achieving.

The differences that separated groups on the scale of radicalism, like Earth First! and Greenpeace, have been the focus of

¹Peter List, *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics* (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1993), 5.

studies that described such differences and that explored how dissatisfaction within environmentalism prompted new radical groups.² Two areas of scholarship have developed about humanity's place in relation to nature from a psychological perspective and an ecological perspective – ecopsychology and deep ecology. Ecopsychology, a field of study that developed in the 1960s, believed that humans' psychological health depended on their connection with nature.³ Expanding on this principle, ecopsychologists believed that humans needed to recognize themselves as members of nature and not as dominant over nature.⁴

Deep ecology also recognized the importance of humans' roles within nature.⁵ Deep ecology was a philosophy, a movement, and a way of life that gave nature its own intrinsic value, while discarding the idea of nature's worth determined by its usefulness to humans.⁶ Based on an understanding that humans are simply one element in the natural order, deep ecology demanded that people live with the least possible negative impact on the environment.⁷

²Mark Stoll, "Green Versus Green: Religion, Ethics, and the Bookchin-Foreman Dispute," *Environmental History* 6 (2001): 413-414; Jonathan K. London, "Common Roots and Entangled Limbs: Earth First! and the Growth of Post-Wilderness Environmentalism on California's North Coast," *Antipode* 30 (1998): 155-156, 159-160.

³Andy Fisher, *Radical Ecopsychology: Psychology in the Service of Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 3; Melissa Nelson, "A Psychological Impact Report for the Environmental Movement," *ReVision* 20 (1998): 37.

⁴Fisher, 5.

⁵Phillip F. Cramer, *Deep Environmental Politics: The Role of Radical Environmentalism in Crafting American Environmental Policy* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 3.

⁶Cramer, 5-7.

⁷Bill Devall, "Deep Ecology and Radical Environmentalism," in *American Environmentalism: The U.S. Environmental Movement, 1970-1990*, ed. Riley E. Dunlap and Angela G. Mertig (New York: Taylor and Francis, 1992), 52-53.

What has not received much attention, even taking into account scholarship in the fields of ecopsychology and deep ecology, is the relation of the activists' personal identities to the extent of their radicalism. If human psychology in general is related to nature, that logic can be taken a step further and applied to individuals – human self-identity is related to nature. One's understanding of one's place within nature determines how one will interact with (or on behalf of) nature. The differing identities of the environmental activists provided personal ideological boundaries for environmentalism and tactical boundaries for individual actions. Greenpeace and Earth First! members had slightly different personal identities that determined their ideologies and tactics, which were in turn different in some ways. However, before discussing the two groups' ideologies and tactics any further, some background to their creation and structure is necessary for a basic understanding of each group.

Some Canadian and American environmental and peace activists created Greenpeace in 1970, to protest the United States' testing of nuclear weapons in the Aleutian Islands by sailing to the area, in hopes that their physical presence would deter the detonations.⁸ Unsuccessful in their first attempt to stop the nuclear testing in the Aleutians, the group persevered. Although Greenpeace started mainly as an anti-nuclear movement, the group soon expanded its focus to environmental issues in general.⁹ Although in size and budget Greenpeace is now considered a huge organization, it has kept its founding spirit of localized protests alive.¹⁰

⁸"The Founders of Greenpeace," n.d., <<http://www.greenpeace.org.au/aboutus/founders.html>> (1 May 2003).

⁹Paul Wapner, "In Defense of Banner Hangers: The Dark Green Politics of Greenpeace," in *Ecological Resistance Movements: The Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism*, ed. Bron Taylor (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 305.

¹⁰Kevin Michael DeLuca, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1999), 32.

In the case of Greenpeace, a specific action gave birth to the group. However, in the case of Earth First!, it was a few people's ideals about the direction of environmentalism, as opposed to a single event, that started the group. The basic story of Earth First!'s founding is that five friends dissatisfied with the effectiveness of contemporary environmental groups (Greenpeace included), and frustrated with recent governmental lack of protection for wilderness, decided to start a group that would not compromise on environmental issues.¹¹ One of Earth First!'s founders, Dave Foreman, expressed his idea for the group to create a space within the environmental movement, and specifically within the radical branch, that had never before existed. In an article published in 1981, Foreman said, "It was time for a new joker in the deck: a militant, uncompromising group unafraid to say what needed to be said or to back it up with stronger actions than the established organizations were willing to take."¹² Earth First!, as the founding members saw it, was self-consciously anti-organizational. As co-founder Foreman said regarding the organization-phobia of the group, "We felt that if we took on the organization of the industrial state, we would soon accept their anthropocentric paradigm."¹³ Instead of an organizational hierarchy, Earth First! consisted of a central group of thirteen women and men throughout the United States who served as the group's only kind of leadership. While people in these informal positions helped to keep the Earth First!

¹¹Martha Lee, "Environmental Apocalypse: Millennial Ideology of Earth First!" in *Millenium, Messiahs, and Mayhem: Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements*, ed. Thomas Robbins and Susan J. Palmer (New York: Routledge, 1997), 121.

¹²Dave Foreman, "Earth First!," *Progressive*, October 1981, 40.

¹³Foreman, *Progressive*, 42.

movement alive in at least a vague coherence, the group's soul lay in individual motivation prompting action.¹⁴

The self-identities of Greenpeace and Earth First! members influencing the degree of radicalism in their respective movements is more evident in the basic ideologies of each group than in the groups' creations and structures. As radical environmental groups, Greenpeace and Earth First! had important ideological similarities. However, just as the self-identities of the members differed slightly, so too did the ideologies. Greenpeace philosophy focused on the human responsibility for environmental destruction, education as a step towards more eco-friendly practices, and saving nature for future generations of humans. Earth First! shared the belief that humans were responsible for the degradation, but they were very pessimistic about the ability of humans to change, and they focused on saving nature not for their descendants, but for nature alone. These differences in ideology between the two groups are a result of differences in the self-identities of the members (the significance of Greenpeacers versus the insignificance of Earth First!ers).

Greenpeace believed that humans were responsible for environmental destruction because of their greed and ignorance of the repercussions of their actions. Greenpeace therefore also believed that if it could create an awareness of the (sometimes indirect) consequences of human actions on the environment, this transformation in public consciousness would be an essential step toward ending environmental destruction.¹⁵ Paul Wapner, who has written many articles about Greenpeace, summarized the group's environmental protection goals, "At the most general level then, the first step toward protecting the earth is to change the way vast

¹⁴Marilyn M. Cooper, "Environmental Rhetoric in the Age of Hegemonic Politics: Earth First! and the Nature Conservancy," in *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America*, ed. Carl G. Herndl and Stuart C. Brown (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 252-253.

¹⁵Wapner, 307.

numbers of people understand it.”¹⁶ Greenpeace also conceived of its role as a group of environmental defenders that would help the environment through its members’ direct actions. This was evident in their mission statement from 1992, “Greenpeace will both personally bear witness to atrocities against life and take direct action to prevent them.”¹⁷ Greenpeace members believed that they held the power within themselves to fight environmental destruction successfully because they knew the specifics of its occurrences (bearing witness), which suggests a self-identity of strength and importance.

In 1976, Greenpeace published its “Declaration of Interdependence,” which explained that although it supported the ecocentric view of deep ecology in which nature has an intrinsic value, the group also acknowledged that its efforts in saving nature was for human benefit – namely, to prevent the human species’ extinction. The Declaration stated that while nature must be saved for its own sake, action must be taken to preserve nature “or our children will be denied their future.”¹⁸ In the “Declaration of Interdependence,” the self-identity of Greenpeace members was evidently significant because of the extent to which human welfare was as important to maintain as environmental protection. Also, for people to see themselves as caretakers with such an essential responsibility as maintaining the natural balance of life, they would have to conceive of themselves individually as significant beings.

The general ideology of Earth First! argued that the inevitable seeds of nature’s destruction lay in the modern forms of industrial western civilization. The general anthropocentric views of these societies placed more value on humans than other forms of life,

¹⁶Wapner, 306.

¹⁷Ronald G. Shaiko, “Greenpeace USA: Something Old, New, Borrowed,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 528 (1993): 92.

¹⁸“Declaration of Interdependence, 1976,” in *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics*, ed. Peter List (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1993), 134-136.

which Earth First! regarded as the reason humans allowed widespread destruction of nature to take place.¹⁹ Earth First! found another source of environmental harm in the combination of this dangerous anthropocentric world-view with the destructive potential of modern technological practices exploiting natural resources.²⁰ Earth First! ideology focused on all the negative elements of human society that led to environmental destruction and believed that humanity in general lacked the capacity to live in harmony with the environment. In placing such limits on the human character, Earth First!ers self-identities, as members of this handicapped humankind, could not have been very positive.

Earth First! members saw their group’s role as taking part in direct actions that halted environmental destruction in any form, for however short a time. With their no-compromise stance, they did not necessarily believe that they could win every time, but their goal was to not back down from any fight for the environment. Foreman expressed this unwillingness to concede in an article, when he wrote, “Perhaps it is a hopeless quest. But is that relevant? Is that important? No, what is important is that one who loves Earth can do no less.”²¹ In this excerpt from Foreman’s writings, he seemed to believe in the probable ineffectiveness of humans to really achieve protection for wilderness on the scale that was needed. In this view, humans, Earth First! members included, did not necessarily have the power to save their world.

In addition to direct actions on behalf of protecting nature, Earth First! saw salvation for nature in the end of civilization as they knew it. They advocated a return to more primitive lifestyle, in which there was little technology, no capitalism, and no government other than the social structures provided by tribal

¹⁹Lee, 125; Ken Kassman, *Envisioning Ecotopia: The U.S. Green Movement and the Politics of Radical Social Change* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), 23.

²⁰Lee, 122.

²¹Foreman, *Progressive*, 42.

systems of living.²² This belief, referred to as Neo-Primitivism, established the idea that “civilized” humanity, in the western understanding of the term, was incapable of living in harmony with the environment.²³ Earth First!ers’ belief that the primitive lifestyle, modeled after indigenous tribes of people around the world, could be human and nature’s saving grace, shows that they had faith in at least small groups of humans. However, Earth First!ers considered that the possibility that humans would destroy the earth and bring about their own demise was more likely than transforming human civilization. This pessimistic view of people included a lack of faith in themselves, to a degree, because they had no confidence in their own abilities to aid in human society’s necessary transformations.

In the collective Earth First! ideology, there is also an emphasis on nature-based spirituality as a component of the return to the primitive lifestyle. Nature-based spirituality is important to Earth First! ideology in two ways – it affirms the need for humans to maintain a deep (emotional, spiritual) bond with the earth in all of its natural forms, and it opposes the monotheistic religions that were seen as a source of civilization’s evils.²⁴ The monotheistic religious traditions, from the Earth First! point of view, were dangerous to the environment because their faiths were partially based on the anthropocentric belief that God created the earth for humans to use.²⁵ In contrast, nature-based spirituality believes in human existence as equal in importance to all life forms. When people’s spiritual faith, which is essentially personal views on the universal order, denies that they have a “chosen” role over other

²²Kassman, 52-53.

²³Kassman, 22-23.

²⁴Bron Taylor, *Ecological Resistance Movements: The Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 16.

²⁵Taylor, *Ecological Resistance Movements*, 16.

living things, their senses of self-identity would probably include a sense of personal insignificance.

As ideologies justify actions, the tactics of Greenpeace and Earth First! expanded upon their guiding principles. Greenpeace and Earth First! qualified for radicalism due to their extreme tactics, in addition to their ecocentric ideologies. Both groups were unique in that they were the first to add direct actions to the environmental movement. Greenpeace direct actions had the dual goals of gaining attention to educate people and attempting to stop ecological destruction. Earth First!’s direct actions, on the other hand, had the main goal of halting environmentally damaging acts, even if only temporarily. Other differences, which made Earth First! the more radical of the two groups, were the ultimate objects of their efforts (as generally either animals or non-animals) and their policies on the use of violence.

As the first of the two groups, early Greenpeace actions established a new direction for the environmental movement by using direct actions, physically placing themselves in danger as a form of protest to stop environmentally destructive activities.²⁶ By the early 1980s, Greenpeace had established three major campaign categories as the focus of their efforts – nuclear disarmament, endangered wildlife, and toxic waste pollution.²⁷ The anti-nuclear campaign, in addition to their first direct action, included other trips to weapons test sites and illegally posting radioactive warning signs along highways to protest nuclear shipments.²⁸ The campaign for protecting endangered species was mostly focused on ending whaling and the killing of baby seals for their fur. In most cases, the activists would place themselves between whales and

²⁶Rik Scarce, *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement* (Chicago: Nobic Press, 1990), 47-48.

²⁷Robin Toner, “A Gadfly for Environmental Causes,” *New York Times*, 25 September 1985, sec. A.

²⁸“Fake Signs Annoy Four States,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 October 1981.

whaling ships, or between hunters and seals.²⁹ In each of the three campaign areas, Greenpeace direct actions are examples of the new forms of protest that they initiated into the environmentalist repertoire. They took the movement's earlier tactics of working through legal and governmental channels a step further by using their own bodies in protest to actually stop, for however short a time, the practices that harmed the environment. The focus of most Greenpeace campaigns and direct actions was on either the survival of their fellow humans or the survival of other mammals. While they believed in the intrinsic value of nature, their actions suggested a sense of hierarchy in choosing what nature to protect. Mammals (humans included) seemed to be at the top of their order, suggesting a sense of self as relatively significant.

Greenpeace tactics often included the extreme decisions of members to put their own lives at risk (of either legal punishment or physical harm) in pursuit of environmental protection. However, Greenpeace leadership drew a definite line between what they viewed as acceptable and unacceptable direct actions, and that line excluded violence of any kind. Direct actions in the environmental movement that used violence, whether perpetrated on humans or inanimate objects, was referred to as ecotage (or environmental sabotage). This form of protest developed in the 1970s, and while rarely planned against humans, sabotage of machinery and other equipment had the potential side effect of harming people.³⁰ Greenpeace officially took a firm stance against ecotage of any kind, predicated upon the belief that violence towards humans, even in the very indirect form of violence against their tools for living and working, was unacceptable.³¹

²⁹Bob Hunter, "Taking on the Goliaths of Doom," in *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics*, ed. Peter List (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1998), 140.

³⁰List, 4-5.

³¹Shaiko, 98; Scarce, 54.

Earth First! tactics were different from Greenpeace tactics because the focus of most Earth First! direct actions focused on wilderness.³² While the survival and welfare of animal species was an aspect of their battles, Earth First!ers were usually more devoted to the protection of natural land than anything. Habitats were so important that members were willing to risk their lives for non-animals and even non-living things, such as the natural flow of rivers. Earth First! direct actions along these lines included chaining themselves to machinery used in logging and in building roads or similar development projects. Earth First!ers also attempted to halt logging by chaining themselves to or climbing up the trees that were to be cut down.³³

Earth First! attempted to increase eco-awareness, although it pessimistically viewed the ability of education to address environmental problems adequately. They used their direct actions, traveling road shows, and various works of guerilla theater to attract attention to their cause.³⁴ Guerilla theater, which relied on zany Earth First! humor, involved activists dressing up as animals whose habitats were threatened and then interacting with the general public on the animals' behalf. One example of Earth First! guerilla theater occurred at Yellowstone National Park in 1985, when a group of Earth First!ers dressed up in bear costumes and entered a hotel and a restaurant, asking for rooms to stay in and food because their natural areas of habitat were being reduced by development and tourism.³⁵ This kind of humor was continually

³²Howie Wolke, "Earth First!'s Proper Role,"(1982) in *The Earth First! Reader: Ten Years of Radical Environmentalism*, ed. John Davis (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1991), 247.

³³DeLuca, 6.

³⁴Michael Parfit, "Earth First!ers Wield a Mean Monkey Wrench," *Smithsonian* 21 (1990): 192.

³⁵Iver Peterson, "Conservation and Tourist Interests at Odds in Dispute at Yellowstone," *New York Times*, 5 August 1985, sec. A; Bill Soiffer, "Guerillas in the War Over the Environment," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 October 1985.

a part of Earth First! direct actions as they bordered on making fun of themselves. Foreman's emphasis on the importance of humor to the movement suggests that Earth First!ers were always careful never to take themselves too seriously. In an article about Earth First!'s goals, co-founder Foreman said, "Not only does humor preserve individual and group sanity, it retards hubris, the major cause of environmental rape, and it is also an effective weapon."³⁶ This tendency to take oneself lightly suggests an identity that did not regard the self as very significant, and in fact, also views the feeling of self-importance as dangerous.

The other major element of direct actions that separated Earth First! from Greenpeace was its acceptance of ecotage as a legitimate practice in environmental protection. Earth First! did not indiscriminately support all forms of ecotage, but the founding members, especially Foreman, believed in it as a powerful tool when used appropriately. For Greenpeace, non-violence was part of their overall strategy – each action was planned to be non-violent, whereas for Earth First!, non-violence was a tactic – only to be employed when it was more beneficial than violent methods.³⁷ Specific examples of Earth First! ecotage included illegally pulling up survey stakes, pouring foreign substances into the gas tanks of mobile machinery, and tree-spiking.³⁸ Foreman, because of his regard for ecotage (which he referred to as "monkeywrenching"), wrote guidelines for its use, simultaneously to endorse it as potentially effective and warn of the dangers if not carefully implemented. Foreman did not label ecotage as violence, because it was only supposed to be directed at inanimate objects.³⁹

³⁶Dave Foreman, "Earth First!," in *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics*, ed. Peter List (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1993), 189.

³⁷Scarce, 54.

³⁸James Coates, "Earth First! Throws Monkey Wrench into Exploitation of Wilds," *San Francisco Examiner* 25 August 1985, sec. A.

³⁹Dave Foreman, "Strategic Monkeywrenching," in *Radical Environmentalism: Philosophy and Tactics*, ed. Peter List (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1993), 192-195.

Earth First!'s decision to use ecotage as a tactic illustrates that they were prepared to engage themselves in the fight to oppose environmental destruction to a greater degree than Greenpeace members. In their acceptance of violence as a viable method, they further placed the welfare of nature above their own. Their willingness to commit violence for the sake of wilderness in its non-animal forms suggests once again that their lack of concern for the human species reflected a personal identity as insignificant in the natural world.

In the founding, ideologies, and tactics of Greenpeace and Earth First! can be found numerous examples of how self-identity of the two groups' members was important to the levels of radicalism that they undertook. The examples support the possibility that Greenpeace members' general self-identities were ones of significance in the world order, but that Earth First! members general self-identities were ones of insignificance. Assuming that human thought and action is related to a sense of self, which psychological studies support, the self-identities of environmental activists helped to determine their ideologies and the tactics that they employed for their movements.⁴⁰ Greenpeace members had self-identities of importance in the natural order, so Greenpeace ideology gave humans an important role in nature. Earth First! members had self-identities that viewed themselves as rather unnecessary in the natural order, so Earth First! ideology believed that humans were essentially unnecessary. Therefore, differences between the self-identities of Greenpeace members and Earth First! members were manifested in the differences between their ideologies and actions. At the root of Greenpeace's and Earth First!'s levels of radicalism for the environmental movement was the personal identities of their activists.

⁴⁰Karl Aquino and Americus Reed II, "The Self-Importance of Moral Identity," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 83 (2002): 4-7.

Nothing to Do but to Obey Them: The French Revolution and British Individualism

Tyler Pepple

Dr. Horsley, Bishop of Rochester, voiced the sentiments of many conservatives in the British government when he gave a speech on November 11, 1795 that proclaimed “the mass of the People in every Country had nothing to do with the Laws but to obey them.”¹ Such beliefs were common in Britain during the 1790’s and early 19th century among the Alarmist elite – a growing number of aristocratic intellectuals within the government who believed the rising popularity of radical movements speaking on behalf of the people jeopardized the power of the nobles and, thus, all that was good in Britain. The masses had become far more overtly political in the years before the French Revolution, furthering the conservative retreat. For example, Prime Minister William Pitt, a one-time reformer now became a rigid traditionalist, and Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* quickly appeared after the fall of the Bastille, defending what he saw as the inherent wholesomeness of the oligarchies in France and England. The French Revolution weighed heavily on the minds of the elite in Pitt’s government, headlining an age devoid of rules and restrictions and gave the primal habits of the masses free reign.

While the French Revolution instilled in the British bourgeoisie and proletariat a new sense of power that influenced the English government is clear, but how the manifestation of the power itself is ambiguous. Studies of the masses in Britain after the French Revolution are fairly young because historians tradi-

¹Albert Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty: The English Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 393.

tionally chose to focus on the aristocracy because of the amount of information available and the opportunity for close examination of individuals. However, because the French Revolution was in essence a revolt of the masses, studies on how it affected the *people* of England have often shed more light on a turbulent and complex period than have inherently limited studies of the aristocracy.²

This essay attempts to follow in the interdisciplinary tradition established in recent years by examining both the history and the literature of the decades after the French Revolution in order to discover how they both contributed to form the ‘spirit of the age.’ During the Romantic period, literature played a crucial role in both shaping and mirroring the sentiments of the people by promoting the ideology of the period. It gave the political tensions of the day a voice, and because of its potential for widespread dissemination, was far more effective than the radical societies at providing agency for the masses.

In Britain, I believe the empowerment of the masses arose because the French Revolution gave them agency and contributed to their growing sense of individuality – something that can best be termed as “collective individuality,” which carries with it the double meaning of a collection of individually minded people, and a class expressing its own distinction from other classes and carrying with it its own desires and demands. Two factors acted as catalysts for increasing this sense of collective individuality: radical interest groups like the London Corresponding Society and the Society for Constitutional Information, and the literature of the period, especially political tracts and polemic and didactic literature. These forms were especially important in this period because of the growing literacy rate among the masses. Of the two factors, the radical societies were certainly more threatening in

²For example, see Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty*; Andrew McCann, *Cultural Politics in the 1790’s: Literature, Radicalism and the Public Sphere* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999).

their demand for lower-class rights as far as Pitt and the Alarmists were concerned, but this would come at a cost for the societies were easy targets for the government. Political tracts and didactic novels, however, were more difficult to suppress given their widespread distribution.

Certainly the greatest instigator of the surge in polemical essays in the 1790's was Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Inspired by his disgust with the Unitarian minister Richard Price's sermon, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, Burke's essay argued vehemently for the status quo. Burke reacted against Price's exhortations that he had "lived to see THIRTY MILLIONS of people, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice; their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects."³ For Burke, the lowly mob leading their king "in triumph" was the pinnacle of evil that could be perpetrated on an established government. The king and the nobility were necessary to the governing of a country because they were the vessels of the political brain, a fact proven historically, Burke thought: "How very soon France, when she had a moment to respire, recovered and emerged from the longest and most dreadful civil war that ever was known in any nation. Why? Because, among all their massacres, they had not slain the *mind* in their country."⁴ The people in the "swinish multitude" were not fit to govern because they had common minds, a quality that would greatly circumscribe a king's authority.

Burke's answer for the problems in France (which he admitted there were) was reform based on the old ways in England – to devise a system of government like the one in place in Britain.

³M.H. Abrams and others, eds., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), vol. 2, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, by Richard Price, 121.

⁴Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 137.

The French government, in other words, was "very nearly as good as could be wished" until all this democracy nonsense stepped onto the world stage again.⁵ According to Burke the Revolution was and would continue to be a failure because France destroyed a system that was designed for its benefit.

Not everyone agreed with Burke's sentiments, especially Thomas Paine. Paine's *Rights of Man* is less important for what it says than for how it says it. Much of its content focuses on attacking Burke's flowery language, or "learned jargon," and making him out to be a kind of contemporary sophist whose sentences end "with music in the ear, and nothing in the heart."⁶ Paine capitalizes on Burke's pretensions by dissecting his complex phrases in order to make them look ridiculous. This tactic was influential capturing a growing reading public lacking the critical capacity to understand much of the *Reflections*. Indeed, the 1790's, according to McCann, saw an explosion of writers interested in the public sphere "and its related term the 'market' as general and abstract entities."⁷ This explosion is partially attributed to a growing cultural insistence on the belief that literature possessed a socially redemptive value. Novelists and political essayists like Paine exploited this by simplifying their language to make it accessible to more readers, resulting in a democratization of both literature and ideas that crossed class borders and, in a sense, unified the political and literary spheres. The elite were not the sole participants in politics any longer, for writers now made the pressing issues of the day accessible to everyone's understanding.

There were two consequences to such a change. First, individuals in the lower-classes of society were flattered by these writers who insisted they were as fit to govern the country as those

⁵*Ibid.*, 122.

⁶Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man, Common Sense*, ed. Michael Foot (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 16.

⁷McCann, 1.

already in power, which increased the collective ego of the mob, in turn increasing its disposition to insurrectionary violence. Second, Burke and the Alarmists were far too clever not to spot this trend, and exaggerated it for their own benefit, arguing that tracts like Paine's were inherently revolutionary due to their effect on the public.

The debate symbolized by Burke and Paine led to a far greater political awareness among the masses. Paine's insistence that government was formed for the people was a strong counterargument against Burke's conservative appeals to maintain the status quo, and did much to instill a sense of individualism among the people. "The fact therefore must be," Paine wrote,

that the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government: and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.⁸

It was the masses that were in control of the government, not as a swinish multitude but a collection of individuals who were capable of voicing their own demands. Each person was not merely capable of voicing his or her demands, but was also potentially as effective as the elites in government: "Every history of the creation...all agree in establishing one point, the *unity of man*; by which I mean, that men are all of *one degree*, and consequently that all men are born equal and with equal natural right."⁹ Paine's critique of the government, then, was twofold. He argued that in its present state it reduced people to an existence below a true human life, although these men and women were theoretically capable of accomplishing anything those in power could achieve.

The challenge the *Rights of Man* posed to Pitt's government

⁸Paine, 41.

⁹Ibid., 36.

demanding a reaction. Much of the Alarmist case against Paine was his intentionally simplistic language. Arguing that it was intended as an insurrectionary appeal to a growing reading public who were not sophisticated enough to understand essays like the *Reflections*, the conservatives in the government labeled it as intentionally subversive. Through such reasoning, were able to push for more repressive measures to keep the public from voicing its discontent. It also helped the Alarmist claim that the French Revolution was not a secluded movement. In 1793, when the Reign of Terror began and France declared war on Britain, Pitt was able to use these events to label the English radical societies as "Jacobin" and "revolutionary", which now isolated them and singled them out, albeit unfairly, as potentially traitorous organizations which would have to toe the line carefully if they wished to remain a public presence.

In reality, the radical societies were hardly revolutionary. Rather, they saw Parliamentary reform as their main objective, concentrating specifically on universal suffrage and annual elections to Parliament. Their effectiveness at petitioning Parliament was never great, but they gained strength after the Revolution and the publication of the *Rights of Man*, which acted as a common bond for all the radical societies.

Ironically, the rise of the radical societies in the 1790s was largely due to Burke's publication of the *Reflections on the Revolution in France* because it prompted Paine's reply. Burke even singled out the London Revolution Society and the Society for Constitutional Information, the two most famous radical societies at the time. He disparages the group by illustrating that they were virtually nonexistent until the Revolution occurred, discrediting them in a society that placed so much importance on being heard and recognized:¹⁰

¹⁰Keith Hanley and Raman Selden, eds., *Revolution and English Romanticism: Politics and Rhetoric*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), Michael Ferber, "The Liberty of Appearing: Two Versions of the Romantic

The National Assembly has given importance to these gentlemen by adopting them; and they return the favour, by acting as a committee in England for extending the principles of the National Assembly. Henceforward we must consider them as a kind of privileged persons; as no inconsiderable members of the diplomatic body. This is one among the revolutions which have given splendor to obscurity, and distinction to undiscerned merit. Until very lately I do not recollect to have heard of this club [London Revolution Society]. I am quite sure that it never occupied a moment of my thoughts; nor, I believe, those of any person out of their own set.¹¹

For Burke, the French Revolution brought the radical societies to the attention of those in government. This was problematic, for while the passage ironically treats the societies by speaking of them as significant in their own eyes but in no one else's, it also admits to the importance of being recognized at all.

Burke and the Alarmists had other reasons to fear the radical societies besides their newfound fame. They believed that the ultimate goal of the radical groups was the abolition of the aristocracy. Even if reform were the objective as the radical societies claimed, this was seen as a stepping stone to all out revolution. Pitt voiced this concern when noting the connection of certain MPs to the societies. He argued that they "were concerned with others, who preferred not reform only, but direct hostility to the very form of our government. This afforded suspicion, that the motion for a reform was nothing more than the preliminary to the overthrow of the whole system of our present government."¹²

The watch was tight, and the radical societies were forced to cautiously play by the rules of the British constitution. For

Enlightenment," 91-92.

¹¹Burke, 87.

¹²Ibid., 206.

instance, most members of the societies supported petitioning Parliament for governmental reforms rather than calling a National Convention, a revolutionary buzzword given its connection to French republicanism and the September Massacres. Although petitioning the government to reform itself was their most overt action in the eyes of the Alarmists, the dissemination of Paineite propaganda proved far more beneficial to their cause.

The Society for Constitutional Information, which was in decline after the outbreak of the French Revolution due to repeated failures in pushing the government toward universal suffrage, was saved by Paine. After he published the *Rights of Man*, the Society for Constitutional Information lost no time in advertising its connection to the author and the result was mutually beneficial, swelling membership for the society and increasing sales for Paine. This, of course, is not meant to suggest that Paine's popularity was entirely based on the radical societies' propaganda machine, for, as already stated, the *Rights of Man* held plenty of appeal for the masses by itself.

Paine, however, was not the only author giving agency to the lower classes. Novelists and poets were also speaking out, and among them was William Wordsworth, who based his poetry more on common life than previous writers had. Wordsworth was a radical in the early years of the French Revolution but quickly turned conservative. His reaction to events in both Britain and France is interesting because of its ambivalence. The tremendous potential power of the masses occupied his thoughts often because of the possibility of its acting for good or evil. His overall philosophy was similar to that of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who argued in 1802 that the "grand ideal of Freedom" cannot be realized "under any form of human government." Rather, it belongs to "the individual man, so far as he is pure, and inflamed

with the love and adoration of God in Nature.”¹³ Both Coleridge and Wordsworth also feared the mob because of its potential for recklessness. They had respect due to the number of individuals it contained, and the French Revolution was therefore first seen as a triumph. In the *Prelude*, Wordsworth recalls his initial feelings toward the Revolution:

To aspirations then of our own minds
 Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld
 A living confirmation of the whole
 Before us in a People risen up
 Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
 Upon their virtues, saw in rudest men
 Self-sacrifice the firmest, generous love
 And continence of mind, and sense of right
 Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.¹⁴

Written in 1805, these words reflected the way Wordsworth felt in 1789, but the sentiments were not endemic to the initial stages of the French Revolution. During his early radical years, the French Revolution presented a new and promising age for Wordsworth, where “human nature seeming born again” could flourish in a democratic utopia.¹⁵ The mob was hardly an ignoble mass and was every bit as good as the hegemonic oligarchy of either Britain or France because it represented a group of individuals capable of ruling themselves.

Wordsworth’s poetry is famous for individualizing members of the masses, both by examining individuals and by bringing the

¹³Peter Kitson, “Coleridge, the French Revolution, and ‘The Ancient Mariner’: Collective Guilt and Individual Salvation,” in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 19, (Leeds: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1989), 203

¹⁴*The Major Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. Stephen Gill, *The Prelude* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 518.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 459.

lifestyle of the lower classes into the lofty realm of poetry. “The majority of the following poems are to be considered as experiments,” Wordsworth wrote in his Advertisement to the *Lyrical Ballads*. “They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure.”¹⁶ It must be stressed here that the *Lyrical Ballads* was not published until 1798, nine years after the fall of the Bastille and also well after the Reign of Terror, which helped shift Wordsworth’s political beliefs to the right. The result was, as already stated, an ambivalent attitude over the mob’s right to independence. As Michael Ferber puts it, Wordsworth “wanted everyone in the world, from the hunger-bitten French girl with the heifer to the distraught mother who drowned her baby, to come into view, to be seen by the public, but he could not quite face the possibility that they might comprise the public themselves.”¹⁷ Nevertheless, Wordsworth’s respect for the power of the masses and the potential of each individual would remain with him through his entire life, and the *Lyrical Ballads* are the perfect place to look for the pervasive influence lower class life would have on his art. As he states in that famous passage from the Preface, “Low and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language.”¹⁸ The importance here is that we get a look into individual lives in the lower class. To Wordsworth and his readers, these were real people with real problems and concerns, not just a herd that had “nothing to do with the laws but to obey them.”

These were also the beliefs of the radical societies, though their politics differed greatly from Wordsworth’s. It seems clear that the idea of a collective individualism was hardly endemic to

¹⁶*Idem*, *Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads*, 591.

¹⁷Ferber, 100.

¹⁸Wordsworth, *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*, 597.

one specific political ideology, instead occupied a pervasive realm of British life that concerned every class, whether the people perceived it or not. The British radical societies understood the problem, however, and dedicated their time to bringing it to the attention of others and to press for Parliamentary reform. The consequences of such actions were costly, for it brought them to the attention of Pitt and the Alarmists. The London Corresponding Society's address to the National Assembly was not to be taken lightly by those in the government:

We can with confidence assure you Freemen and Friends, that knowledge makes a rapid progress among us; that curiosity has taken possession of the minds of the public; that the reign of Ignorance, inseparable from that of Despotism, is vanishing; and that at present, all men ask each other, What is Liberty? What are our Rights? Frenchmen you are already free, but Britons are preparing to be so.¹⁹

The London Revolution Society's address was not less controversial: "Royal prerogatives, injurious to the public interest, a servile Peerage, a rapacious and intolerant clergy, and corrupt Representation are grievances under which we suffer. But as *you*, perhaps, have profited from the example of our Ancestors, so shall we from *your* late glorious and splendid actions."²⁰ The last sentence in this passage is particularly ominous. If the French gained their freedom through revolution, how would the British expect to gain the same liberties?

The fears of the British government were compounded when the London Corresponding Society and the Society for Constitutional Information came together in 1793 to form the British Convention after failing to petition for parliamentary reform

¹⁹Goodwin, 255.

²⁰Ibid., 129.

through the Whig opposition on May 7, 1793. Its reference to the governing body in France and its use of French Revolutionary language was overt. Delegates at the Convention, for example, addressed each other as "Citizens," November 29, 1793, was labeled "the First Year of the British Convention," reports were often headed with the phrase, "*Vive la Convention*," and it was suggested that the Convention's "Address to the British People" be preceded by a Declaration of Rights.²¹

What the radical societies were thinking by utilizing so much rhetoric from the French Revolution, especially considering their insistence on their reformist nature, is unclear. What is clear, moreover, is the manner of the government response. Pitt announced a bill to suspend *habeus corpus*, which passed on May 18, 1794. While the bill was only applicable to those thought to be engaged in treasonable practices, such a definition was broad enough to hold any leaders of the radical societies without trial.

In early June, the three members of the radical societies with the highest profiles, Thomas Hardy, Horne Took, and John Thelwall, were imprisoned. This time, however, the result was not what the government had anticipated. All three were acquitted by December, and the other members of the radical societies were subsequently released. The trials were not without their successes for the government, though. The greatest casualty for the radical societies was the Society for Constitutional Information, which ceased to meet after its secretary, Daniel Adams, turned King's evidence and supplied the government with all of the group's records. Additionally, financial problems gripped the London Corresponding Society, which used much of its funds in defending Hardy and Thelwall. While it continued to operate, membership dwindled significantly.²²

Circumstances changed temporarily in October of 1795 when the opening of the new Parliamentary session was disrupted by an

²¹Ibid., 302.

²²Ibid., 362.

attack on the King's carriage. Pitt used the incident to introduce the Two Acts – the Treasonable Practices Bill and the Seditious Meetings Bill. The former altered the current law in order to widen the scope of treason and include “any who ‘compassed or devised’ the death, bodily harm, imprisonment or deposition of the King, who exerted pressure on him to change his measures or counsels, who plotted to assist foreign invaders, or to intimidate or overawe both houses or either house of Parliament, whether such intention was expressed...by overt act, or by speech or writing.”²³ The latter bill was designed to regulate the content and number of public meetings by forcing those organizing the meeting to submit a written document specifying the time, place, and purpose of each meeting to a local newspaper and the local magistrate, who could approve or deny the meeting. Both of these bills were repressive measures designed to silence the voices for Parliamentary reform and for lower-class rights. Once again, however, the results of the Two Acts were ambivalent. Fierce resistance from all sides rose up against the bills. Charles Fox labeled the time as “Pitt's Reign of Terror,” and there were ninety-four petitions with a total of 130,000 signatures in opposition presented to Parliament.²⁴ During this time, the membership of the London Corresponding Society swelled again. But the revival was short-lived as December 7, 1795, was the last protest meeting the London Corresponding Society held and repeated exhortations by Thelwall to remain defiant were useless. In the end, the most obstinate radicals were forced to seek refuge abroad. The Whig opposition, led by Fox, had no other alternative, but to secede from the House of Commons in 1797.

Of these radicals living abroad, none was more famous than Percy Shelley. Of all the Romantic authors, he and Wordsworth best encapsulate the growing sentiments of individualism that had taken root among the masses. Shelley was far more of a political

²³Ibid., 387.

²⁴Ibid., 391.

poet than Wordsworth, making him a kind of culminating artist of the period – a result of both the political and artistic tensions that had been festering for over three decades. In *A Defense of Poetry*, he elucidates why he views poetry as supremely (and sublimely) important. Part of the reason is its connection with politics, exclaiming that, “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World.”²⁵ And he means this in a distinctly political sense. “We live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty. The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is Poetry.”²⁶ Poets, in other words, have the ability to influence men's actions through their art; to become “as generals to the bewildered armies of [men's] thoughts.”²⁷ This influence comes primarily from the heightened self-esteem men feel when reading poetry, which, like Paine's more universal language, ennobles the masses and offers them a new perspective on life.²⁸

Perhaps Shelley's most ambitious attempt at putting such a philosophy into action is *Prometheus Unbound*. This four-act play personifies the masses in the character of Prometheus, thus giving them both a face and a hero. Chained to the Caucasus Mountains in India by the tyrant god Jupiter, Prometheus eventually frees humanity with the help of Demogorgon, the ruler of the underworld. *Prometheus Unbound* is filled with assertions of the potential power of the people. “I gave all / He has,” Prometheus says of Jupiter, “and in return he chains me here / Years, ages, night and day.”²⁹ Just as the people were first responsible for

²⁵Idem, *A Defense of Poetry*, 535.

²⁶Ibid., 535.

²⁷Ibid., 523.

²⁸Gerald McNiece, *Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 3.

²⁹Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, 221.

giving the king his power, so Prometheus is the fountainhead of Jupiter's power, and the result is a despotic government where all that is good is turned to evil purposes:

The good want power, but to weep barren tears.
 The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.
 The wise want love, and those who love want wisdom;
 And all the best things are thus confused to ill.
 Many are strong and rich, -- and would be just, --
 But live among their suffering fellow men
 As if none felt -- they know not what they do.³⁰

Yet, among this chaos is the pervading sense that all will one day be right because all people, while controlled by society, are still in control of their own passions and beliefs. "Yet I am king over myself, and rule / The torturing and conflicting throngs within / As Jove rules you when Hell grows mutinous," Prometheus exclaims to the Furies.³¹ Hope is always present in *Prometheus Unbound* because oppressed individuals are capable of something more than they are allowed to be under the tyranny of Jupiter's rule.

What emerges in this study of the literature and politics of the decades after the French Revolution is the discrepancy between what occurred in the two realms. Both the radical societies and the writers of the time were influenced by the collective individuality emerging in the masses (including conservative writers like Burke, who were influenced negatively). The radical societies, however, were far less successful than the writers in achieving their goals. As distinct organizations that could be equated to revolutionary France (which was also an enemy of Britain for the most of the period studied here), they offered easy targets for the repressive measures of Pitt's government. Authors such as Paine were more difficult to silence because of the rate of dissemination

³⁰Ibid., 229.

³¹Ibid., 225.

of their texts, while others, like Wordsworth, could bring the lives of "low and rustic" people to the foreground without being overtly political.

The literary and the political realms were thus tied together in complex ways, as each supported a similar ideology, and when it was challenged by Pitt's oligarchy, the two areas necessarily grew closer together. It is partially because of the relationship between politics and literature that the Romantic period was such a dynamic one. Long after the demise of the radical societies, the government could still boast that at least the mass of people in *England* "had nothing to do with the laws but to obey them," but authors such as Wordsworth and Shelley, who were active well into the 19th century, proved that the influence of the French Revolution on the collective individuality of the masses was far from ephemeral.

Secrets, Schemes, and Strategies: Nixon Opens Relations with Communist China

Kelsey Swanson

In the Cold War era, the United States faced challenges from two Communist giants: the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The United States considered both nations to be a threat to international stability, but had failed to significantly improve relations with these countries in the 1950s and 1960s. While the United States was already engaging in talks with the Soviet Union at this time, it had failed to even recognize the existence of the PRC for over twenty years. President Nixon and his advisor Henry A. Kissinger devised a grand plan to normalize relations with the PRC while continuing to better relations with the Soviet Union. Although such a strategy succeeded to some degree in the immediate aftermath of the event, in the long run, the Soviet Union had more pressing reasons for improving relations with the United States. What initiated this change in policy? Because the Chinese and Soviets were hostile toward one another, Nixon and Kissinger sought rapprochement with the PRC mainly to gain more leverage in dealing with the Soviet Union.

In October 1949, the Chinese Communists, led by Mao Tse-tung, proclaimed victory for the new People's Republic of China over the United States-supported Nationalists.¹ The Nationalists' leader, Chiang Kai-Shek, fled to Formosa (Taiwan), establishing the Republic of China on this island. While the Republicans blamed Truman and the Democrats for having "lost" China to the Communists, in fact, there really was not much that the United

¹United States Department of State, *Issues in United States Foreign Policy: People's Republic of China* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office (GPO), 1972), 3.

States could have done to prevent this end result. The Chinese people simply saw their interests better served with Mao. After 1949, the U.S. was hesitant in formally recognizing the PRC because of the support for Chiang by many in government office and because of a sense of mistrust toward Mao and the Communists.² During the Korean War that began in 1950, relations between the United States and the PRC deteriorated as the Communists intervened to help the North Koreans, pushing back American and United Nations forces to the Thirty-eighth Parallel. This confrontation with the PRC garnered more support for the Nationalists on Formosa, as the United States saw the anti-American Mao as the enemy.

The Republican Party regained the Presidency in 1952 with World War II hero Dwight David Eisenhower as their nominee. Once elected, he promised not to recognize "Red China" under current conditions, hoping to isolate the PRC. Later American involvement in the Vietnam War to contain the spread of Communism harmed relations between the two countries further. The fact that Vice President Richard Nixon, as early as 1954, believed that the PRC was backing the Vietnamese Communists by providing them military supplies, made the possibility of rapprochement even more distant.³

In his October 1967 *Foreign Affairs* article entitled "Asia After Vietnam," Nixon hinted at the need for the United States to better relations with China in the future, but only after it changed its aggressive policies. In the conclusion of the article, Nixon explained his view on U.S. policy toward China: "For the long run, it means pulling China back into the world community—but as a

²Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 2000), 167.

³Richard M. Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), 150.

great and progressing nation, not as the epicenter of world revolution.”⁴

How could Nixon advocate such a policy toward the Communists? First, Nixon had a history of being firmly anti-communist. Not only was he a charter member of the “Who Lost China Club?”, but he was also a steadfast realist who recognized the importance of balance of power and geopolitical stability.⁵ This position allowed him to work towards future relations with China without seeming “soft” on Communism when he was elected President in 1968. Nixon also was a Republican and therefore able to exploit the idea that the Democrats “lost” China. If a Democratic president had shown signs of wanting to improve relations between the two countries, he would be seen as trying to appease the Communists. Nixon, on the other hand, would just be trying to work with the situation that the Democrats left him. Thus, President Nixon had the right political position to make rapprochement with the PRC even possible.

A complimentary asset to Nixon in his hope for better relations with China was Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and later Secretary of State. Kissinger was a true believer in peace through stability and longed for order in the world.⁶ In the Cold War era, Kissinger had two main strategies to achieve his goal of stability: détente and linkage diplomacy, which worked hand-in-hand. As defined by Kissinger, détente was “the search for a more constructive relationship with the Soviet Union.”⁷ It was more broadly used to describe the relaxation of tensions between hostile countries, including

⁴Ibid., 235.

⁵Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 334.

⁶John G. Stoessinger, *Henry Kissinger: The Anguish of Power* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 13.

⁷“Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger Defines Détente, 1974,” *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations Volume II: Since 1914* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 487.

Communist China. Kissinger saw détente as something imperative in the age of nuclear power, when each side could potentially destroy the other.⁸ Détente, however, was not about coming to agreement on ideological values. Instead, the goal was to come to peace without compromising the vital interests of either nation involved.

In order to achieve détente between two nations, Kissinger believed that linkage between issues was necessary. This strategy, known as linkage diplomacy, involved moving talks along with the Soviet Union on arms control while settling political differences at the same time. Thus, the strategy was essentially the idea that progress in one area was dependent on progress in other areas. At one of Nixon’s first presidential press conferences as President, he enunciated the concept of linkage as having “strategic arms talks” in such a way as to promote “progress on outstanding political problems *at the same time*,” especially on “problems in which the United States and the Soviet Union can serve the cause of peace.”⁹

Kissinger’s linkage approach dealt with issues in the global sense, not just as isolated events. Issues could not just be compartmentalized, for Kissinger believed that the Soviet Union would then use cooperation in one area while simultaneously trying to get the upper hand elsewhere.¹⁰ This policy would create both incentives and negative consequences for Soviet action, so that in the end, the Soviet Union would be led to détente with the United States.¹¹ The ultimate end of the linkage strategy was to make both United States and Soviet policy in line with the realities of the world situation. Most Americans, however, saw linkage diplomacy as just the Administration’s way of stalling arms limitations

⁸Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 610.

⁹Robert S. Litwak, *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1984), 93-4.

¹⁰Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.), 129.

¹¹Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 166.

talks with the Soviet Union.¹² Nevertheless, when Nixon and Kissinger saw the rise of China as threatening global stability, the policies of détente and linkage were used to normalize relations.

On July 23, 1969, President Nixon articulated what came to be known as the Nixon Doctrine. This statement limited the extent of U.S. involvement in Asia in order to ensure that there would be no future situations like Vietnam.¹³ The United States would respect its existing treaty obligations, but it would not make any more commitments in the area unless essential to American interests. In addition, the United States would issue arms and money to help Asian nations fight aggression, but it would be the responsibility of the country to provide the manpower necessary to fight. There was one main exception to the aforementioned conditions: if an ally was threatened by a nuclear power, referring to the Soviet Union or the PRC, the United States would be compelled to act directly.¹⁴ Thus, although the United States saw the trouble in further involvement in Asia after the Vietnam War, it was not ready to totally remove itself from Asia, where the two largest Communist states were located.

Was there a higher purpose than solely to limit United States involvement in Asia at work in the Nixon Doctrine? International relations expert Robert Litwak argues that one of the keys to the Nixon Doctrine was in détente with both China and the Soviet Union. If the United States could normalize relations with these two countries, then the Asian continent would be more stable in terms of United States interests, and the U.S. could start to transfer its power to its ally nations in the area.¹⁵ As long as the United States and China were enemies, it was not likely that the United States would surrender significant interest in Asia even if the Nixon Doctrine outlined such a position. Therefore, one reason for

¹²Litwak, *Détente*, 94.

¹³Nixon, *Memoirs*, 395.

¹⁴Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 241.

¹⁵Litwak, *Détente*, 134.

the beginning of Sino-American rapprochement under Nixon was that it flowed logically from the Nixon Doctrine and provided stability in Southeast Asia.

Nixon and Kissinger had other motivations in seeking to normalize relations between the United States and the PRC after over twenty years of non-recognition and hostility. Nixon clearly stated the obvious reason that better relations were “certainly in our interest, and in the interest of peace and stability in Asia and the world.”¹⁶ Just as détente with the Communist Soviet Union was beneficial to maintaining peace during the Cold War, détente with the PRC would provide similar results, especially after U.S.-Sino conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. Therefore, rapprochement simply for the sake of better relations was an important consideration. The sheer size of mainland China was another factor. The existence of a 3.7 million square mile expanse of land with approximately 750 million people could not be ignored or isolated politically and economically.¹⁷ President Nixon, speaking in Kansas City explained, “Mainland China, outside the world community, completely isolated, with its leaders not in communication with world leaders, would be a danger to the whole world that would be unacceptable.”¹⁸ Although these were important considerations, the possibility of improving relations with the Soviet Union was the most significant cause for a United States interest in normalization with the PRC.

There were ideological disagreements between the Soviets and the Chinese during this time, even though both nations were Communist. Mao Tse-tung believed Chinese Communism to be purer than that of the Soviets, since China had achieved Communism without going through a stage of socialism.¹⁹ Another

¹⁶Nixon, *Memoirs*, 545.

¹⁷United States Department of State, *Issues in United States Foreign Policy: People's Republic of China*, 5.

¹⁸Nixon, *Memoirs*, 552.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 166.

ideological contention was the Chinese accusation that the Soviet leaders were “revisionists,” and thus the real head of the Communist revolution was Mao Tse-tung, located in the Chinese capital of Peking.²⁰ Mao thought the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev was too intent on peaceful relations with the West, giving up the revolutionary aspect of Communism. Before, the United States believed in the monolithic character of international Communism—that Communism was under control of the Soviets and everything stemmed from their wishes. However, with the nationalism of the Chinese Communists and open hostility with the Soviets, this theory failed. Kissinger believed that this history of hostility that had existed before and after the 1950s between China and the Soviet Union would continue to exist, and thus the United States’ policies had to adjust to this new world power structure.

Kissinger’s idea to stabilize the world order in this era of the Sino-Soviet split involved what political scientists call “triangular diplomacy,” a branch of linkage diplomacy. Triangular diplomacy was the concept that the interests of the United States were best served if it preserved better relations with both the Chinese and Soviets than these two countries did with each other.²¹ The policy “linked” progress with China to further progress with the Soviet Union. The United States was to hold the most favorable position in the triangle and act like a fulcrum, with the two other countries depending on the U.S. In this way, both China and the Soviet Union would try to gain favor with the United States against the other country. The United States would then act as the balancer between the two countries, establishing better relations with each country as well as a global equilibrium in the process.²² However, the key was not to antagonize one of the countries too much, for it

²⁰Franz Michael, “The New United States-China Policy,” *Current History* (Sep. 1972): 127.

²¹Kissinger, *White House Years*, 712.

²²*Ibid.*, 192.

was like “walking a delicate tightrope.”²³ If the United States could achieve rapprochement with the PRC, the idea was that it would gain huge leverage over the Soviet Union, which would lead to greater Soviet cooperation. Plus, the Chinese had reasons to want to seek normalization of relations with the United States. The PRC was experiencing definite hostility with the Soviet Union, a nation with superior military force. Would the Chinese really want to be isolated from both the United States and the Soviet Union? Since Kissinger believed that the Chinese feared the Soviet Union more than the United States, reconciliation between the two Pacific powers seemed possible.²⁴ Thus, triangular diplomacy was based on using continuing hostilities between the two Communist superpowers to achieve global stability.

Once the Nixon-Kissinger strategy was established to seek rapprochement with the PRC, a series of subtle diplomatic exchanges traveled between Washington and Peking aimed at showing each country’s good intentions about establishing relations. The United States first tried to resume Sino-American talks after a two-year break. This was achieved with talks beginning on January 20, 1970 in Warsaw between the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Walter Stoessel, and Lei Yang from the PRC, eventually resulting in the Chinese accepting the U.S. proposal to send a high-ranking American official to Peking to serve as leader of the American delegation in discussions there.²⁵ In Nixon’s Foreign Policy Report to Congress in February 1970, the President reported, “The Chinese are a great and vital people who should not remain isolated from the international community...But it is certainly in our interest, and in the interest of peace and stability in Asia and the world, that we take what steps we can

²³Henry A. Kissinger, “My Visit to China,” Declassified White House Memorandum, 19 Nov. 1971, 3, Digital National Security Archive.

²⁴Stoessinger, *Anguish of Power*, 117.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 118.

toward improved practical relations with Peking.”²⁶ Although the talks between the PRC and the United States were temporarily halted due to the American invasion of Cambodia, diplomatic channels reopened after a couple of months.

Nixon opened up indirect channels to China through President Yahya Khan of Pakistan and President Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania in order to keep the State Department out of the negotiations.²⁷ The Department of State had a large bureaucracy and was not very secretive, which was important to Nixon and China in the beginning of this new relationship. In another positive gesture towards China, on October 26, 1970, Nixon actually called China the “People’s Republic of China” instead of “Communist China.”²⁸ After a series of messages between the White House and Chou En-lai discussing the sending of an American envoy to Peking and identifying the main obstacle to diplomatic relations as Taiwan, a breakthrough occurred. On April 27, 1971, a message was received through the Pakistan channel from Chou En-lai that stated, “The Chinese government reaffirms its willingness to receive publicly in Peking a special envoy of the President of the U.S. (for instance Mr. Kissinger) or the U.S. Secretary of State or even the President of the U.S. himself for a direct meeting and discussion.”²⁹ The scene was now set for the United States and the PRC to openly discuss, in person, the differences hindering improved relations.

During the same month, the Chinese sent another signal proving their desire for better relations. Both the Chinese and the United States table tennis team were participating in the World Table Tennis Championship in Nagoya, Japan. Nineteen-year-old Glenn Cowan from Santa Monica, California, approached the Chinese team captain to get a ride on a bus with them to see the

²⁶Nixon, *Memoirs*, 545.

²⁷Kissinger, *White House Years*, 699.

²⁸Nixon, *Memoirs*, 546.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 549.

pearl farms. In retrospect, Kissinger noted that such an event never would have happened unless Mao and Chou En-lai explicitly told the team to be nice to the Americans.³⁰ Cowan later gave the Chinese captain a T-shirt and he received a Chinese scarf in return. However, what became known as ping-pong diplomacy was more than just an exchange of gifts. The Chinese actually invited the American team to visit on April 6, and when they arrived at the reception that Chou En-lai arranged, he proclaimed, “You have opened a new chapter in the relations of the American and Chinese people.”³¹ An invitation was extended to the Chinese team to visit the United States as well. Chou En-lai’s overture to the ping-pong team was symbolic of the readiness of the Communist Chinese government to develop relations with the United States.

After it was certain that an American official was welcome in Peking, the question became who to send. After brainstorming for possible candidates, Nixon decided on Kissinger, for he knew Nixon’s policy best and the President could exert the most control over him.³² As part of his plan, Nixon wanted his representative to go on a secret trip to China beforehand to formally arrange the details of the President’s trip. If the trip were secret, Nixon did not have to worry about other countries, such as the Republic of China, attempting to thwart the trip, wanting a list of concessions, or making the U.S. promise not to compromise.³³ In addition, the United States was simply not familiar with China or its officials, and, not knowing what to expect, wanted to keep this first trip secret. Kissinger was the perfect person for a secret trip. Not only was he furtive by nature, but he also had a reputation of being a playboy, dating many different women, including the actresses Jill St. John, Shirley MacLaine, Marlo Thomas, Candice Bergen, and

³⁰Kissinger, *White House Years*, 709.

³¹Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 339.

³²Kissinger, *White House Years*, 717.

³³*Ibid.*, 725.

Liv Ullmann.³⁴ So, if he were to “disappear” for a couple to days to go to China, no one would be surprised, imagining that he was with a woman somewhere.

Given the codename “Polo,” after the explorer Marco Polo, the first Westerner to travel to China, Kissinger’s trip broke the ground for President Nixon’s visit.³⁵ To keep the trip to China secret, Kissinger suddenly became ill with a “stomach ache” while in Pakistan, requiring bed rest for a couple of days.³⁶ It was during these days, July 9-11, 1971, that Kissinger flew to China to meet with Chou En-lai, the foreign minister with an understanding of the Western world. Kissinger came back from this journey with a sense of the personality and ideology of the Chinese, especially Chou En-lai, and had laid the groundwork for the President’s own trip. Kissinger and Chou En-lai worked out a joint communiqué to be issued at the end of the trip, revealing both countries’ interest in having the President go to China for a summit and the President’s acceptance of such an invitation. In addition, the document mentioned the purpose of the President’s trip, which was to seek normalization of relations and to discuss “questions of concern to the two sides.”³⁷ This communiqué was what President Nixon read to the American people over national television on July 15, adding that this beginning of relations with the PRC was “not directed against any other nation.”³⁸ With this qualification, it appeared on the outside that the United States was not opening up talks with the PRC to use as leverage against the Soviet Union, although this was exactly what the Nixon-Kissinger strategy of triangular diplomacy was all about. By improving relations with China, Nixon and

³⁴Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 361.

³⁵Kissinger, *White House Years*, 726.

³⁶Nixon, *Memoirs*, 553.

³⁷Henry A. Kissinger. “My Talks with Chou En-lai.” Declassified White House Memorandum, 17 July 1971, 10, Digital National Security Archive.

³⁸United States Department of State, *Current Foreign Policy: The United States and the People’s Republic of China* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1971), 2.

Kissinger hoped the Soviet Union would be more eager to work with the U.S.

The meetings between Kissinger and Chou En-lai, however, amounted to more than just what was read to the public. Kissinger reported privately to the President that the Taiwan issue was still the main impediment to normalization of relations, and that the Chinese were still very fearful of the Soviet Union, which played nicely into the Nixon-Kissinger strategy of triangular diplomacy.³⁹ The Chinese were adamant about the United States recognizing Taiwan as part of China and removing troops from the Taiwan Strait, but these issues would be discussed in detail later when Nixon met with Mao Tse-tung. Nevertheless, Kissinger explained to Chou En-lai that removal of troops from Taiwan was linked to the conflict in Vietnam.⁴⁰ Thus, if China wanted progress on the removal of U.S. troops, progress had to be made in ending the war in Vietnam. Besides general discussions on these issues, Chou En-lai and Kissinger worked out the basics of the President’s trip, including what cities to visit, how long to stay, and which Americans should attend.

Kissinger went on a second trip to Peking in October 1971, but this time publicly, to negotiate the joint communiqué that would be issued after the President’s journey in February 1972.⁴¹ After wrangling by both Chou En-lai and Kissinger about the wording of the communiqué, a document that highlighted the common interests of both countries while also including a section where both countries could assert their differences, was created. While Kissinger was in China, the United Nations (UN) voted to expel the Republic of China on Taiwan from the General Assembly, while giving the PRC a seat on the Security Council.⁴² Although

³⁹Kissinger, “My Talks with Chou En-lai,” 11.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 14.

⁴¹Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 351.

⁴²“Secretary Rogers’ View of UN Action on China Question,” *Department of State Newsletter* (Nov. 1971): 4.

the United States had supported Taiwan remaining in the UN, the fact that Kissinger's trip to China coincided with the UN vote caused many to speculate that Kissinger's visit had caused the outcome.

President Nixon's historic journey to China on February 21, 1972, the first ever by an American President while in office, was largely symbolic in nature. When President Nixon stepped off the plane, he greeted Chou En-lai with a handshake, something Secretary of State John Foster Dulles refused to do in Geneva in 1954.⁴³ With this handshake, a new era of relations between the two countries began. The main workings of the joint communiqué had already been finished months in advance between Kissinger and Chou En-lai, and so all that was left to do was to complete the details of the document. This job was basically left to Kissinger and his foreign policy aides. Nixon spent his days in China meeting with Chou En-lai, discussing issues of policy, sightseeing, and attending banquets. During the few times that Nixon was able to meet with Mao Tse-tung, they discussed Chiang Kai-shek, American politics, world affairs, and general policy issues between the two countries.⁴⁴ What they discussed did not really matter. The fact that these two leaders, after years of impasse, were speaking face to face was significant by itself.

The Shanghai Communiqué, which was issued at the end of the President's trip, outlined what had been discussed and agreed upon at the summit.⁴⁵ The United States reaffirmed its desire for peace both in Asia and the world, its support of the South Korea and Japan, and its agreement with Nixon's latest peace proposal for Vietnam. The PRC, on the other hand, declared its support for the struggle of oppressed people and nations, its opposition to Japan,

⁴³Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon, The Triumph of a Politician 1962-1972*, vol. 2 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 512.

⁴⁴Nixon, *Memoirs*, 561-63.

⁴⁵President Nixon, "Shanghai: Joint Communiqué," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Feb. 28, 1972): 473-76.

and its support of North Korea and the Communist peace position in Vietnam. On the issue of Taiwan, the United States acknowledged that Taiwan was part of China, but that it was an issue the Chinese should deal peacefully with themselves. In time, the United States confirmed it would remove its military presence surrounding the country as long as "the tension in the area diminishes."⁴⁶ This last phrase shows the Nixon-Kissinger linkage diplomacy, giving the Chinese government reason to work to end the war in Vietnam. China also asserted that Taiwan was part of China, but that the People's Republic was the only government of China.

Besides the talk of expanded trade, more regular diplomatic communication, and exchanges of culture, the only true agreement that came out of the communiqué was that both countries opposed any country, including themselves, gaining hegemony in the Asian-Pacific area. This can be seen as directed toward the Soviets, whom the Chinese thought wanted influence in the region. This agreement also reflects the Nixon-Kissinger desire for stability in Asia. Essentially, the communiqué just showed that the Chinese and the Americans agreed to disagree. Thus, the importance of President Nixon's trip is not what came from it, but simply that it occurred.

The question then becomes whether or not the President's trip was actually effective in achieving the Nixon-Kissinger goals. In other words, did improved relations with the PRC really give the United States an advantage in talks with the Soviets, as linkage diplomacy suggested? In the months immediately following the President's announcement of his trip to Peking, Moscow did appear to respond to the new international situation. In a July 24, 1971 article in *Pravda*, less than ten days after the President's broadcast, the Soviets commented on the new chapter in Sino-American relations: "It goes without saying that any designs to use

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 475.

the contacts between Peking and Washington for some 'pressure' on the Soviet Union...are nothing but the result of a loss of touch with reality."⁴⁷ Although the Soviet rhetoric alluded to standing firm, shortly thereafter, the Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin indicated his desire for the President to attend a summit in Moscow. Progress was also made in late August 1971 on Berlin, which had been an area of contention with the Soviet Union. An agreement was reached to limit the harassment of travelers from East Berlin to West Berlin, allow West Berliners to travel using West German passports, and permit a Soviet consulate to be established in West Berlin.⁴⁸ Even though the President had yet to visit Peking, just the idea that he was going made the Soviets a little more anxious and encouraged them to work with the United States.

The President went to Moscow in May 1972, three months after opening up China, to work on arms agreements. At the Moscow summit, the Nixon-Kissinger strategy of linking limits on offensive weapons with limits on defensive agreements was successful. The two countries agreed to limit antiballistic missiles (ABMs), and also signed an interim offensive agreement limiting the number of offensive weapons to those currently in existence.⁴⁹ In the wake of President Nixon meeting with Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the Soviets naturally became more concerned about their relationship with the United States. They did not want to be left alone in this new era of Sino-American cooperation. It was almost as if Nixon's trip to Peking shocked the Soviet Union into compromising with the United States, at least in the short run.

However, regardless of whether or not normalization was occurring with China, the Soviet Union needed the strategic arms limitations with the other nuclear superpower, the United States.

⁴⁷Kissinger, *White House Years*, 766.

⁴⁸Nixon, *Memoirs*, 524.

⁴⁹*Nixon: The Fourth Year of His Presidency*, (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973), 12.

An arms race between the two countries was occurring during this time, making it in the Soviets' best interests, both economically and strategically, to work out an agreement with the United States, sooner rather than later. In this way, the United States and the Soviet Union would remain on nuclear parity. Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) began to progress more rapidly after a period of impasse even before Nixon announced that he was going to Peking, which testifies to the fact that the Soviets were serious in wanting improvements.⁵⁰ Indirectly, Nixon's trip could have had an effect on Moscow's willingness to cooperate in the later stages of the talks, especially so soon after the historic event. Still, a better relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States in and of itself was probably the main motivator for the increased Soviet cooperation.

As the United States slowly moved towards more normal relations with China in the 1970s after Nixon's initial trip, there is no evidence that Soviet action was influenced as a result. The United States continued to work mainly on arms agreements with the Soviet Union to reduce the chances of nuclear annihilation. During the same time, China and the United States were taking baby steps to diplomatic relations, including the establishment of liaison offices in Washington and Peking in 1973.⁵¹ The relationship between China and the United States was in no way resilient, especially since the Chinese refused to establish diplomatic relations or extensive trade with the United States until Nixon gave up recognition of Chiang Kai-shek's regime on Taiwan and the 1954 defense pact the United States had with him.⁵² Nixon was not ready to commit himself to abandoning Taiwan, especially during Watergate when he needed the support of conservative members in Congress who had traditionally supported Chiang Kai-shek. Therefore, from the Soviet perspective, although loose relations

⁵⁰Nixon, *Memoirs*, 523.

⁵¹Cohen, *America's Response*, 199.

⁵²*Ibid.*

did exist between China and the United States, there were still many issues that needed to be resolved on both sides. The idea that the Soviet Union would feel compelled to work with the United States because of China is not a strong argument because it was in the Soviet Union's best interest to cooperate with the United States to keep nuclear power in balance.

The Nixon-Kissinger strategy of using linkage diplomacy in order to achieve détente with the two largest Communist nations was a great plan on paper, but in reality, not extremely successful. Both the Soviet Union and the PRC were better off working with the United States regardless of whether their rival Communist country was also. The Sino-Soviet split could not hurt the United States in improving relations with these countries, yet it had only an indirect effect, if any, on Soviet motivations for cooperation. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Nixon's opening of China was beneficial. With a strong anti-communist background and a capable national security assistant in Kissinger, Nixon was able to begin normalization of relations with the PRC that eventually led to full diplomatic recognition in 1979.⁵³ The Nixon-Kissinger strategy of using China as an incentive for Soviet cooperation was ineffective, but the results of the policy led to a new era in Sino-American relations.

⁵³Ibid., 202.